



Jack Arthur Berends

April 11, 1940 - November 18, 2020

Mr. Jack Arthur Berends, age 80, passed away Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at Mercy Hospital. He was born April 11, 1940 in Byron Center to Edward and Gertrude (Herrema) Berends.

He is survived by wife, Lois; sons: Patrick & partner, Lisa Walejewski, Ruston & wife, Jill, Michael & wife, Paula, Ryan & wife, Ellen; grandkids: Brittany, Jacob, Joy, Christian, Ashley, Luke, Emma, Jonas, Grace, & Benjamin; great-grandkids, Kayden & Liam. He is also survived by his siblings: Boyd & wife, Linda, Dick & wife, Nancy, Bill, and Bonnie.

Jack lived a big life, guided by his faith in Jesus Christ that he shared openly with his family and those around him. He spent 36 years teaching, coaching, and mentoring our youth in Grand Rapids, Lakeview, Cedar Springs, Montague, and Caledonia. Jack was a father to 4 boys who shared building, sports, and adventure. Jack was legendary for his canoe trips to the Canadian bush and the Pine River, and skiing trips to Colorado, California, and Utah.

Together, Jack and Lois opened their home to many students and hosted 5 exchange students. Jack's students learned more than math from him. They learned to have open hearts, integrity, and perseverance. Jack could do anything. He was fearless and smart. He was a natural leader and problem solver and was never afraid to stick up for anyone or himself. He was a wave maker when he needed to be and sometimes when he didn't need to be.

In retirement, Jack sought out new adventures in truck driving and helping his community. Jack and Lois traveled throughout the country with their sidekick Dundee. In Jack's later years, he battled a bipolar disorder that changed his life.

Jack lived a big full life full of adventure.

Due to COVID 19 restrictions a celebration of Jack's life will take place next year. In lieu of

flowers, please make donations to the [Muskegon Rescue Mission]<https://muskegonmission.org/> to help the community Jack looked to serve. Please sign the family's online guestbook at www.sytsemafh.com.

Comments



“ Dear cousins. I'm aunt shirleys youngest daughter so one of jacks youngest cousins. I'm so sorry to learn of jacks passing. Hugs and prayers to you all.

Trudi Baratono - November 25, 2020 at 03:34 PM



“ MR. BERENDS HIRED ME IN AS AN AIDE AT CEDAR SPRINGS SCHOOLS. MY SON MICHAEL HAD HIM AS A TEACHER WHEN HE WAS IN A WHEEL CHAIR. HE THOUGHT HE WAS WONDERFUL + I APPRECIATED THAT HE HIRED ME IN TO WORK. EVERYONE THAT EVER KNEW HIM WAS OVERWHELMED BY HIS GENEROUS PERSONALITY + SOMETIMES COMICAL IN HIS TEACHING METHODS BUT THEY WORKED WONDERS. WARMEST WHISHES TO FAMILY FROM SHIRLEY {WAITE} HART FROM CEDAR SPRINGS

SHIRLEY HART - November 24, 2020 at 11:08 AM



“ Mr. Berends was one of the BEST teachers I ever had and I still tell the story of how he turned kids on their heads to explain geometry! He had a wonderful gift and was generous in sharing it! My deepest sympathies to all who cherished this great man and mentor.

Christine Neitzel
Former Student
Caledonia High School

Christine Neitzel - November 23, 2020 at 07:46 AM



“ Mr Berends made a difference in my life! In the early 70's at Cedar Springs, he took a group of at risk and troubled boys to Chicago. We spent the night before at his house, left real early and saw the sights. It was my first trip to the big city. He was a great educator who really cared about his students.

John Uplinger - November 22, 2020 at 02:04 PM



“ Mr Berends was my soccer coach at Caledonia, 1988, 1989. The whole team loved him. One of our favorite times is when he took us to Ludington State Park for conditioning. He had broken some ribs the day before, but didn't cancel the trip. Even though he was in a lot of pain, he still ran around with us and we had a great time! My condolences to The Berends family and may God comfort you.

Joel Vander Wall - November 22, 2020 at 11:12 AM



“ Sending our sympathy and prayers to Lois and the entire family. Jack was a very special person. He was such a positive influence in the lives of so many as a teacher, coach and real friend to many in Caledonia. I'm sure he will be remembered as a "favorite" teacher and coach by a huge number of former students and athletes, including our sons. Roger and Joyce Keating.

joyce keating - November 21, 2020 at 09:03 AM



“ I took Algebra I and got a C but didn't understand it at all. So I decided to take it again with Mr. Berends as a teacher the second time. I finally 'got it' and it was fun! I got an A. He was the best. The first day he put his phone number on the board and made sure we all wrote it down and promised to call him at home if we got stuck doing our homework. I think I called him twice, even once about 10pm, and he was super gracious. What a great teacher and kind man. I have thought of him every time I've passed his old home on Whitneyville Road and wondered how he was. He really was a positive influence. I hope all his family take comfort in the many lives he touched for good.

April Andrus - November 20, 2020 at 10:10 PM



“ He was the most amazing teacher. Not only did he make math easy he taught some amazing life lessons that I still hold dear to me today. I hope he knows what a difference he made in my life. Heaven has truly gained an angel. You'll be missed Mr. Berends.

Chip Hess - November 20, 2020 at 07:29 PM



“ Mr. Berends made math fun. I remember his giving out "little bitty check marks" to the kids who misbehaved! He inspired me to become a math teacher.

kelly TenBrock - November 20, 2020 at 05:19 PM



“ Sending comforting thoughts to Pat and the rest of the Berends family...while I still hate math, Mr. Berends had innovative ways of easing the pain of learning it ("what? I get to keep handy a notebook with all the formulas??"). I'm sure many Caledonian students will tell you he positively impacted their school careers. Wishing you happy memories and upcoming peaceful days.

-Colleen Estep, class of 84

Colleen Marchese - November 20, 2020 at 08:49 AM



“ Lois and boys. I am so sorry. I did not know you were in Muskegon now, but I am so glad I ran across this on my computer. I will be praying for your family. We still live at same address in Spring Lake. If you get me your address, I will write you a letter.

Karen Browne - November 20, 2020 at 08:40 AM



“ Mr. Berends was my favorite teacher of all time when I went to Caledonia. He was a kind, caring, and compassionate man who was always willing to go the extra mile to help you learn if asked.
My thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Brian Rampenthal "1980"

Brian Rampenthal - November 20, 2020 at 08:02 AM



“ We hold you all in our prayers.

Kim Wood - November 19, 2020 at 06:06 PM



“ Torgeir, Eva, Solveig, Marte, Tarjei and Ingvill purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Jack Arthur Berends.



Torgeir, Eva, Solveig, Marte, Tarjei and Ingvill - November 19, 2020 at 05:26 PM



“ Mike Greene lit a candle in memory of Jack Arthur Berends



Mike Greene - November 19, 2020 at 02:24 PM



“ Jack was a remarkable math teacher for Caledonia High School for many years.

John Butler - November 19, 2020 at 07:32 PM



“ Our sympathies to the Berends Family. Jack made an impact in the lives of so many people.

Walt & Terri Brodock

Walt & Terri Brodock - November 21, 2020 at 12:33 PM



“ Mr Berends was a remarkable man full of goodness and abilities. He had a knack for connecting with students on a personal level, reaching out to me on several occasions when I needed redirection and encouragement. Time spent with him was always time well spent. He was purposeful with everything he said or did. My condolences to the Berends family.

James J Dutcher - November 21, 2020 at 05:54 PM



“ I extend my sympathy to you, Lois, and your family at this time.

Carol DykhousE Ebels

Carol M Ebels - November 22, 2020 at 07:10 AM