



Paul VanFaasen

October 8, 1934 - October 8, 2015

Paul VanFaasen, 81, of Holland, died peacefully on October 8, 2015 at The Inn at Freedom Village. Paul graduated from Holland Christian High School in 1952 and Hope College in 1956. After serving two years in the army, he began his career teaching at Hope College in 1963, serving in the Biology Department until his retirement in 1997. Education was always important to Paul. Although he specialized in botany and plant systematics, his true calling was to serve the students and colleagues with whom he worked. He also served eight years on the Board of Education for Holland Public Schools and many years with the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District. He was also a long-time member of First Presbyterian Church of Holland. Following his retirement, he served as a board member and one of the founders of the Outdoor Discovery Center Macatawa Greenway. He also enjoyed spending time with the Evergreen Commons Stamp Club, Hope Academy of Senior Professionals (HASP), and his grandchildren. Paul was a man who could easily relate to others, and he truly cared about his family and community. Paul was preceded in death by his sister and brother-in-law, Maria and Hans Walters. Paul is survived by his: Wife of 57 years

Janice VanFaasen Sons

Bill and Susan VanFaasen of Kaukauna, WI

Carl and Pam VanFaasen of Holland Grandchildren

Neil VanFaasen

Cora VanFaasen Sisters

Ella Von Ins of Pleasanton, CA

Jane Ruitter of Spring Lake In-Laws

Betsy and Eric Mihan of Kennebunk, ME

Barbara and George Fanke of Loveland, CO

Susan and Randy Kreps of Lake Monticello, VA An outdoor memorial service is planned for 4:00pm Friday, October 16 under the Pavilion at the Outdoor Discovery Center Macatawa Greenway, A-4214 56th St., Holland, with Rev. Linda Knieriemen officiating. An indoor reception will follow inside the newly opened Visitors Center. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Outdoor Discovery Center Macatawa Greenway.

Tribute Wall



“ *Paul VanFaasen*

August 31, 2022 at 01:26 PM



“ *"Jan and Family: So sorry for your loss. Ann and I were both students of Paul while at Hope. I can still remember his holding a review session for our first Intro Biology exam and Paul stated before we started that the review session will continue until someone asked "will this be on the exam" at which point we'd be done. I freely admit that I've stolen that line and used it myself for my classes. He had a real passion for his field of study and am happy to claim him as both as a teacher and a colleague."*

Tony Nieuwkoop - November 03, 2015 at 12:00 AM



“ *"I feel a tremendous amount of sadness as I write this, but also an incredible amount of positive memories. I was a theater student at Hope in the early 80s. While taking biology for non-majors with Dr Van Faasen, I felt an urge to change my major to Biology. I was nervous about changing majors, wasn't sure how that worked. I remember cornering Dr Van Faasen and asking if it was possible. His smile and assurance helped me make one of the most important decisions I ever made. I continued to study biology and am now a professor. He made a huge difference in my life. I recall field trips in plant taxonomy classes, making my plant press, making microscope slides in plant anatomy, and using his study guides in the lab on week nights. I am grateful for his guidance and instruction. Paul will be missed."*

Tom Byl - October 16, 2015 at 12:00 AM

LH

“I was a student in Dr. VanFaasen's botany class and even though it was a long time ago, I remember his enthusiasm for teaching. He left the world a greener place. My thoughts and prayers are with his family.”

Liz H - October 16, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DD

“Carl, Bill, and Mrs. VanFaasen, Maybe Carl and Bill remember, as I had a Dad who was a Professor (Chemistry) at Hope College as well, how much fun it could be to be "little P.K.'s" - (Professor's Kids), and "hang around" with our Dad's at the College and see and experience what they do/did! Not everybody's Dad's made their living this way, and so we got to be kinda "special little guys" around all the parts of Hope's campus, in our younger days, and, when the College had a whole lot less of a Security Team. Hope Faculty Picnics, etc, etc, etc. Enjoying the, then brand new DeWitt Cultural Center, complete with a bowling alley in the basement, and pinball games, really, meant for the "Bigger Kids"...the ones paying deep tuition to be there! I remember your Dad showing me around Biology on my many trips on up to the Chemistry Floor above to visit my Dad. Your Dad always had something fascinating and new from the out-of-doors to show me...and he could answer any and every question I could come up with about it too! You might remember the Biology Museum that the Biology Staff built in about the middle of the department, with the offices kind of surrounding it. I would go through it by myself to see what was new, and then run and find your Dad, or/and Jerry Duceau, to answer my many questions in the Museum. Memories!!! Good and treasured ones...though your Dad is, "for a moment", gone, we WILL see him again one day, and in the meantime, nothing and NO-ONE can take his warm smile, assuring voice, and things we remember and loved about him from us...those are OURS TO KEEP! Friends, David D. Williams.”

David D - October 14, 2015 at 12:00 AM

AB

“I took Dr. VanFaasen's plant systematics class when I was a biology major at Hope College. It was in this class that I determined I was to be an ecologist. I remember the moment distinctly, we were visiting one of his favorite bogs. We had been warned about snakes and other biting critters. I was thigh deep in mud and I had the revelation that 'people get paid to do this'. It was Dr. VanFaasen's passion for his topic and dedication to teaching that helped me reach that conclusion. He remains one of my favorite memories of Hope College. My thoughts go out to his family. Of course they know he was a very special man; I want them to know he was special to me, too.

Anne Bartuszevige, Hope College alum and Plant Ecologist.”

Anne Bartuszevige - October 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DO

“We will miss Paul's friendly smile around the neighborhood and at Evergreen Commons, especially on Trivia night! Thoughts and prayers are with the whole family. May God grant you His peace throughout the coming days.”

Diane and Carl Oberlin - October 11, 2015 at 12:00 AM

HM

“Carl, so very sorry to hear of your dad's passing. He has left quite a legacy. Prayers for peace and comfort during your time of grief.”

Holly Moore McKee - October 11, 2015 at 12:00 AM

TE

“I am so sorry to hear of your loss. Paul was such a wonderful man, and he was incredibly generous with his time when I started teaching at Hope. He gave me guidance on teaching my classes, and he showed me all of his favorite botany sites so that I could take students to them as well. I am glad to be one of the many people who benefitted from Paul's kind spirit. You will all be in my thoughts and prayers.”

Tim Evans - October 10, 2015 at 12:00 AM

MR

“My condolences to all of the Van Faasen family on the loss of such a matriarch. Its not easy losing anyone but please find comfort in all the lives he touched over the years. Thoughts and prayers are with all of you during this difficult time.”

Melissa Ramirez - October 10, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JM

“My sincere thoughts and prayers to all of Paul's family at this time. May you all find comfort and strength from your family and friends during these days. Blessings, Janet Morrow”

Janet Morrow - October 10, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DL

“My thoughts and prayers are with you all. I am saddened but fondly remember his volunteer work with me at the Holland Museum. I looked forward to his arrival and his time spent in the archives. He could always make me smile.”

Deborah L - October 09, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JM

“*I'm so sorry for your loss. I know how hard it is to lose a parent. We're thinking of and praying for you and your family.*”

Jackie McDonald - October 09, 2015 at 12:00 AM