



Joseph J. Rafferty DDS

DEC 31, 1947 - AUG 13, 2024



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Joseph J. Rafferty DDS

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Joseph James Rafferty, age 76, passed away in Muskegon, MI, on Tuesday, August 13, 2024. Joe was born in Muskegon on December 31, 1947, to James and Anneliese (Thaufelder) Rafferty. He graduated from Muskegon Catholic Central in 1966 and went on to receive his doctorate from the University of Michigan School of Dentistry. On July 18, 1970, he married the former Linda Gawkowski, and the two of them spent many wonderful years building a family together before she preceded him in death in 2007. Fellow classmate and close friend, Phillip Witkowski, had dared him to ask Linda out, and the rest is history. Joe worked for 15 years at his own dental practice before becoming the dental director at Hackley Hospital, serving there for 25 years. While working there he was proud to provide dental services to underserved members of the community, such as AIDS patients, incarcerated persons, and children and families that were on Medicaid. He was a longtime member at St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church in Muskegon, serving for many years on their finance board. He always did what he could to help others with their dental care. He enjoyed woodworking and using his laser engraving machine to make unique and personalized gifts for many people over the years. He was also quite tech savvy and liked playing games on his computer, but more than anything he loved spending time with his family.

Joe will be lovingly remembered by his three daughters: Katy (Jason) Kohley, Kerrin (Alan) VanWashenova, and Susan Rafferty; five grandchildren: Alaina and Logan Kohley, and Owen, Quinn, and Sloane VanWashenova; three siblings: Marianne Wentzloff Rafferty, James (Janet Larkin) Rafferty, and Thomas (Pamela) Rafferty; and a beloved grand-dog, Sophie. He was preceded in death by his parents and his wife, Linda Rafferty.

A VISITATION will be taking place from 4:00 – 7:00 PM on Friday, August 16, 2024, at The Walburn Chapel of Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services, 1547 Sherman Blvd, Muskegon, MI,



Obituary

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49441. A FUNERAL MASS will be taking place at 11:00 AM on Saturday, August 17, 2024, at Saint Francis de Sales Catholic Church, 2929 McCracken St, Muskegon, MI, 49441, with visitation taking place an hour prior. In lieu of flowers please consider making a memorial contribution to a charity of your choosing. Please sign the family's online guestbook and share memories at sytsemafh.com



Events

Joseph J. Rafferty DDS

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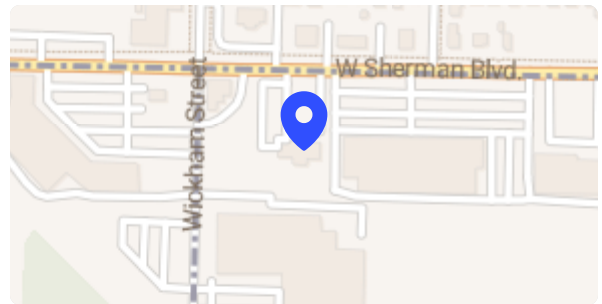
Visitation

Friday, August 16, 2024

4:00 PM - 7:00 PM ET

Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services - The Walburn Chapel

1547 W. Sherman Blvd., Muskegon MI 49441



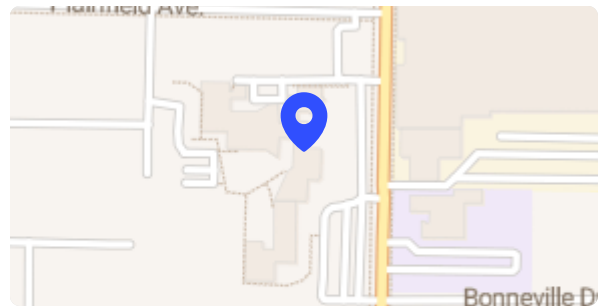
Funeral Mass

Saturday, August 17, 2024

11:00 AM ET

St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church

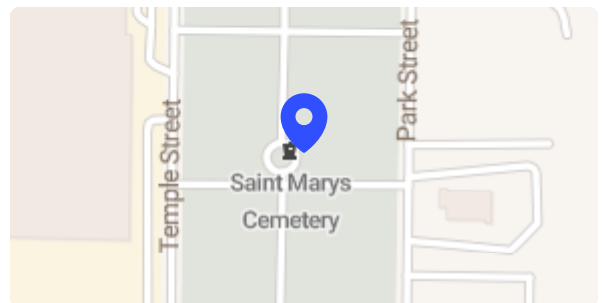
2929 McCracken, Norton Shores MI 49441



Cemetery Details

St. Mary's Cemetery

1915 Park St., Muskegon MI 49441





Tribute Wall

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MO

Marti Ocilka posted:

I am so sorry to hear about Joe's passing. My thoughts and prayers are with the family. Joe and I went to grade school together at St. Francis de Sales and I graduated from Muskegon Catholic with him and Linda. I know Joe and Linda are happily reunited. I hope they are dancing in the clouds together. May happy memories of them comfort the family in this time of loss. God bless you, Marti Ocilka

August 18 at 5:25 PM

SA

Seconda Addicott lit a candle in honor of Joseph.

Dear Marianne, Jim and Tom, I was so sorry to hear of Joe's passing. We go way back to being neighbors and friends to your family through the years. He was a great person ..very caring. Wonderful memories. Please accept my sincere sympathy and send loving prayers. Seconda (Lombardi) Addicott



August 17 at 11:29 AM

YF

Your Gm Family sent a Serene Reflections Bouquet to the Rafferty DDS family.



August 16 at 5:56 AM

YF

Your Gm Family planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Joseph.



August 16 at 5:56 AM

KB

Kim Brush lit a candle in honor of Joseph.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord and let the perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and the souls of the all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. The parish families at St. Francis de Sales Church



August 15 at 10:41 AM



Tribute Wall

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DW

Dr Barbara (Rudecoff) Wehr posted:

Joe and Linda were my best friends in dental school. We were always seated alphabetically... I spent years 4 years in and out of class with Rafferty and Rosema. After graduation we practiced on different sides of the state and lost touch. I reconnected on Facebook when I retired. He was a kind soul and always helping other people. He will be missed

August 15 at 10:21 AM

MU

Mary Ullmer posted:

Doc was one of the kindest people I've known. When I was a young adult (18) and struggling financially, he helped with dental work (pulling my wisdom teeth) and asked nothing in return. I have paid it forward many times over because of his kindness. We hadn't spoken for decades, but Facebook put us back in touch. May he rest in peace.

August 15 at 10:09 AM

DC

Donna Clawson posted:

I got to know Joe because of his McMahon genealogy. We exchanged many emails, and I learned much when we met for a few hours two years ago. I also have fond memories of his grandparents Uncle Foney and Aunt Mamie. Donna Clawson

August 15 at 8:17 AM



Anonymous sent a Fiery Lily and Rose to the Rafferty DDS family.



August 15 at 7:19 AM

BP

Betty Lou (Hamel) Pleva posted:

My heart goes to Joe's family especially my childhood friend , MaryAnn, Joe's lil sister. Maryanne, my heart hurts for you, I pray that the lesson's of our faith will guide you during this difficult time. God be with you now, tomorrow and forever. ❤️ Blou.

August 14 at 4:42 PM



Tribute Wall

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MW

M Williams lit a candle in honor of Joseph.

Dearest Rafferty Family...I am so very sorry to hear about Joe! I know he will be dearly missed.A great guy, i remember when he was in dental school, and when he married Linda. I haven't see you in years but you are often in my thoughts. Please know you are being thought of with love and prayers. Long hugs,Mardi Monroe Williams



August 14 at 11:34 AM

DB

Daniel Balaskovits posted:

Sincere condolences and prayers to Joe's family. Joe and Linda were kind people. Keeping them in our prayers.Daniel & Marijane Balaskovits

August 14 at 10:14 AM

MS

Monica (Krause) Sawyn posted:

Joe, Linda and I were friends in high school, when they were just getting together. Lots of fun memories of those days! Linda was gone much too soon, and now Joe...Rest in peace my friend, and be assured of my prayers. Prayers also for all your family.

August 14 at 10:09 AM

GW

Gracie Wenk planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Joseph.



August 14 at 10:05 AM



Anonymous sent a Full Of Love Bouquet to the Rafferty DDS family.



August 14 at 10:05 AM



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MC

Molly Clawson posted:

My sympathies to Joe's family. May all the good memories carry you through this hard time. I'll always remember cousin Joe as a generous, kind man who shared his genealogical research with all the McMahan cousins. He helped my siblings and me to learn about our ancestors. Now he goes to join them, may they welcome him to heaven with open arms!

August 14 at 8:23 AM

JL

Jim Leiter posted:

May he rest in peace and prayers for the Family

August 14 at 8:02 AM

PJ

Peggy L. Johnson lit a candle in honor of Joseph.

My sincere condolences to Dr. Rafferty's family & friends. I knew him as I also worked at Hackley Hospital for many years. He was a good friend and a wonderful man!



August 14 at 7:49 AM

KJ

Kathryn Johnson posted:

Reconnected with Joe recently, I was a lucky recipient of one of his Facebook give aways. We didn't really connect in high school, but found out we had a lot of connections in our early years. Such a great guy & very interesting to talk to, also talented. Sorry for your loss.

August 14 at 7:19 AM



Memories only last if you share them

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



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