



Alfred A. Gay

September 10, 1953 - May 9, 2020

LEXINGTON- Alfred A. Gay of Lexington, MI, who was a beloved professor at St. Clair County Community College for more than a decade, died suddenly May 9, 2020, after a valiant battle with brain cancer. He was 66.

Alfred was born Sept. 10, 1953, in Osnabrueck, Germany, and immigrated as a boy with his mother, Anne, to the United States, settling in the Seattle area.

As a young man, he returned to Germany numerous times to visit his extended family and travel throughout Europe. He graduated in 1971 from Cascade High School in Everett, Washington, and went on to receive bachelor and master of fine arts degrees from the University of Washington in Seattle. During college, he took a year off to study at the Goethe Institute in Germany and work at the family inn and bakery in Glandorf.

He married his wife, Katherine, in 1975 after meeting her at a Halloween party near the university. He was a clown and she was a cavewoman. He mistakenly called her Karen and she called him Albert for months when they passed on campus until they realized they were soulmates on New Year's Eve, 1974. They were married for almost 45 years.

Alfred studied printmaking in college and owned and operated an art gallery and picture framing business in Seattle before he and his wife moved to Germany in 1987. He worked as a picture framer in Munich until becoming a stay-at-home dad after the birth of their son, Alex, in 1988. They moved that year to central Germany, where Kathy worked for The European Stars and Stripes. Their daughter, Helen, was born in 1990. The family returned to the

States in 1996 to pursue job opportunities in the Port Huron area.

Shortly after moving to Michigan, Alfred began teaching at SC4. Over the years, he taught German, studio art classes and art history, in addition to working at Proper Framing in Port Huron. He loved art and sharing its wonders, inspiring countless students with his firsthand experiences in Germany and from visiting famous art museums throughout Europe. He was a prolific artist in his own right, specializing in printmaking, drawing and painting. Alfred also was a deeply committed Christian who lived his faith daily, serving as a longtime elder at Faith Lutheran Church in Port Huron.

Ever devoted to his family, Alfred made sure every day that they knew he loved them. He also doted on the family's many rescue pets. He loved good beer, bad jokes, great movies, golf and grilling, as well as working on the family's pre-Civil War farmhouse, often with his son-in-law, Josh.

Alfred spread grace and good humor no matter the circumstances and remained quintessentially himself until the last: radiating kindness, can-do optimism and a certainty that God was right beside him.

Alfred is survived by his loving wife, Kathy; children, Alex (Susie) Gay, of Milan, MI, and Helen (Josh) Zoerhof, of Des Plaines, IL; mother, Anne Gay, of Lexington, MI; brother-in-law, Steve Boyer, and sister-in-law, Reri MacLean, of North Bend, WA; and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and other extended family in Germany, California, Colorado and Washington state. Alfred is preceded in death by his father, Robert Gay.

A memorial service will be held 2 PM Saturday, September 25, 2021 at Faith Lutheran Church, 3455 Stone St., Port Huron, Michigan 48060. Visitation will be held 1-2 PM prior to the service. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Faith Lutheran Church, or to The Detroit Institute of Arts, at <https://www.dia.org/support/donate/tribute-memorial-giving>.

Previous Events

Service

SEP **25.** 2:00 PM (ET)

Faith Lutheran Church
3455 Stone St.
Port Huron, MI 48060

Tribute Wall



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Alfred A. Gay.* ”



September 13, 2021 at 08:36 PM



“ *I'm so sorry for the families lost. I'm thankful that I had the chance to enjoy his class and stories about Surprise his cat. Rest In Peace Professor Gay* ”

Jordan Martin-Nichols - May 21, 2020 at 01:34 AM



“ *My deepest condolences to the Family, Rest in Peace my Friend.* ”

John Hubbarth - May 19, 2020 at 12:18 PM



“ *He was an amazing teacher and very patient. He would take a genuine interest in the history videos I would be watching before class. Always soft spoken and had a smile on his face(even at a 9pm class). Condolences to the family. Know he will be remembered fondly.* ”

Justin Martin - May 17, 2020 at 11:40 PM



“ I was deeply saddened to hear of Alfred's passing. He and I had a few short conversations over the years. Two pieces of his work adorn the walls in my house. His "Nie Wieder " work which I received as a gift struck a particularly powerful chord in my heart. I lived in what was West Berlin for three years and his work brought back the anger, fear, and frustration of the Wall -- helping me appreciate how far we'd come and how much we must prevent the kind of hurt the wall put upon people, families, and the soul of a nation.

We'll be poorer without his warmth in our world.

My deepest condolences,

joe vandervest

Joe Vandervest - May 17, 2020 at 12:58 PM

AM

“ We feel fortunate to have known Alfred during his years living in Frankish Crumbach, Germany. We had arrived there from England, not long before they arrived. We were so happy when Alfred, Kathy and Alex moved in next door, and felt even happier when we discovered what a lovely family they were. We can honestly say that our few years in Germany were made so much more special through knowing this wonderful family. When you are a long way from family, friends mean that much more.

Alfred was the stay at home father and I was the stay at home mum (Alison). I remember Alfred as a devoted father, the perfect model of parenthood. I was impressed by his constant calmness and consistency. Going to play in his back yard was always fun and there would often be a number of neighbourhood children there. If any needed disciplining, he would do so firmly, quietly and with kindness. He was always so kind. Children responded to this immediately.

I saw him as a wise man and I respected his opinion on things. If I was unsure of something, whether it was how to deal with German society or children, I could talk to him, and he would have sound, significant advice. He was so reliable!

Alfred was a supportive friend. One night, Rod (my husband), was pacing the floor in a great deal of pain. It was about 2 am in the morning. I didn't hesitate to call next door. They were still up watching a movie! Alfred didn't hesitate. He was around in seconds, getting Rod in the car and off to hospital. During the next few days, he would look after our children if I wanted to visit Rod at the hospital without them. He was a staunch and caring friend.

I have a clear picture of him walking down the street with his two children and their much loved dog Drifty, going for a post nap walk to the park. How we loved to join that happy group!

Dear Kathy and family,

We send you our love and our prayers, trusting you will find comfort in the many treasured memories of this precious man.

Alison and Rod

Alison Monk - May 16, 2020 at 02:04 PM

RM

“ *Hi Cathy, Rod Monk here from Vancouver. I was really sorry to hear this news. Alfred was special.*

Actually one of the highlights of our German experience was our neighbours that we shared a wall with. It was great that we briefly reconnected by phone a few months ago.

Loved the obituary BTW. Reminded me that life is short and you must make the most of it, as Alfred surely did.

*Best wishes to you and family going forward,
Rod.*

Rod Monk - May 16, 2020 at 12:08 PM

MP

“ *I worked with Alfred for several years at SC4 and he taught my sisters when they were students there. He was such a kind man. He always had a smile on his face and a nice thing to say. I'm offering prayers of comfort for his family today.*

Mary Piechowski

Mary Piechowski - May 16, 2020 at 09:45 AM

AM

“ *He was one of my all-time favorite teachers*

Ashley Moore - May 15, 2020 at 09:23 PM

KW

“ Alfred was always smiling and happy whenever I saw him. Very caring. I will miss his smiles whenever I saw him at church. Always enjoyed the bible classes he was in, very knowledgeable person. RIP my friend and brother in Christ.



Kathy Weaver - May 15, 2020 at 07:19 PM

CB

“ I am so sorry to hear this. I remember Mr. Gay when he bought his home in Lexington. He was kind, always had a smile and a good word. I am so sorry for your loss. Rest easy Mr. Gay, I was happy to know you.

Cindy Bartle - May 15, 2020 at 06:56 PM

SS

“ Kathy I am so sorry that we all lost Alfred. You have both been a part of our loving family at Faith. I have always thought that you are such nice people. You and your whole family have been in our prayers and will continue to be. Please hang on to God. Sending you so much love. Dan and Sandra Smith.

Sandra Smith - May 15, 2020 at 04:24 PM

LH

“ Mr. Gay was one of my teachers at SC4. I always looked forward to his classes, and enjoyed his gentle approach to teaching. He was always encouraging and I felt that he enjoyed sharing his passion for creating and appreciating art. He and I also loved driving our Volvos. I will always remember Mr. Gay. I am sorry for his family's loss.

Lindsay Hayosh - May 15, 2020 at 04:12 PM

AG

“ 11 files added to the album *Photos of Alfred*



Alex Gay - May 15, 2020 at 01:03 PM