



Gregory Van Hee

October 18, 1940 - August 30, 2016

Gregory J. Van Hee passed away on August 30, 2016 after a valiant battle with Acute Myelogenous Leukemia. Greg was born to Jules and Vera (Deutz) Van Hee in Marshall, Minnesota, on October 18, 1940. In Marshall he attended Holy Redeemer Grade School and graduated from Central Catholic High School in 1958. After high school he attended St. Cloud State College and graduated with a secondary teaching degree. Later he would also spend enough summers at Mankato State College to earn a Master's Degree in American Literature.

Upon graduation from college, Greg planned on attending William Mitchell Law School in the Twin Cities, but first he needed to teach long enough to support those plans. His first teaching job was in Minneota, Minnesota, for five great years, where he fell in love with kids and teaching and decided to make teaching his life's work. On June 6 of 1964, Greg was united in marriage to Judy Lane Smith, the love of his life and mother to his children, Tonya and Justin. The summer of 1968 found Greg, Judy and their baby daughter moving back home to Marshall, where he would teach for thirty-one more wonderful years and retire at the end of the school year in 1999. While at Marshall Mr. Van Hee taught 10th and 12th graders English, literature and advanced writing. His last years there he also served as chairman of the English Department, a joy he always recalled because of the excellent teachers with whom he strived to make that department as good as it possibly

could be.

In Marshall Mr. Van Hee also held many other positions. He worked with declamation, school plays, curriculum committees, 9th grade football, and Student Council for several years. For him, the success of his students was a lifetime interest. In 1996 Greg was voted Marshall's Teacher of the Year by his peers and in 1997 was selected Southwest Minnesota's Teacher of the Year, as well as the same honor from Wal-Mart. That same year he was a semi-finalist in Minnesota's Teacher of the Year. The greatest honor for him, however, was to be elected to Marshall's Tiger Hall of Fame as an outstanding educator in 2005.

Greg is survived by his beloved wife of Perham; daughter, Dr. Tonya (Steve) of Minneapolis, son, Justin (Debi) of Minneapolis; and granddaughters, Sydney, Lael and Natalie; siblings, Colleen Dandurand (late Gordon) of Anthem, AZ and Steve (Diane) of Watertown, SD. He was preceded in death by his parents; sister, Antoinette; many aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews.

During his retirement, Greg moved to Big Pine Lake in north central Minnesota, where he pursued his loves for fishing, reading and writing.

Greg did not desire a public service but just a private family gathering to celebrate his passing.

Memorials preferred to Marshall Senior High School.

Tribute Wall



“ I graduated in '95. Mr I. Van Hee was one of my favorite teachers. He knew I was nuts about fantasy and sci-fi, and every summer he'd lend me a stack of books to read. Those books were a huge influence on me and I actually ended up adapting one of them to a film many years later as a professional writer. I doubt he had any idea what an impact he made on me or on a host of other students. Safe travels, Mr. Van Hee.

Henry Jones - April 15, 2020 at 09:30 PM



“ I was a student of Mr. Van Hee in (I believe) 1980. He was one of my favorite teachers during my 4 years at MHS. He had a great sense of humor and always treated everyone fairly and with respect. I often share the great memories of his class with fellow classmates and with my husband, who also had him as a teacher. My sympathy goes to all of your family and friends who will miss him most. Take care and we'll remember you all in our prayers.

Sincerely,
Denise Cadwell Buesing
MHS Class of '82

Denise Buesing - September 08, 2016 at 05:46 PM

RM

“ For Judy and Family.....

I swapped many stories with Gregg and am pained to add another. B.J. Thomas was performing at Flandreau, and I caught him with my son, Brian. He made a statement, "We are all eternal spirits, enduring a human experience".. That meant a lot to me, and helps explain why I know that Gregg lives on in all of us who knew him. Thanks, Gregg. Peace.....

Ron and Marge Mann

Ronald W Mann - September 07, 2016 at 11:31 AM

JB

“ *My children had Mr Van Hee for their teacher...my boy struggled with his subject but Mr Van Hee greatly helped him CHALLENGED him and my son grew to deeply deeply respect Mr Van Hee Thank you for your great dedication t the students Mr Van Hee You were a gentle Jesus to these children...Rest in peace*

J L Boerboom

J Boerboom - September 04, 2016 at 08:29 PM



“ *I am so very sorry for your loss. I can still picture the exact room at Marshall Senior High with Mr Van Hee teaching the class. He had such a positive impact on my life and other students.*

Robin Dreyer - September 04, 2016 at 09:23 AM

TG

“ When he taught you literature, he also taught you history. When he taught you communication, he also taught you psychology. When he taught you writing, he also taught you critical thinking. No matter what he taught you, above all other things, he taught you humanity and compassion. And to think that he did all of this in a small classroom in rural Minnesota! He married his sweetheart, raised his kids, and quietly changed the lives of hundreds of students. Then he sent us out to change the world. He was the wisest, truest lesson in how to live a meaningful life. I loved him deeply, and my heart breaks for Judy and Tonya and Justin. I'm so sorry he's gone.

Tenessa Gemelke - September 04, 2016 at 07:33 AM

DA

“ My heart is broken at the loss of my dear mentor; what a gentle giant of a man. May his beloved angels and saints comfort all family and friends...and may Greg throw a few erasers at Heavenly intercoms that dare interrupt his musings. I promise to vote for Hillary for you, My Friend.

Deb Ahmann

Deb Ahmann - September 03, 2016 at 10:53 PM



“ As a director for high school plays and as a teacher, he possessed enthusiasm and drive. So glad to see the many awards he received. He was interesting and interested in his students and not afraid to apply a 'kick in the pants' when it was due. I'm sure many past students are thinking of how he made Marshall High a true place of learning. Condolences and good wishes to his family & friends who will miss him. SJ Flann



Susan Flann - September 03, 2016 at 10:15 PM

 Becky Haas

“ *Mr. Van Hee was one of three reasons I obtained a degree in English (in addition to Mrs. Ahmann and JB). I was thankful for the chance to reconnect and let him know how influential he was in my life.*

Becky Haas - September 03, 2016 at 07:37 PM

SW

“ *I've always been proud to be a Minnesotan especially when I read in the star tribune the well thought out and well articulated "letters to the editor." Greg was published many times. I could tell halfway through that it was Greg because his letters were among the best there were.*

Steve Walters - September 03, 2016 at 09:58 AM

CS

“ *I never had Greg as a teacher, but worked with him for many years at MHS. Passionate and a great colleague. Rest in peace Greg and condolences to you and your family.*

cathy schlagel - September 03, 2016 at 09:22 AM

KD

“ *Mr. VanHee was the kind of teacher that believed you were capable of more than we believed in our selves and made literature fun. From the class of 1978, respect and condolences.*

Kirsty (Gladis) Deslauriers - September 03, 2016 at 01:08 AM

BF

“ *Great teacher! He changed the lives of many with his passion, patience and humor! Heartfelt sympathy to his family. He touched a lot of hearts and minds!*

Bonna (Burgess) Fischer - September 03, 2016 at 12:53 AM



“ *He was well liked in the community, as well as in high school and at the university. He will be sorely missed by many. Thoughts and condolences to his family and friends on his passing.....*

Jason D. Smith - September 03, 2016 at 12:12 AM



“ *All I can say is cowboy boots and that I was glad to get to know Mr. Van Hee differently via Facebook the past couple of years. Very, very sorry. He left a mark on many of us.*

Felice Amato - September 02, 2016 at 11:19 PM



“ *He gave me an appreciation for music as poetry. Can't listen to a Simon and Garfunkel or Bob Dylan song without a thought of Mr. VanHee's high school english class. Still makes me smile... Carrie "Colvin" Jones, Class of 1981.*

Carrie Jones - September 02, 2016 at 10:21 PM

DU

“ He made our English Literature class very passionate and exciting which made it easier for us to learn.

This is from the prophet Mosiah 18: 9 from the Book of Mormon

"9 Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life--"

Class of '98 Marshall High

Dan Udeck - September 02, 2016 at 10:14 PM

JO

“ My sincere condolences to Mr. Van Hee's family. He was an incredible teacher and touched many lives. I remember his class fondly. He had such great insight into the personalities of the students.

- Jon Olson , class of '79

Jon Olson - September 02, 2016 at 09:45 PM

SW

“ Once we went fishing at Lake Hendricks and I caught four Walleyes & he caught one so he didn't talk to me all the way home. Very competitive. Course he outfished me plenty of times too.



Steve Walters - September 02, 2016 at 09:22 PM

JJ

“ As a member of the 1996 graduating class of Marshall High School I want to extend my deepest condolences to the family as Mr. Vanhee was one of my favorite teachers. I'm very sorry for your loss!

Jeremy Johnson - September 02, 2016 at 07:31 PM

BM

“ He was a great teacher and a great guy he will be missed. Sending thoughts and prayers to his family

Brent McMahon - September 02, 2016 at 07:21 PM

CK

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Carolyn Koskan - September 02, 2016 at 07:02 PM

NJ

“ He was one of the reasons I became a teacher. What a wonderful man.

Nicolle Johnston - September 02, 2016 at 06:13 PM

MC

“ Mr. Van Hee was a teacher I still talk about! He taught me so much about communication in 10th grade. It helps me yet today, these forty plus years later! He was so highly regarded and will be remembered with love.

Mary (Schreier) Chalmers

mary chalmers - September 02, 2016 at 05:34 PM

JB

“ *Such passion! Such a life force! Forever thankful for Greg's camaraderie and friendship through all the years we shared at MHS. His silenced voice is deafening . . . and heartbreaking.*

Jonna Bjornebo

Jonna Bjornebo - September 02, 2016 at 05:27 PM

KW

“ *Mr. VanHee was the best English teacher! I will never forget his passion for what he did. Prayers to his family.*

Kristi Wiese - September 02, 2016 at 05:11 PM

NR

“ *He was a great teacher and a nice guy. Best in the department*

Nancy Reisdorfer - September 02, 2016 at 04:10 PM

TG

“ *I was privileged to be one of Mr. Van Hee's students in Minneota and later a fellow teacher in Marshall Public Schools. As a student, I thought I was something, Mr. Van Hee was not impressed. As fellow Marshall faculty members and Marshall Education Association members, our paths would cross. When he looked at me, he still shook his head, but he did it with that Van Hee smile! A wonderful man, and a fantastic teacher has passed.*

*Tom Guttormsson
Minneota, Minnesota*

Tom Guttormsson - September 02, 2016 at 03:21 PM

LN

“*Mr. Van Hee was one of my favorite teachers at Marshall High School! I can't say the same about "English". . . God bless him for getting me through it! He was "one of those special people" that had a positive impact on me as a young person. Now as an adult, I look back and I am encouraged and inspired because of his patience, humor and considerate manner of teaching and guiding his students.*

He was a wonderful addition to my life and this world! His endearing smile and laugh will be missed!

*Lisa (Crow) Nelson
MHS Graduate 1977*

Lisa Nelson - September 02, 2016 at 12:33 PM

SD

Mr Van Hee was an awesome English teacher at Minneota High School before MHS teacher. He had a great impact on me and most of his students, it was his way of teaching, his inspiration and sense of humor that pulled us through! He has always been remembered by me and I am sure his Minneota students he taught. Awesome forever Mr Van Hee. Graduate of MHS 1967

Syl (Guza) DeBaere - September 03, 2016 at 12:15 AM

RW

I was fortunate enough to know Mr. Van Hee as a teacher and director. I was in the Barefoot In The Park production mentioned by Tim Como which was a wonderful experience and, as a new student at MHS, a great intro to the school. Mr. Van Hee contacted me a few years ago and it was nice to be able to express my appreciation while he was alive. My memories of him are fond ones. My condolences to his family.

Rand Whipple - September 03, 2016 at 05:05 PM


Sandie
Enger

He was one of my favorites. He shared his passion for words and lust for life with all his students. Sandie Thiesse Class of 1985

Sandie Enger - September 03, 2016 at 06:01 PM



Mr. Van Hee was one of my favorite teachers at MHS. He was always so kind to the "shy me" of the early 70's and his sense of humor inspired me just as much as his lesson plans. My condolences to his wife, children and extended family. I'm sure you're as proud of his legacy as he was. Rejoice in Paradise, Mr. Van Hee!

Wendy Andreen Fox, Class of '76 - September 04, 2016 at 01:44 AM