



Robert "Bob" Haarala

December 15, 1937 - March 2, 2022

Robert "Bob" Haarala died Wednesday, March 2, 2022, in Livonia.

Beloved husband of Karolyn

Loving father of Troy (Jeree), Brett (Lori), Bruce (Edie), Dan (Jennifer) and Kara

Proud grandfather of Derek, Brandon, Ryan, Kyle, Jessica, Jack, Kayla, Eric, Alec, Brooke, Elyse, Summer and Samantha. Proud great grandfather of Parker, Brayden, Vallen.

Bob was born December 15, 1937 in Bruce Crossing, MI to Laurie "Tom" and Florence (Gerber) Haarala. Bob graduated from Ewen-Trout Creek High School and afterward enrolled at Northern Michigan University in 1955. During college Bob worked summers for the US Forest Service. After graduating with a BS degree in Math in 1959, Bob took a position as a Math Teacher at Brake Jr High in Taylor. In 1961 Bob met Karolyn Mueller of Tecumseh (on a blind double-date at a drive-in) and was married that same year. Together they raised five children.

Bob completed his Masters Degree in secondary education in 1965 at Northern Michigan and had a distinguished 39 year career in the Taylor schools as a teacher, Principal, and Assistant Superintendent. Bob's spirit, humor and drive made him a very popular and effective educator for both students and coworkers throughout his career. Bob was recognized with multiple awards for his impact on the schools and community.

Survivors include his children:

Troy (Jeree) of Trenton, Brett (Lori) of Framingham MA, Bruce (Edie) of Plymouth, Dan (Jennifer) of Livonia, and Kara Schroeder of Plymouth. Also survived by close family friend Ronny Fowler of Westland.

Bob is also by survived by his siblings:

Nina Humphrey, of Ewen, Jean (Martin) Keranen, of Land O'Lakes, Wis., Lawrence (Lynn), of Phelps, Wis., Thomas (Sharon), of Ontonagon, Mary (Duane) Leaf, of Bruce Crossing, and Ann Marie (Jeff) Haapoja, of Ironwood;

Also by Karolyn's siblings:

Gary (Maryann) Mueller, Chuck (Donna) Mueller, David (Carolyn) Mueller, Paula Mueller, MarySue Amas, Jana (David) DeJonge Randy Mueller, and Beth Corey.

Bob is survived by numerous nieces and nephews and extended family members.

Preceding Robert in death were his parents Tom and Florence.

Bob touched so many people in his life, through his large family, his work as a teacher and administrator to literally thousands of students and staff, and to the many people who were his close friends. Bob was known to all for his energy, drive, generosity and his unique sense of humor.

Bob enjoyed the company of his relatives and many life-long friends with whom he kept in touch

frequently . For the last 20 years Bob organized an annual golf tournament for friends and relatives that allowed distant family to regularly reunite. Bob was an excellent athlete playing baseball, basketball, and was captain of his high school football team. Bob enjoyed bowling and golfing throughout his life and enjoyed both for 50 years as a member of leagues formed by fellow Taylor Public School educators. From the times of Vince Lombardi and Bart Starr, Bob was an avid supporter of the Green Bay Packers. He also was a fan of University of Michigan sports and the Detroit Tigers, enjoying the highs and

enduring the lows of those storied teams.

Visitation Tuesday, March 8th 1 – 8 PM at Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home, 46401 Ann Arbor Rd. W., (between Sheldon & Beck) Plymouth. In state Wednesday, March 9th 9:30 AM until the Wednesday 10 AM Funeral Mass at St. Mary Cause of Our Joy, 8200 North Wayne Rd, Westland, MI 48185. In Lieu of flowers the Haarala Family has indicated that memorial contributions can be made to the Robert Haarala Memorial Scholarship - to be awarded to a graduate of Taylor Public Schools who desires to become an educator. Checks should be made out to the Taylor Public Schools Foundation. Please include "Haarala Memorial Scholarship" in the memo line at the bottom of the check. Checks can be dropped off at the funeral home during visitation or mailed to:

Taylor Public Schools Foundation
23033 Northline Rd.
Taylor, MI 48180

Donations may also be made to Angela Hospice of Livonia. Angela Hospice, or Taylor Public Schools Foundation (Haarala Memorial Scholarship), 23033 Northline Road, Taylor, MI 48180. To share a memory, please use the Share a memory tab on this web page.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 8. 1:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home Plymouth
46401 Ann Arbor Road West
Plymouth, MI 48170
(734) 459-2250
plymouth@vermeulenfh.com

In state

MAR 9. 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary, Cause of Our Joy
8200 Wayne Road
Westland, MI 48185

Funeral Mass

MAR 9. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary, Cause of Our Joy
8200 Wayne Road
Westland, MI 48185

Tribute Wall

JH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Jessica Haarala - October 30, 2024 at 03:46 PM



“ Robert "Bob" Haarala

December 07, 2023 at 05:11 AM

JE

“ Jeannine lit a candle in memory of Robert "Bob" Haarala



Jeannine - February 20, 2023 at 07:36 PM

JE

“ I had Mr.H in TJH also. I never got away with the darn thing with that man around! I was in 9th grade. I am now 62! I loved him! It get to be a big joke when he caught me doing bad things! Innocently bad things I must say LOL he was a great man! I'll always remember him! Rest in Peace Mr H! You will be missed ❤️🙏🎵😭

Jeannine - February 20, 2023 at 07:34 PM

SU

“ *The most vivid memory I have of Mr. Haarala is when he was Asst principal at Taylor Junior High (I think) and he came into our classroom when either our teacher was late or absent. He went to the blackboard and drew a perfect circle, about two feet in diameter. I think he told us he taught math and you could tell he was pretty proud he could still do that circle! I was a pretty straight-laced kid so I didn't have much opportunity to personally interact with him, which to me was a good thing! It sounds like I missed out. So sorry to the whole Haarala family on his passing.*

Suzanne Ronald TC '81

Suzanne - March 12, 2022 at 08:50 PM

JD

“ *My sincerest condolences to your family at this time. I worked for Bob at the Taylor Board of Education Office and with him at the Taylor Junior High School. He was a great boss and friend. Always smiling and had an unending supply of jokes. I do remember his rendition of Locker Cleans up Time that he would sing over the PA system. It was amazing!*

Rest in peace, you will be missed!

Joyce Dean

Joyce Dean - March 08, 2022 at 09:41 AM

MK

Those were the days! I remember the "Y" Monica "Y". He will truly be missed by everyone.

Monica Yonitch King - March 10, 2022 at 02:29 PM

BH

Joyce: Thank you for your condolences and sharing fond memories of my Dad when you worked with him. Luckily, Dad didn't save all his jokes just for the school, so our family was also treated to continuous jokes and songs, and everyone had a special nickname too. We will definitely miss our Dad dearly, but will also have many fond memories of him to smile about.

*Best Regards,
Brett Haarala*

Brett Haarala - March 11, 2022 at 10:53 PM

EG

“ <https://youtu.be/GodTUTC3Jm8>

I wanted to share a very special time I had the honor of thanking Bob on behalf of all us Kids back from our Taylor school days . And additionally to thank his wife Karolyn for going along with the idea of them coming to Florida!!!

eric gaffka - March 07, 2022 at 08:30 PM

BE

What a beautiful tribute. I was fortunate enough to also work for Bob in the office during my high school years at Taylor Center. We were all so fortunate to have our young lives shaped by this wonderful soul. Thank you for sharing.

Bernice - March 08, 2022 at 07:01 AM

EG

Bernice, So happy you enjoyed! God Bless

eric gaffka - March 09, 2022 at 02:18 PM

BH

Eric: Thank you so much for sharing this and having the character to speak from the heart and recognize my Dad as a significant influence on your life so many years ago. I was very impressed when I saw this originally, and want you to know that your reaching out made a huge impression on him and our family. Our family is gratified that you forged a friendship with Dad in his later years to honor him in his service to the Taylor community as an educator. We also thank you for your kind generosity to him over the years.

*Best regards,
Brett Haarala*

Brett Haarala - March 11, 2022 at 10:34 PM

ER

Brett, It was truly an honor to know your Dad & Mom ! What a blessing!!! I wish I could have made the funeral but I just could not pull it off from Florida. Your father meant so much to me when I look back over the many years of knowing him. And if you are ever in the Daytona Beach area look me up. Would really enjoy the visit from you !!!

eric - March 15, 2022 at 04:35 PM

CH

“ If had to name who was the biggest influence in my life it would be Robert Haarala! At a young age he got through to me, and thank God he did! Utmost Professional, leader and he let me know he cared! From my heart my sincere condolences to your family!

P.S. He also swung a mean paddle!

Christopher Hall - March 07, 2022 at 08:07 PM

BH

Christopher: Thank you for sharing your very kind complements and memories of my Dad, and your condolences. It gives our family a lot of pride and comfort to know the positive influence he had on young people in his career. (Hopefully the paddling part wasn't too bad)

*Sincerely,
Brett Haarala*

Brett Haarala - March 11, 2022 at 10:43 PM

RL

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Ron Leggitt - March 07, 2022 at 12:50 PM

BH

*Ron- Thank you for sharing this nice “vintage” photo of my Dad from his earlier years as an educator in Taylor- it is much appreciated
Regards,
Brett Haarala*

Brett Haarala - March 11, 2022 at 11:08 PM



“ *He was such a good and kind man. I worked in the office for him for a few years and will never forget his kindness and fairness. My heartfelt sympathy and condolences to his loved ones.*

Kathleen King - March 07, 2022 at 12:15 PM

BH

*Hi Kathleen, thank you for sharing your positive memories of our Dad and your condolences. We appreciate it very much
Regards,
Brett Haarala*

Brett Haarala - March 07, 2022 at 05:52 PM

RR

“ *My condolences to the Harrala family on behalf of the Richards family. I too was part of the Indian guides we were in the same tribe Shoshone. Lots of memories from then. I still live in the same neighborhood and would see him out front doing yard work all the time as I drive by.*

Ron Richards - March 07, 2022 at 09:58 AM

BH

*Ron: Thank you for your condolences and also for attending the visitation this week, it was great to see you and Betsy after all these years. As you saw, one of Bob's joys was being outdoors and working in the yard. Best wishes to you and your family,
Brett Haarala*

Brett Haarala - March 11, 2022 at 11:01 PM

JH

“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Jeree A Haarala - March 06, 2022 at 06:04 PM

DN

“ *Mr. Haarala, was my teacher in Brake Jr High .He was a very nice teacher. We respected him and he was patient and kind.The reason I really know he was patient was because he was also my drivers ed teacher.He needed a lot of patience for that. But seriously he was very nice as a driver instructor.,a genuinely good person.Deborah Nothnagel*

deborah nothnagel - March 06, 2022 at 05:24 PM

BH

*Deborah: Thank you for sharing your fond memories of my Dad, it is much appreciated
Best Regards,
Brett Haarala*

Brett Haarala - March 11, 2022 at 11:11 PM

JS

“ I was saddened to hear of Mr haarala's passing. He was one of my favorite teachers at Brake Junior High. I really enjoyed his math class and had a great admiration for him Rest in peace Mr Haarala.

Jerry Stonebraker - March 06, 2022 at 11:02 AM

BH

*Jerry: Thank you for your kind thoughts and wishes for my Dad. We are comforted to know he had your admiration.
Regards,
Brett Haarala*

Brett Haarala - March 11, 2022 at 11:14 PM

DW

“ Mr. Haarala was one of the nicest bosses I have ever worked for. He was always interested in what the Band was doing. Later in my career I was a corporate pilot and he always asked me about flying, where I was going and who I was flying. When I would show up at his office he would smile and say "hello Dennis, how much is this visit going to cost me." I would answer him with "That's not why i stopped by but since you asked....." He was a great man, a fair man, a caring man and one of the best administrators the Taylor School District could ever have hoped for.
And to his entire family may you find comfort in the fact that he was dearly loved by all.
Thank you Mr. Haarala

Dennis Winnie

Dennis Winnie - March 05, 2022 at 07:55 PM

BH

Dennis, thank you so much for the very kind works about my Dad. We are happy to know how much he was respected and loved by his coworkers in the Taylor Schools. We will miss him dearly.
Regards,
Brett Haarala

Brett Haarala - March 07, 2022 at 05:17 PM

MI

“ My thoughts and prayers are with all his family and friends. Mr. Haarala was my principal at Taylor Center and he was very kind and fair man.

Mary Hall Ice - March 05, 2022 at 12:53 AM

BK

“ Bob had been our neighbor since 2015. My first memory of him was him and his boys cutting a limb on my tree that was hanging over the fence while the poor cable guy was installing the cable.

Needless to say that limb hit the cable line and he had to redo his work.

Our dogs adored him. Every day he would meet them at the fence to hand feed all three of them the treats that his lovely wife bought. I think my Australian Shepherd Shelby liked him better than me. They lined up so he could get to them all. If he didn't notice them they would bark until he did.

Bob and his wife Karol are a dream to share a fence with. We will sorely miss Bob and the joy he brought to our family.

Becky Krupa - March 04, 2022 at 08:51 PM

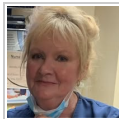
PM

Thanks for sharing this beautiful story, you have good taste in people. This brings tears of gratitude for having such a wonderful brother-in-law



Karolyn's sister; Paula

Paula Mueller - March 04, 2022 at 11:38 PM



I was one of the many students Mr. Haarala left a impression on during his career in the Taylor School District. I remember he would use little tricks to remember students names. My last name was Hayes so he'd call me "Ruthie" when he'd pass by me in the hallways-for President Rutherford B. Hates-and my friends would say "He called you the wrong name" but I knew his trick. Sixteen years later, as a principal, he was one of the people who stood up for my son when he got in trouble in high school. He was always genuine, always showed a good, kind heart, always showed that sense of humor. Not all your teachers stand out in memory but he definitely does.

Mary Bargerstock - March 06, 2022 at 10:34 AM

JO

“ Joe lit a candle in memory of Robert "Bob" Haarala



Joe - March 04, 2022 at 08:39 PM

TF

“ On behalf of the Arsenault Family, please accept our sincerest condolences. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all during this very difficult time.



Thomas and Jacklyn Arsenault & Family - March 04, 2022 at 05:41 PM

JG

“ I'm so heartbroken to here of Mr. Haarala's passing. I was a student at Taylor Center High School where he was the principal. I'll never forget when it was locker clean out day. Mr. Haarala would get on the speaker & say it's locker clean-out day locker clean-out day he would say it about 5 time's. He was so funny, kind & was a wonderful principal. You are all in my thoughts & prayers



Jackie Gaits-Maynard - March 04, 2022 at 04:17 PM

MR

“ Spent plenty of time in his office during the six years between Taylor Junior and TC I am so sorry for your loss my thoughts and prayers are with you he was a great guy always threaten but never suspended me blessings

Michele Michaels Rogers - March 04, 2022 at 01:52 PM

BM

“ I am so sorry to hear about Mr. H's passing. I am a former TC student and he was like a father to me while I was a student in the late 80's. I am grateful that I was able to run into him every once in a while and tell him how much of a positive impact he had on my life. To be honest, I have to give him credit for a lot of my life's success. God Speed Bob and prayers to your family.

*With Deepest Sympathy
Bernice Morrison*

Bernice Morrison - March 04, 2022 at 12:48 PM

CK

“ A wonderful friend,husband,father. Lots of good memories of our families fun together. His 4 boys and our 3 boys were in Indian guides together and he was a great leader. As an outstanding educator he was well known in Taylor. The Kleinsmith family love goes out to his entire family. God Bless them all

Carolyn kleinsmith - March 04, 2022 at 11:54 AM