



## Waino Aukee

October 17, 1931 - March 21, 2023

Waino Eric Aukee, age 91, passed away on March 21, 2023, in Zeeland, Michigan, after a long struggle with pulmonary fibrosis. His life was full of joy, curiosity, love for family, faithfulness, learning and gratitude for many lively adventures around the world.

Waino is survived by his dear wife of nearly 20 years, Carolyn Watson Aukee, and his children, Anita Johnson and husband Keith, Eric Aukee and his wife Maria Hellman, Josef Aukee, and Linnea Nurmi and her husband Kevin, and his brother Henry Aukee. He is the beloved grandpa to Andrew and his wife Erfana, Carolina, Elisabeth, Esa, Matthew, Timo, and Paavo. Grandson Andrew's children Sybrand and Aisha Johnson are his two great-grandchildren. He is also the stepfather and grandfather to David, Jonathan, Peter, and Mary Watson and their families. Waino was married for 44 years to his first wife Sylvia Mae (Schipper) of Zeeland, Michigan who passed away in 1999. Waino is the son of Franz and Hulda Aukee of Ironwood Michigan. He is preceded in death by brothers and sisters Esther, Toivo, Wilho, Lauri, Esko, Edna, Arvo, Aune and Norma. Waino will be missed by countless Aukee and Schipper family nieces and nephews, in-laws and cousins.

Waino Eric Aukee was born in Ironwood, October 17, 1931, and he graduated from Luther L. Wright High School, Ironwood, MI, and he continued his education at Gogebic Community College in Ironwood. Waino attended

Eastern Michigan University, graduating in 1953 with his BA. He went on to graduate studies at Wayne State University, in Education, completing his academic work at the University of Michigan, earning both an MA and PhD in Education, and he served as an Adjunct professor in Education while working as a school principal in the Wayne-Westland school system.

Waino's early working years included memorable summers at Dairymen's Country Club in Boulder Junction, WI, and years at jewelry stores in Ironwood, Detroit and Ypsilanti. After completing his degree at Eastern Michigan University, he started his teaching and administrative careers with Wayne-Westland Schools, five years teaching and 27 years as an Elementary School principal. During his career in Wayne-Westland he was active in developing environmental education programs, was active in union leadership as a teacher, and was an inspired and supportive academic leader.

Waino and Sylvia were married in 1955. They moved into a home on Ash Street in Wayne, Michigan, where Waino and his family enjoyed growing and thriving in this community for nearly 30 years. Waino built work, community and neighborhood friendships as his family expanded in this loving and graceful home, full of events, celebrations and joy. Waino and Sylvia welcomed family, work colleagues, fellow church members and friends as their children grew and went on with that same curious spirit as their father to study at universities and colleges around the country and the world; seeking their fortune in new and different places. Waino loved to visit and share the interesting and various places his children and extended family lived. He shared that love of learning and curiosity with everyone he met, regaling and retelling stories of family members and friends who would bring him news of their accomplishments.

In 1985 Waino retired from the Wayne-Westland schools. He began a new career, also dedicated to education and reflecting his lifelong faith, as a

Missionary Educator with ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church In America) Global Missions in Lae, Papua New Guinea, where he served as the Principal at Balob Teachers College, and taught as a Lecturer, at the Martin Luther Seminary in Lae, Papua New Guinea. He was a Visiting scholar for one year at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN, and he loved traveling around Michigan to share stories about his time in Papua New Guinea when he retired to Holland, Michigan in 1993. Waino worked for a few years in the Holland schools as a substitute teacher and relished his time in the classroom, always inspired by the act of teaching, perhaps his greatest gift.

This calling to be a Missionary Educator grew from his early experiences in the church and camping where he remembers an inspirational visit about Papua New Guinea from a visitor to his summer catechism camp. He shared later in life that he had made a commitment that very summer, that when and if he could, he would take his passion and diligence and serve the church in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

Waino was blessed to live in the Idlewood neighborhood in Holland for over 20 years and his children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, in laws and friends were frequent visitors for fun, food and fellowship. His grandchildren enjoyed the beaches north of the state park for many summers. Waino and Carolyn enjoyed seasonal gatherings, and friendships over those many years before they moved to Royal Park Place in Zeeland. Waino served as a guide on the Tulip Trolley for many years during Tulip Time and embraced his Western Michigan lifestyle.

Throughout his life, Waino was involved in many civic, cultural and community activities, and his connections to his church families were always very important. Waino was an active member of Kiwanis for many years, and a Rotary Club member while in Papua New Guinea. He loved music, especially

singing, he participated in music programs in high school and sang in church choirs, served as a song leader for civic groups and especially enjoyed singing with the Finlandia Chorus in Detroit spending 7 years with this unique institution. When he moved to Holland, Waino joined the HASP organization at Hope College – and enjoyed many years of HASP activities, serving as the program director and VP of the group at times, and was a longtime participant in the Non-Fiction Reading group.

This cultural and community service appetite was shared by Waino with his children. His children studied music and over the years each have contributed to their communities and cultural institutions in their own creative way but very much like their father. Waino loved and supported community arts and music. He followed friends and students in local program, encouraged and enjoyed following his children and extended family across the country and overseas to hear concerts and see performances.

Being involved in church was at the heart of his life with many active years at Prince of Peace Lutheran, Westland, MI, including serving as council president, congregational leadership Adult Bible class teacher and choir member. Waino was also member of Peace Lutheran in Holland, MI, and later joined the Harderwyk Ministries Celebration congregation in Holland, MI.

Along with his work, faith life, and focus on education Waino also loved bowling, golf, reading, jigsaw puzzles, travel (including global travel to PNG, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Europe and England) and most of all his family. Waino passionately photographed the many adventures that he, Sylvia and the kids took early in their family life and created memorable evenings of slide shows in the living room on Ash Street in Wayne; later he would share throughout the region photos, slides and artifacts from his work and travels in PNG. His love of learning was seen in everything he did, every conversation he shared and every story he told. Waino was a blessing and a joy to all, and

he will be treasured in memory by all whose lives he touched.

Donations can be made in Waino's behalf to ELCA Global Mission or Global Health Ministries.

The family wants to thank Hospice of Holland and everyone at Royal Park Place.

A funeral service for Waino will be held at 11:00 AM, on Saturday, March 25, 2023, at Harderwyk Ministries, 1627 W. Lakewood Blvd., Holland, MI 49424. Visiting hours will be from 4-7 PM on Friday, March 24, at the Yntema Funeral Home, 251 S. State Street, Zeeland. [www.yntemafh.com](http://www.yntemafh.com)

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR **24**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Yntema Funeral Home  
251 S State St  
Zeeland , MI 49464  
(616) 772-2173  
info@yntemafh.com  
<http://langelandsterenberg.com/>

## Funeral Service

MAR **25**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Harderwyk Ministries  
1627 West Lakewood Blvd.  
Holland, MI 49424

## Live Streaming of Service

MAR **25**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Harderwyk Ministries  
1627 West Lakewood Blvd.  
Holland, MI 49424

[www.harderwyk.com/wainoaukee](http://www.harderwyk.com/wainoaukee)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Waino Aukee funeral service in memory of Waino Aukee*



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**Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes** - March 23, 2023 at 11:51 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Waino Aukee.*



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March 24, 2023 at 11:37 PM



“ *My deepest condolences to the Aukee family. Mr. Aukee was a kind man to his son's high school friends and I have fond memories of conversations with him and Mrs. Aukee at WMHS events*

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**Ellen Scrimger Gordon** - March 24, 2023 at 01:34 PM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Waino Aukee.*



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March 24, 2023 at 12:50 PM

AP

“ *What a remarkable life Waino lived! The obituary gave a just tribute to how God used him in His kingdom on earth. I, as did my husband, Jack, enjoyed being in Life Group with Carolyn and Waino. Waino's learning, curiosity and love of his Father in heaven were always evident. Waino and Carolyn extended gracious hospitality to all of us. Love and prayers to Carolyn and all of the family, some of whom I met not long ago at a birthday celebration for Waino. He is now at home with the Savior he served diligently on earth.*



Arden Ruth Post - March 24, 2023 at 09:19 AM



“ *Fiery Lily and Rose was purchased for the family of Waino Aukee.*



March 24, 2023 at 07:01 AM



“ *Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Waino Aukee.*



March 24, 2023 at 01:00 AM



“ *Tender Tribute was purchased for the family of Waino Aukee.*



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March 24, 2023 at 12:26 AM



“ *Kauser, Peter, Susan, and Colin purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Waino Aukee.*



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**Kauser, Peter, Susan, and Colin** - March 23, 2023 at 03:45 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Waino Aukee.*



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March 23, 2023 at 01:53 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Waino Aukee.*



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March 23, 2023 at 10:06 AM

DW

“ *Dave, Judy, William and Andrew Watson purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Waino Aukee.*



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**Dave, Judy, William and Andrew Watson** - March 23, 2023 at 08:58 AM



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Waino Aukee.*



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March 22, 2023 at 08:47 PM