



Steven Rocky White

APR 8, 1954 - MAY 21, 2018



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Steven Rocky White, age 64, of Grand Haven passed away unexpectedly at Mackinac Straits Hospital, on Monday, May 21, 2018. He was born in Muskegon to Lyle “Whitey” and Kathleen (Mendel) White, and married the former Raynel Nelson on May 19, 1979.

Steve began snow skiing at the age of five, and started performing at the age of seven, as a saucer skier in the Whitey White Water Ski Show. He was an Eagle Scout. Steve was involved in the rescue of four people washed off the Grand Haven pier the night the Edmund Fitzgerald sank. He was awarded the U.S. Coast Guard Gold Lifesaving Medal for his involvement that night. He has surfed in Grand Haven, Mexico, California, and North Carolina. He attended Grand Valley State University majoring in physical fitness. Steve worked at many locations in Grand Haven, Grand Haven Brass Foundry, YMCA and Ottawa County Parks and Recreation. He graduated from Grand Haven High School where he was an All-State swimmer and football player. He is lovingly remembered by his wife, Raynel White of Grand Haven; son Joshua (Kimber) White of Grand Haven; three grandchildren: Draven, Mya and Jack White; his parents Lyle “Whitey” (Kathy) White of Grand Haven; in-laws, Ray (Barb) Nelson of Grand Haven; his brother, Joe White of Grand Haven; 2 brothers-in-law, Kevin Nelson of Lexington, KY and Dennis Nelson of Grand Haven. He was preceded in death by his mother-in-law, Dorothy “Dottie” Nelson.

A funeral service will be held at 11:00 a.m. Wednesday, May 30, 2018 at Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services – The VanZantwick Chapel with Rev. Jill VanderWal officiating. Friends may meet the family from 5-7 p.m. on Tuesday, May 29, at The VanZantwick Chapel. Interment will be in Grand Haven Township Historic Cemetery. Memorials to Grand Haven Area Community Foundation Catwalk Fund are appreciated. Share memories with the family at their online guest book at www.sytsemafh.com.



Events

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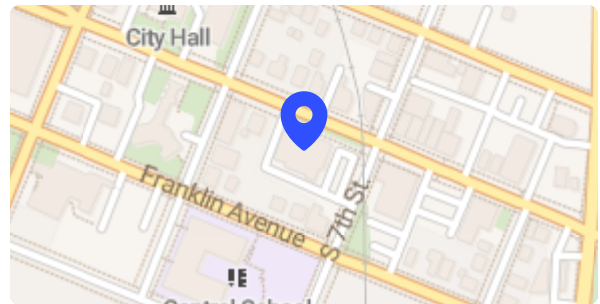
Visitation

 **Tuesday**, May 29, 2018

 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM ET

 **Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services - The VanZantwick Chapel**

620 Washington, Grand Haven MI 49417



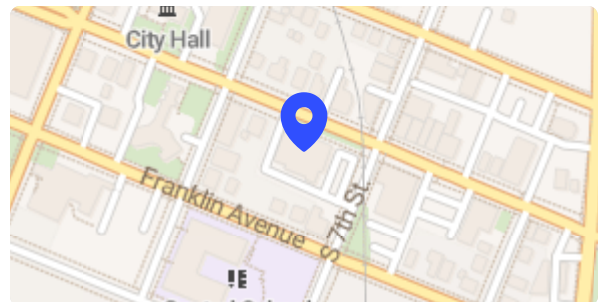
Funeral Service

 **Wednesday**, May 30, 2018

 11:00 AM ET

 **Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services - The VanZantwick Chapel**

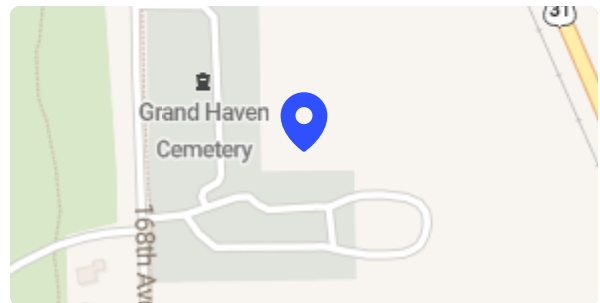
620 Washington, Grand Haven MI 49417



Cemetery Details

 **Historic Cemetery**

12604 168th Avenue, Grand Haven MI 49417





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Jennifer Vanvoorst posted:

Raynel, I am so sorry for your loss. You and Steve were good neighbors to us for many years. You and your family are in our prayers.

May 29 at 2:43 PM



Anonymous sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the White family.



May 29 at 10:35 AM



John Wozniak posted:

Rest in Peace, Steve.

May 29 at 6:32 AM



Terri And Curt Whiting sent a Heart's Companion Bouquet to the White family.



May 29 at 6:02 AM



Steve & Lorie Kiebach lit a candle in honor of Steven.



May 29 at 1:51 AM



Matt posted:

Dear White & Nelson family, My deepest condolences for the loss of Uncle Steve. May you find some peace and comfort in this difficult time. Love Matt Steele

May 28 at 8:49 AM



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Anonymous sent a Basket of Joy to the White family.

May 28 at 8:01 AM



Anonymous sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the White family.

May 27 at 10:24 AM



Pam Mulder Plamann sent a virtual gift in honor of Steven.

May 25 at 4:48 PM



Marcia Glueck posted:

Dear White family, You have our deepest sympathy in the passing of Steven Rocky. Marilyn and Marcia Glueck

May 24 at 1:10 PM



Linda Stephens lit a candle in honor of Steven.

May 24 at 10:51 AM



Charlotte Corwin lit a candle in honor of Steven.

May 24 at 5:34 AM





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BB

Bob Beaton posted:

Whitey showed his courage and leadership in the great 1975 surf rescue off the Grand Haven south pier. He was awarded the Congressional Gold Life Saving medal on par with the Congressional Medal of honor and the only Congressional heroism medal awarded to civilians as well as military. He came very, very close to being awarded that medal posthumously battling enormous waves in the dark in 52 degree water and gale force winds. This heroic effort occurred at the exact same time that the mighty Edmund Fitzgerald went down in Lake Superior!! first saw Whitey performing in his dad's Whitey White Water Ski show and fondly remember that little 3-yr old, blonde headed kid water skiing up the Grand Haven channel. I met him later in life on the west coast of Mexico. He wanted to borrow my board to try surfing. I warned him of the dangerous conditions of the big waves and that surfing was very tough to learn. After a few minutes relented and gave him my surf board.He paddled directly out in that 7-8 foot surf, sat for a moment and then spun around and took off on a nice 8-footer that broke over a coral reef just a couple feet below the water. He dropped down the steep face of the wave, pulled off and excellent turn and then got into what eventually became his famous speed crouch and shot across that wave as it crashed down behind him.I have never seen anyone surf that good on their first time out. Returning back to Grand Haven he dominated the south pier break with his consistent good rides and expert style. Anyone who has come to watch us surf the south pier always remember that young, blonde headed kid ripping off wave after wave.He became my life-long friend and surf brother. I will miss him.Bob (Aquadoc) Beaton

May 23 at 9:49 PM

BM

Barry Miller posted:

Great friends with Steve in Junior High and High School even though he was one class ahead of me. We water skied just about every day in the summer. He actually saved my life off the GH pier when I jumped in and panicked because the waves got to big to climb ladders back up on the pier. Steve jumped in and helped me get to where we could touch bottom. To all Steve's family and loved ones, I am so sorry for your loss. Comfort and peace to you all.

May 23 at 4:32 PM



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DF

Daphne And Howard Bennink And Family posted:

What can I say...saw him perform at the thrill show when he was little. Was a Bignell kid with him in third grade. The river and bijou was our world. Then swim team and surfing. We had such a time. He was an inspiration to all of us. Gave 110% always. Best drum solo ever. That illegal smile and eyes twinkling. Too soon... hang ten forever brother

May 23 at 8:57 AM

DV

Dave Vanderhoek May 27 at 11:12 AM

Our deepest sympathy goes out to you and your entire family, Lyle and Kathy. We are so sorry for your loss. Our prayers are with you all.The VanderHoek's

WB

William W Beaton May 27 at 9:23 AM

Steve was a Great Surfer and even a Better Friend.Will and Julie Beaton

EM

Eula C Morrissette May 27 at 3:41 AM

Dear Ray and Barb, I am so sorry for the loss of your son-in-law.. My heart goes out to all his precious family and friends. God bless each and everyone of you. Eula C Morrissette, Foley AL.

BV

Beverly And Terry Velik May 25 at 4:56 PM

Ray, Barb and Family, our thought and prayers go out to you and your Family during this sudden death. Please know we care and are lifting you up.Bev and Terry Velik

DM

Deb Mccarthy May 25 at 2:18 PM

Raynel,We are so sorry for your loss. Prayers for you and your family. Ed & Deb McCarthy(Oasis Deli & Grill)

GR

Gary And Joanne Rupar May 25 at 2:37 AM

We got to know Steve in scouting when Gary and I were involved in Cub Scouts. Our deepest sympathy to all of you at this time, we will pray for all of you!!!!!!!

SM

Sharon Macconnach May 24 at 1:59 AM

Steve was such a good guy. I never heard him say an unkind word about another person. He was good at enjoying life. We had so much fun as " river rats." I am going to miss you Steve White, you were one of my favorite people. Your kind soul and personal strength were an inspiration to many. Grand Haven will not be the same without you.Sharon Rudicil MacConnach

BB

Bob Beaton May 23 at 9:45 PM

Whitey showed his courage and leadership in the great 1975 surf rescue off the Grand Haven south pier. He was awarded the Congressional Gold Life Saving medal on par with the Congressional Medal of honor and the only Congressional heroism medal awarded to civilians



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Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Steven by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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