



Frank Kraai

January 30, 1936 - July 11, 2024

Franklin Delano Kraai, age 88, of Holland, passed away on Thursday, July 11, 2024.

Frank was born on January 30, 1936, to Floyd and Winnie Kraai. While he was proud of his North Holland roots, Frank's love for the Holland community ran deep. Frank naturally declared "I've lived a beautiful life!". He was surrounded by family and friends who loved him dearly because of the encouragement, affirmation, and enthusiasm he shared so freely. If you knew Frank, you had a friend for life.

After graduating from Holland High School and earning degrees from Hope College and Michigan State University, Frank dedicated nearly 40 years to shaping young minds as a teacher and administrator for West Ottawa Public Schools and guiding future educators studying at Hope College. He delighted in sharing his time with others, volunteering with the Tulip Time Festival, Holland Chorale, 4-H programs at Ottawa County Fairs, and the Michigan Education Association. The spark in Frank's blue eyes was never brighter than when he shared the spirit of Santa Claus or Sinterklaas with children, especially at the Ottawa Area Center. His dedication to Holland extended to supporting local projects, exemplified by a \$1.1 million donation to bring his life-long dream of a downtown ice-skating rink to reality. He was eager to proclaim "lace up your skates!" and watch folks of all ages enjoy the magic of

being on the ice together.

Frank is survived by his sister, Lavonne Elhart; nieces and nephews: Shannon Elhart, Stephanie Elhart (Jay Frankhouse), Rayetta (David) Perez, Denise (Don) Nelson, Terri (Kim) Jamieson, Eric Kraai, Carolyn Cooper (Ron Stephens), and Dwight Kraai Jr., as well as many great and great-great nieces and nephews.

Frank was preceded in death by his brothers, Vern Kraai and Dwight Kraai, nephew Duane Kraai, brother-in-law Ray Elhart, and sister-in-law Carol Kraai.

A celebration of Frank's life and legacy will be held from 4-7 PM on Thursday, August 1, 2024 at the Holland Civic Center (*remarks at 5:30 PM).

Frank's family is grateful for his loving and dedicated caregivers at Freedom Village, and the medical team at Holland Hospital who provided excellent treatment and then ensured his peaceful farewell.

Memorial contributions may be given to Mobility Worldwide (<https://mobilityworldwide.org/affiliates/michigan-west-michigan/>) or to the Holland Community Ice-Skating Park ([https://hzcfcf.iphiview.com/hzcfcf/FundAccess/OnlineDonation/tabid/542/dispatch/contribution_id\\$165640_hash\\$c5c056199be6271675e4b7bb118cead95f25e097/Default.aspx](https://hzcfcf.iphiview.com/hzcfcf/FundAccess/OnlineDonation/tabid/542/dispatch/contribution_id165640_hashc5c056199be6271675e4b7bb118cead95f25e097/Default.aspx)).

Arrangements are by Langeland-Sterenberg Funeral Home, 315 East 16th St. Holland, MI, 49423. To leave condolences online, please visit www.langelandssterenberg.com.

Cemetery Details

Pilgrim Home Cemetery

370 E. 16th St.
Holland, MI 49423

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

AUG 1. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

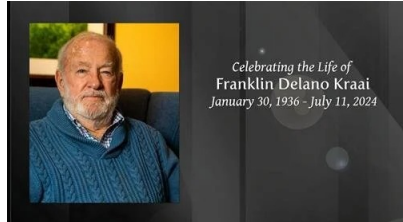
Holland Civic Center
150 W 8th St
Holland, MI 49423

**Remarks at 5:30 PM*

Tribute Wall



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Frank Kraai*



Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes - January 28 at 12:57 PM

SK

“ *Frank Kraai remembered his roots in Olive Township with a donation to OTHS just weeks before he passed away. The brick and mortar cornerstone from the namesake home of Frans Kraai and wife, Elizabeth Siersema Kraai on 112th Avenue in Olive Township will be forever remembered as our Frank Kraai, the educator, the philanthropist and friend of so many! Thank you to Frank's family for sharing this piece of history with OTHS. We are forever grateful! Olive Township Historical Society*

Sandy Karsten - August 03, 2024 at 12:20 PM

IS

“ *Kathleen and Irvin Smith: we were planning to attend the memorial but are not able to due to current health issues. Frank was the best cousin and because of him we were able to stay in contact by meeting for monthly golf outings that Frank organized for the North Holland gang for multiple years. He will be truly missed but always remembered. Thank you LaVonne for everything you've done for Frank during this difficult time.*

irvin and Kathleen Smith - July 31, 2024 at 05:29 PM

DY

“ *Such a wonderful man, my sympathies to the Kraai family. He was a special gift to the Holland area.*

Debra Yonker-Hecht - July 27, 2024 at 11:38 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Frank Kraai.*



July 22, 2024 at 03:53 PM

-T

“ - *The Courtyard Downtown Holland Team planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Frank Kraai.*

- The Courtyard Downtown Holland Team - July 22, 2024 at 03:53 PM

DM

“ *Mr Kraai was one of my favorite elementary teachers at Waukazoo Elementary! He had a way if making every child feel special! I remember bringing Mr Kraai a Christmas present to his apartment on Ottawa Beach road and my parents talking as they were best friends! He will be missed but he leaves a great legacy.
Delores (Tootie) Tubbergen Smallegan*

Delores Meyer - July 21, 2024 at 09:46 PM

KA

“ Mr. Kraai was one of my favorite elementary teachers at Sheldon Woods. I remember him standing outside the door at recess, in the middle of winter, in just a short sleeve shirt, laughing and talking with us kids. He made school an amazing place to learn. Mr. Kraai will always hold a special place in my heart, and his legacy will continue to influence the lives of many. My deepest condolences to his family.

Kathy (Smith) Davis

Kathy - July 19, 2024 at 11:05 AM

NJ

I was a secretary at Sheldon Woods School. When Frank came into the office he always had a great greeting. I enjoyed him so much. At Christmas time I would take my very young grandsons to see Santa (Frank). He always make a big deal showing his love to them. Frank was a person that would make a person feel good even if that person wasn't having a good day. Blessings to you Frank.

Nyela De Jong - July 19, 2024 at 07:58 PM

LS

“ I'm so sad to hear of Frank's passing and honored to have known him as a mentor, friend, and colleague. Frank was my college supervisor from Hope College during my student teaching experience at North Holland Elementary School in West Ottawa. Frank was always a huge support, so positive and energetic every time we met. His support, enthusiasm, challenges, and zest for life had a profound impact on me and the way that I approached my teaching and coaching career the past 31 years. I enjoyed seeing Frank during my time as a teacher in other classrooms and around the community. He was a tremendous ambassador for educators, the Holland community, and great model of kindness and generosity to all people. I'm so thankful to have had Frank's influence on my life.

Lee Schopp - July 17, 2024 at 09:00 AM

DI

“ I was Frank's housekeeper on Copper. He always greeted every woman with "Hello my dear." And told everybody that worked there they were the "hardest working person." I always told him there's a lot of hard-working people.. Frank will be missed by everyone.

Dee Ann Immormino - July 14, 2024 at 11:06 PM

LP

Mr. Kraai was my 6th grade teacher back in Beechwood School. He was one of the best teachers I had. We met up again later in life working with him in different capacities in various organizations he was involved in. You couldn't ask for a more generous, compassionate and all round great guy. He put a smile on your face by just saying hello with a twinkle in his eye. We lost a good person when Frank passed. RIP you will be sadly missed.

Lynn and Carol Petre - July 16, 2024 at 02:26 PM

TF

“ I knew Frank from his days in the Holland Community Chorale. IN those days he was the backbone of the organization. I am sorry to hear of his passing. His legacy will live for decades in Holland. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Thomas Mark Folkert - July 14, 2024 at 07:16 PM

NV

“ Mr.Kraai was my all-time favorite elementary teacher. He made school an amazing place to be and learn and also thrive . He will always be fondly remembered. Nancy Vanderbilt

Nancy Vanderbilt - July 14, 2024 at 11:19 AM

D.

“ Mr. Kraai was my teacher in elementary school. He was sharp, witty and always snapping his fingers and saying "Look here... I'm the big cheese" I imagine it was hard trying to keep everyones attention working thru those math lessons. He absolutely gave more than he ever took from this community. I hope he knew how many lives he touched. In my heart he was truly Mr. Hollands Opus.

D.Davis - July 13, 2024 at 10:55 AM

CI

“ Frank was a great guy whose presence could light up the room... his FV family and friends will miss him dearly☐
We always loved the excitement and big smile on his face when he'd be returning back to FV in his hard hat ,after checking on the ice skating rink.
Our deepest sympathy is extended to your entire family
Roger Borr
Jim, Carin and Davis Von Ins

Carin Von Ins - July 13, 2024 at 08:23 AM