



Ronald Eugene Roels

February 26, 2020

“Obituaries are like book reports; they take the major plot-points of a story and list them in sequential order. To summarize the happenings in a person’s life in a few mere paragraphs is to leave out who they were and what their life was about. The last act taken in someone’s name should not be to strip them of their spirit and character. Not everyone gets a novel or an epic poem written about them, but everyone deserves to have the memory of who they were preserved.

So here begins the unconventional obituary of Ronald E. Roels, a loud, courageous force of a man who lived his life for love: love of hard work, the pursuit of wisdom, community, and family. He grew up with dedicated parents who taught him to act with purpose, pride, and passion. A self-proclaimed asshole, Ron was never afraid to speak up for what he believed in.

Ron committed his professional career to becoming an educator, teaching generations of young minds to think critically about the world around them. He vowed his personal life to keeping up with a woman who had his heart before their first date. Ron married Dona Munger on June 14, 1969 in Moline, Illinois. The two of them built a foundation of unconditional love for their children, who learned by example to lead their lives by following their own hearts.

Ron gave freely of his time and gifts to his community, generously investing in the people around him in the name of God and goodness. He had a talent for seeing the people in his life for who they were despite the noise of who they were trying to be. He always had a vote of confidence cloaked in crass humor for his friends, his unmistakable laugh inviting them to join in his fun.

Ron approached the difficult things in life with pragmatism, honesty, and enduring grit. He made the best of the good times and the bad, appreciating that everything in life has its season. Ron honored his past while welcoming new chapters openly. He faced uncertainty with problem-solving conviction.

As his life comes to a close, Ron's fiery attitude and fierce love lives on in his children and grandchildren. Their hearts will always ache for him, but his salient life lessons will persist through the time and space that momentarily separates them: to do what you love and surround yourself with the people you love." (Written in love by granddaughter, Katie, in gratitude of the immense impact he had on her life.)

Ronald Eugene Roels, age 73 died February 26, 2020 of a progressive neuromuscular disease of unknown origin. A Celebration of Life will be held later this summer. Ron will be deeply missed by his loving children, Suzanne (Dan) Woods of Savanna, Illinois and Benjamin Roels of Avon, Colorado; three grandchildren, Katie, Joey, and Adam Woods; and one brother-in-law, Doug Munger of Chicago, Illinois. Ron was preceded in death by the love of his life, Dona; and his parents, Mike and Edith Roels.

Comments



“ Eric & Kathy Dahlman lit a candle in memory of Ronald Eugene Roels



Eric & Kathy Dahlman - March 05 at 09:06 AM



“ Dear Family- I will miss sharing stories and many laughs about our teaching and coaching days. Always enjoyed Ron's company and have fond memories of working with Dona at Savanna High School. Prayers. Bill Wright

Bill Wright - March 05 at 08:10 AM



“ My condolences to the Roels family. We were good friends at MHS, WIU and after..

Tom Ahlstrand - March 02 at 01:44 PM



“ I was 10 years old when Ron married my Sister, Dona .. He scared me a lot as he was big, strong and loud .. As I got a little older .. and with the help of my parents .. who adored him .. I saw the true side of Ron... Yes, still LOUD .. but a Gentleman and a Gentle Man .. I thank Ron for being a good husband to my Sister and a passionate Teacher of USA History and Government .. He is reunited with his beloved wife now ... God Bless

Doug Munger - February 29 at 08:37 AM



“ Katie, what a well written memory of your grandfather. Prayers to you and you're family in your time of sorrow. Gone but never forgotten.

Norma Randecker - February 29 at 08:20 AM



“ So sorry for your loss! He was just an amazing man!!!



Theresa Farrell - February 29 at 05:22 AM



“ I met Ron when Suzanne and I were in high school. It was on the river. We had a blast. My husband had him as a teacher. " One of the good ones" Sorry For your loss. Your family is in our prayers



Amy & Mike Oudeker - February 28 at 11:55 PM



“ I am so sorry for your family's loss. Ron was quite the character. I could have killed him in high school as he laughed at me as I came dragging into class after having just swum a mile. I could have kissed him for how sweet he was when he let our 3 year old on the bus to see where his big sister sat. I learned he was a big softy at heart who always had a hug ready. Hugs and prayers.

Marna Geerts - February 28 at 07:33 PM



“ I always called him Grandpa Ron, although we were only friends, not relatives.. He was such a super nice guy. I got to know Gpa Ron at his grandchildren's activities, especially the sporting activities they were in with my own grandchildren. I also knew Dona for a little while and we were always going to go for coffee together, but never got it done. Both Ron and Dona were the best and I will miss them, esp at the sports activities. Love and Hugs to his family. Carolyn Appel

Carolyn Appel - February 28 at 05:40 PM



“ "unmistakable laugh".....when I went to visit him before Christmas, I asked him to just give me a good belly laugh. He obliged. Very thankful and blessed to know him. Love to all. Carol and Rob

Carol Canier - February 28 at 11:51 AM



“ Doctor Dan and Suzanne sorry for your loss. God Bless



Sherry hood - February 28 at 11:47 AM



“ Suzanne, Dan and family, I'm so very sorry to learn of Ron's passing. He had an impact on every person he met. May the wonderful memories you made with him bring you peace.

Ann Murphy - February 28 at 11:03 AM