



Paul Yerk

June 30, 1943 - January 10, 2021

Paul I. Yerk, 77, of North Cape May, NJ passed away on Sunday, January 10, 2021 with his loving wife by his side, tenderly holding his hand. He was born June 30, 1943 in Phoenixville, PA to Paul “Razz” and Jeanne (Fry) Yerk. He was a part of the first graduating class of Spring Ford High School in 1961 and subsequently graduated from Penn State University in 1969 with a BA in English & Psychology. In 1979 he completed his Master’s degree in Special Education from Slippery Rock University. Paul married his soulmate, savior, and love of his life Sally (Droz) Yerk in 1978 in Pittsburgh, PA. He was a respected English & Special Education teacher at Middle Township High School for 35 years, retiring in 2005. Paul also served as mentor & coach to his beloved athletes on the Middle Township football and golf teams for over 30 years. He coached the Middle golf team to two Cape Atlantic League titles in 1975 & 1985, 350 victories in 588 matches, and culminated his successful career with his induction into the New Jersey Coaches Hall of Fame in 2003, finally retiring as the area’s longest tenured coach in 2005. In retirement, he filled his time as a home bound teacher for LCMR, enjoyed listening to great music, reading a plethora of books, and enjoying a cigar on the front porch on any sunny day. Paul will be lovingly remembered by family, friends, students, coaches, athletes, and colleagues alike – most notably for his articulate candor, sarcastic sense of humor, and a love that shined brightly, touching the lives of so many that had the privilege to know him. Paul served his country and his community. He was drafted and served in the U.S. Army from 1965 – 1967, with an honorable discharge. He also served on the Lower Township Board of Education for nearly two decades, beginning in 1994. Paul was a member of the American Legion and a faithful parishioner of Our Lady Star of the Sea Church in Cape May. He enjoyed “cruising through life” with his wife and accomplices, the Hooymans; golfing with the LACEY group and Poconos guys; and his time with the beloved Tennessee Squires of Cape May. Paul’s greatest achievement, however, is a marriage to be emulated and his seven children, whom he loved dearly. Paul is survived by his wife of 42 years, Sally; his children Daniel, Mara, Genna (Scott) Price, Micah (Bryce), Adam, Shanely (Brian) Damon, and Caylyn; and the grandchildren he adored – Griffin & Georgia Yerk; Darla, Penelope, & Beau Price; Clara & Kai Yerk; and Adeline Yerk; and his aunts Fannie James & Sally Weber. Paul is pre-deceased by his parents Paul & Jeanne and his

brothers Robert & David. A “walk through” visitation will be held at SPILKER FUNERAL HOME, 815 Washington St., Cape May on Friday January 15, 2021 from 6-8pm. A Funeral Mass will be held at ST. ANN CHURCH, 2901 Atlantic Ave. in Wildwood, NJ on Saturday January 16, 2021 at 11am. Paul’s Mass will be livestreamed for those unable to attend. The livestream will be active on Saturday morning beginning at 10:45am by simply clicking on this link: <https://client.tribucast.com/tcid/9335561> Interment will follow the Mass at Cold Spring Cemetery in Cape May. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions are suggested in Paul’s memory to the Caper 10 Alumni Association. Checks can be made payable to “Caper 10 Scholarship Fund” and mailed C/O Loretta Saggiomo, 239 4th Avenue, West Cape May, NJ 08204. Digital donations can be made via Venmo to @ShanelySYerk and will be forwarded to the Caper 10.

Cemetery

Cold Spring Cemetery

780 Seashore Road

Cape May (Lower Township),
NJ,

Events

JAN **Walk-Through Visitation** 06:00PM - 08:00PM

15

Spilker Funeral Home

815 Washington Street, Cape May, NJ, US,
08204

JAN **Mass of Christian Burial** 11:00AM

16

St. Ann's RC Church

2901 Atlantic Ave., Wildwood, NJ, US, 08260

Comments



“ An external video has been added.



Spilker Funeral Home - January 15 at 06:57 PM



“ Sally,
I was so sad to read of Paul's passing
My deepest condolences to you and the family. He was always so pleasant when I saw him every 6 months or sooner if he broke a tooth. This is the part of not working I miss, seeing their faces and sharing how they are and learning more about their lives and Paul was always a fun discussion about anything
Thoughts and prayers for your family

Sincerely
Mary Keating
Formerly of Dr Piper's office

Mary Keating - January 27 at 09:12 AM



“ We always enjoyed talking with you and Paul at Our Class Of 1961 luncheons and reunions.
We wish to extend our sincere and deep sympathy to the entire Yerik Family.

Steve and Fran Nagy

STEVEN NAGY - January 18 at 12:30 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Paul Yerk's Mass



Spilker Funeral Home - January 18 at 10:45 AM



“ Dear Sally and Family,

I was so fortunate to have worked for so many years in Lower Township with the support and guidance of Paul as a BOE member. Everything that has been said or written about Paul is such a testament to the man he was and the life he lived. I count my blessings that our lives crossed. My deepest sympathies to the family. May you be comforted by your wonderful and enduring memories.

Sherry Bosch

Sherry Bosch - January 20 at 12:22 PM



“ Sally so sorry for your loss Paul was one of the greatest guy I ever met

Sandy Brown



Sandy Brown - January 16 at 12:32 PM



“ John Durante lit a candle in memory of Paul Yerk



John Durante - January 16 at 12:12 PM



“ Dear Sally & Family,

We were all so sorry to hear that Paul had died.

We will remember all of the good times we had together. Especially Penn State games and his bartending days at the Durante's. Paul was never getting married but along came Sally and we all knew she was the one special girl of his life. Then they got married and look at the beautiful family they have today.

Love the Durante Family

John Durante - January 16 at 12:11 PM



“ It's difficult to explain the infinite good-ness Mr. Yerk carried with him and doled out by the spoonful. He is part of some of my earliest, funniest, and favorite memories, and taught me the fine art of how to absolutely roast family members. He has made so many lives richer, including mine.

I will remember him as a model of a father and a friend. Mr. Yerk was dependable and honest- a straight shooter who would tell you the truth, and even when it was irritating to hear... he was right. We all know how his voice could send seagulls flying, but I will remember him as the kind of person who didn't waste time on idle chit chat. He always got straight to the point. When I was a kid this seemed like some sort of superpower. It still does.

I will remember him at the helm of the green van on the way home from long beach days, in the stands at games, holding court at the kitchen table or downstairs, sometimes with the paper, a book, or a game on, but always with time for me.

So, Dannycadymarasallymichaahennaadamshanley...whoever you are! With all my heart I wish I could be there with you. Mr. Yerk was incomparable and extraordinary, and he is so loved and missed.

Maggie Kobik - January 16 at 09:32 AM



“ My thoughts and prayers are with you all.



Nancy Mola - January 16 at 08:33 AM



“ I don't know how to properly memorialize a man who I've known for longer than my conscious memory exists. I think the sad reality is that I can't. There are not enough words or the right words to capture that many years. This week we lost a man, to Covid-19, who will be terribly missed by so many in his community, family, and by me, a member of his family. I have known this man since I started going to my friend Mara's house. I remember being scared of Mr. Yerk when I first went to her house (these were preschool days) because I heard his booming voice before I saw him and I figured it's better to stay away from that level of volume. Little did I know just how many times I would be yelled at by him in the years to come and just how lucky I was to be yelled at by him because it meant that he cared, because it made me feel like I was just another one of family. As an only child, I wanted desperately to be a part of that large family. I grew more and more a fixture of the family and Mr. Yerk grew to mean more and more to me.

I remember going to Middle football games with Mara and discovering a whole new world - the world of the concession stand! We could run around, go to Mr. Yerk for more candy money, and navigate the concession stand all by ourselves.

I remember asking him to take us to work with him. Mara and I were far too old for it to be cute, old enough in fact, to figure out that "Take your daughter to work day" was an excused absence from school. He told us no. He told us we would dysregulate his students. He saw right through us and told us to go to school (We didn't. We just moved on to another parent.)

I remember him taking us to the water park for Mara's birthdays and he would stand on the other side and wait for us to go down the one slide he could see before he left us to our own devices.

I remember him tutoring us for the SATs. I think we lasted one session. We laughed too much and listened too little.

I remember the evolution of his understanding of the rules and regulations of field hockey. At first he was so frustrated to watch the games and not understand the whistles and by the end he was yelling the rules at the refs during the games. There is one particular cry of "HIGH STICK" that I will never forget: it stopped the whole play.

I remember talking college football, for years, with him.

I remember New Year's Eve games.

I remember his encyclopedic knowledge of ... a whole lot of things.

I remember honey blessings.

I remember cigars.

I still remember his near constant consternation at Wiz the dog.

I remember his impressive vocabulary (impressive isn't quite the right word, he would have a better one).

I remember the way he said my name, unlike anyone else, each syllable stretched out and sung; it was joyous and tremendously kind.

I remember, just this summer at the beach, him yelling out to Cady to get my attention and let me know that he thought I was leaving Ofelia behind. It was loud, it was unnecessary, but it was endearing and it made Cady and I laugh all the way down to the pipe. That volume is what we all learned to expect and enjoy. It meant he cared. To know him is to hear him and to hear him is to love him.

I remember the way my kids, and of course his grandkids, made him chuckle.

I remember, I remember, I remember.

I lost one of my father figures but so many lost a father, grandfather, husband. The loss is so powerful. I am beyond sad to not be there with his family, with my family. My heart is absolutely there, it couldn't be anywhere else. I'm ashamed of this nation that continues to allow this virus to spread. I am heartbroken for all those who feel the void of his presence. Mr. Yerik - you are missed.

Jennifer Hooyman - January 15 at 10:57 PM



“ This is an amazing tribute! I am terribly sorry for your loss!

laurie - February 13 at 02:29 PM



“ Paul, you were always an inspiration and a mentor to me. We spent so much time together in the classroom and on the football field and there are more memories than there is space here to list them. Suffice it to say those years were a special time in my life. God bless & I guess you know some of the answers now! My heartfelt condolences to Sally & the rest of your family. John H. Kaighn - go Panthers!

John H. Kaighn - January 15 at 09:01 PM



“ Wishing you strength and peace at this time of sadness. Am so sorry for your loss Mercedes Baumann

Mercedes Baumann - January 15 at 06:36 PM



“ Karen Coyle lit a candle in memory of Paul Yerk



Karen Coyle - January 15 at 02:58 PM



“ My heart hurts for this special family. I only knew Mr Yerk for a short time but he... and his family touched my life.

Lacey - January 15 at 01:09 PM



“ Our condolences to the entire Yerk family. The Patriarch will be greatly missed by both family and his legion of friends and associates. I particularly will miss our conversations on the porch where we discussed, and tried to solve, the problems of the world. Sadly we failed. May he rest in peace. Murray & Dorothy Plenn

Murray S. Plenn - January 15 at 10:42 AM



“ Sally,
Thank you for contacting us when Paul became ill with COVID. We were pleased to have the opportunity to connect with Paul while he was hospitalized. We also want to acknowledge the enjoyable conversations we had with you and Paul at the regular SF-61 class gathering.

We extend our sincere sympathy to you and your family.

With out best wishes,
Ed and Carol Shane

Ed and Carol Shane - January 15 at 09:28 AM



“ We were so sorry to learn of Paul's passing. We fondly remember the carefree, good times, stories and laughter shared on the front stairs between the Yerks and Barbara and Jim Coyle. The members of our family were so fortunate to have been a few of the many lives Paul touched with his genuine presence and friendship.

Kevin and Mary Coyle

Kevin and Mary Coyle - January 14 at 07:55 PM



“ Helen Fredricks Staniec lit a candle in memory of Paul Yerk



helen fredricks staniec - January 14 at 05:05 PM



“ I never had Mr. Yerk as a teacher at Middle Township high school but I did have Sally Drozd Yerk RIP Paul. my prayers to all your friends and family... class of 1978...

helen fredricks staniec - January 14 at 05:07 PM



“ First of all my condolence to Sally and the entire Yerk family. To lose a husband, father and grandfather so suddenly is shocking and heartbreaking.

The phrase “one of a kind” is used so often that it often loses its meaning but in describing Paul it is apt. Paul and I came to Middle Township in the Fall of 1969, he most recently from Penn State and the army. During the next four years we developed a friendship that lasted 50 years, and although we often lapsed in communicating, it didn't take long for us to fall back into our old friendship immediately once we got back in touch. He was a dedicated Steelers and Penn State fan and of course the Phillies. And a dedicated son to his mother Jeanne. During the 4 years we shared in New Jersey, we lived together as bachelors, in “winter” apartments in Wildwood, and “summer” houses in Stone Harbor. We navigated as best we could the trials and tribulations of living through our early/middle 20's. We learned to teach in a multiracial district with kids from a broad range of backgrounds and socio economic status and were assisted professionally and personally by principal Ed Web. I left but Paul stayed 35 years and those of us who knew him in those early years can understand fully the description of Sally as his “savior”. During those times I learned that Paul's early claim to fame was sharing the silver screen with Steve McQueen in “The Blob’ (he was one of kids running out of a movie theater). He loved Gleason, in the Honeymooners “I hope you like those jokes on the moon Alice” and Spock in the original Star Trek, “Vulcan's never bluff”. Summers were spent on the beach with “shoobs” and many winter Friday nights in Fred's Tavern in Stone Harbor. In his army days in German he developed a taste for Jagermeister, decades before it became the go to drink for a younger generation.

He was a good man, friend, husband and father and he will be missed.

Vince Orlando

Vincent Orlando - January 14 at 02:07 PM



“ My condolences to the entire Yerk Family. Although I did not know Mr. Yerk very well, I met him several times with my Father, Ralph. Pop always thought highly of Mr. Yerk and worked well with him on the board. That is why I am writing because Pop would have wanted us to remember this man as an unselfish, caring member of our community. The examples these men set are invaluable to the youth and hopefully they take advantage of the wisdom and overall knowledge Mr. Yerk displayed. Thank You, Sir for a job well done and for making the county a better place. Rest In Peace. Jeff Bakley

J. Bakley - January 14 at 01:15 PM



“ I would like to extend my sympathies to the Yerk Family. While I never met Mr Yerk, I know that he was a respectable man of high standards and values, and a model of good parenting. As a high school teacher for almost 20 years at LCMRHS, I had the privilege of teaching most of the Yerk family children.

In the classroom, each of Mr. Yerks children without exception were models of scholarship, discipline, kindness, and good citizenship. No doubt, these qualities that I witnessed so clearly, came from two loving parents who were active in the lives of their children and vigilant in teaching them high standards and unwavering moral values.

While Mr. Yerk is sadly no longer physically with us, his legacy proudly lives-on through his children.

janice gallagher - January 14 at 09:57 AM



“ Paul was an amazing with students. He was patient, kind and professional. I enjoyed the times we worked together on some of the most needy students. He always managed to coax some measure of success from them. He will be greatly missed by all. Prayers for strength for his family.

Lynda M Fraizer - January 14 at 09:36 AM



“ I am completely in shock and feel blessed that I got to zoom with Paul and Sally in December after not seeing them for at least 10 years. My favorite two memories of Paul involve my 16th birthday when he gave me a box of books he had selected to improve my intelligence - and a morning that I left a note on his car....LOL Sally....you know what I am referring to. He was always larger than life to me and I love him dearly. I am so upset with myself that I did not keep in touch better. Danny was in my wedding when he was 2 and I was in Paul and Sally's wedding. If there is a message here it is to always try to find time to keep in touch with those you love - Someone posted that this morning in the NY Times feel good little paragraph at the end of the daily digital news briefing. I am going to work hard to honor Paul and Sally by trying to be a better friend and person. Rest in peace Paul. I will watch for you



Andrea C O'Hearn - January 14 at 07:46 AM



“ Hello Andrea! Sally and Paul's niece Barb here! I, too, was in the Royal Wedding! Charles and Di had nothing on this event and certainly not the longevity! What a fun day, I remember it well!

Barbara - January 16 at 12:25 PM



“ Mr. Yerk was a huge part of our summers down the shore. He and my pop were great friends and I'd like to think Pop was there with him being they share their day. I will always remember Mr. Yerk's big booming voice and that roaring laugh when he and my pop were together on one of their porches or hollering to each other across the street. My grandma thought Paul was the funniest too. I hope they can hang out again in heaven. I'm so sorry for your loss and I hope you all can find peace in the coming months.

Kelly Schroll Wood (Coyle grandkid) - January 13 at 08:12 PM



“ Dear Sally and family we are so sorry to hear of Paul's passing. I think Jim called him home on his own anniversary because they were very good friends. Jim and Barbara were very fond of all of you. May your good memories comfort you and help to bring you peace. With our sympathy, Edie and Bob Callahan

Edatha Callahan - January 13 at 04:58 PM



“ Heartfelt condolences to the entire family. The first time I met Paul, probably 40 years ago, he treated me like he had known me all of his life and mine. It was sometimes years between seeing him and the treatment was always the same. Just an all around nice person. a privilege to have known him.

M. Biersbach

Martin Biersbach - January 13 at 03:34 PM