



Mark Jay Horowitz

April 17, 1946 - September 13, 2023

Mark Jay Horowitz, longtime resident of Milwaukee's East Side, passed away on September 13, 2023. Mark was born in Queens, New York on April 17, 1946. His was a loving family of modest means but lots of passion - for education, for music and for social justice. He was educated in the NYC public schools and he was a staunch advocate of public education all of his life. He went to college at the University of Rochester, then joined Volunteers in Service to America and worked in Milwaukee's Latino community (he was fluent in Spanish). He took advantage of a Milwaukee Public School program that was recruiting college graduates without education degrees and training them "on the job" because of the severe teacher shortage in the 1960s. He thought he would "try it for a few years" but ended up finding his life's passion. He loved being a teacher and resisted multiple suggestions that he consider becoming a principal, because he never wanted to leave the classroom. He taught for 10 years at Keefe Avenue School and 35 years at Golda Meir School before retiring in 2013. He was an innovative educator who strove to provide meaningful experiences for his students, receiving multiple awards for his work. He is perhaps best known for establishing, in 1994, with longtime friend, Lis Faerch, a partnership between Golda Meir school and Dyssegardskolen, an elementary school outside of Copenhagen, where he would take his fourth-grade students for two weeks each year. The program resulted in lifelong trans-Atlantic friendships and many students, now adults, have described the trip as life-changing.

The only thing that Mark was more passionate about than teaching was his family. He and his wife, Mary, were married for 49 years. He was a loving and supportive partner, encouraging and enabling her to pursue her own career. He was a wonderful, very present father to their three children. He was the one who took them to Suzuki music lessons, dance lessons, theater rehearsals, sports and a myriad of other after-school activities. He coached their baseball, basketball and soccer teams. He adored his two grandchildren and loved reading to them, playing sports with them and listening to them play the piano. He was devoted to his parents and to his three siblings and was the kind of uncle who really wanted to know about what was going on in the lives of his nieces and nephews.

Mark was active in the community, coaching youth soccer even after his children had grown and serving for many years as Director of the East Region of the Milwaukee Kickers as well as volunteering with Lake Park Friends. He loved classical music, traveling and Vincent van Gogh.

Sadly, Mark was diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia in 2008, which forced him to retire in 2013 and which eventually took his life. Despite his dementia, Mark remained devoted to his family and was kind to and appreciative of the caretakers that he eventually needed - treating them as guests in his home. His family is very grateful for the staff from Horizon who made it possible for Mark to remain at home for most of his illness, especially Pam Guldán, who became a part of our family, and who continued to be with him almost daily after his condition required a move to Eastcastle Place. They are also grateful for the caring staff at Eastcastle who supported both Mark and his wife through the difficult final year of his life.

Mark is survived by his wife Mary (nee Maresca) Horowitz, his children, Jason (Kerry Burke), Sarah (Derek Ford) and Joe Horowitz, his grandchildren, Molly

and Finnegan, his siblings Miriam Meisler, Susan Horowitz, and Rey Horowitz (Gabrielle Prisco) and a large circle of extended family, friends and children whose lives he touched. The family requests that, in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Milwaukee Public Schools Foundation (Mark Horowitz-Golda Meir School Fund, 234 W. Galena Street, Milwaukee, 53212) or to Lake Park Friends (92975 N Lake Park Rd, Milwaukee 53211). There will be a celebration of Mark's life at Northshore Funeral Services Chapel on Saturday, October 7th with visitation from 1:30-3:00PM and a memorial service starting at 3:00 PM.

Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the album Paul Matzner



Northshore Funeral Services - January 25, 2024 at 10:33 AM

CT

“ I am just today (10/14/23) learning of the passing of this amazing educator. I have read the many tributes and concur with all of the fabulous things that have been said about him! I was fortunate enough to have been a student of his in 1978, to have all four of my children have him as a teacher, to have travelled as a chaperone with him to Denmark and then to be able to publish a book honoring his amazing Denmark program. My condolences to the Horowitz family. Thank you Mr. Horowitz. I am the Educator I am today because of the Educator he was!

Corey Thompson - October 14, 2023 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ I was a student of Mr Horowitz's in the 4th grade at Golda Meir. I was deeply saddened to hear of his passing, and wanted to honor his life with two stories. He made a huge difference in my life, and I'm sure dozens if not hundreds of other students. The world is infinitely better because of you Mr Horowitz. 1) In 4th grade, Mr Horowitz was the first teacher who ever really, truly, deeply believed in me. He immediately spotted my excitement for math and programming, breathed energy into my passion rather than normalize me, and empowered me to pursue both at my own speed of my voracious interest. Math: he let me self-study, I sat in the corner by myself during math class, and accomplished 3 years of math in a single year. Programming: he made up extra credit projects like building a game from scratch in basic, and let me "break the rules", so I could stay inside during recess to work on them :) In a world where sooo many students are squelched by our factory farm public school system, Mr Horowitz was one of the biggest influences in my early life. Thank you for believing in me, I will honor you always. 2) Much later in life as a young adult, I visited a retired Mr. Horowitz. My dad had passed away from a rare brain cancer, and I was missing a lot of guidance, father love, and approval. We caught up on life, shared years of updates like old friends... and at the end of our walk, he said he was proud of me. That I had blossomed from the young Jeremy he had taught, and was growing into a fine young man. It meant the world to me. Love and appreciate you forever Mr Horowitz.

Jeremy Carr - October 09, 2023 at 12:00 AM

JC

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So sad :(Loved him so much. Jeremy Carr

Jeremy Carr - October 08, 2023 at 12:00 AM

SK

“ I never met Mr. Horowitz, but I read an article about his great work in *Journal Sentinel* a few years ago-and deeply touched by his contributions to the educational system. Mary, sorry for your loss, and our prayers are with you and your family.

Sailaja Kamaraju - October 07, 2023 at 12:00 AM

TD

“ Mark was our middle son Bowie's 4th grade teacher. When we told him Mark had passed, Bowie said he often told people about his trip to Denmark as a fourth grader, and that everyone was always amazed at everything the trip involved and that his teacher had organized it. It was a truly remarkable and formative experience for him. Bowie is now an elementary school special ed teacher in Washington, D.C., and while he has teachers in his family (two aunts and an uncle), I think his experiences as Mark's pupil played a big role in inspiring him to become a teacher. He saw what a difference a teacher could make in his/her students' lives. And Mark did.

Tina Daniell - October 07, 2023 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ The best and most influential teacher I had. Mr. Horowitz taught us valuable life skills and most importantly, he built mutual trust and respect with his students. People still do a double take when I tell them my fourth grade teacher took his class to Denmark and Holland. Mark will live on through the hundreds of students lives he touched. I will always remember him when spelling words like "rendezvous", "chartreuse" and remembering that "a lot" is two words (he would write "lot" off the side of the chalkboard to emphasize this - an epic mnemonic). Thank you Mark Horowitz.

Joe Stilin - October 07, 2023 at 12:00 AM

DJ

“ He was the first person to take my daughter out of the country from Golda Meir School. He showed them that it was more to life outside of Milwaukee. I will be forever grateful. RIH❤️🌸

Demetrace Jude-Williams - October 06, 2023 at 12:00 AM

DH

“ Both of my children had Mark as their fourth grade teacher, and each, separately told me that he was the best teacher they'd ever had, grad school included. Having accompanied both children on their camping trips, I saw what an insightful, caring, funny, challenging teacher Mark was. "He always made me want to do my best," said my fourth grade son. What a wonderful tribute to an amazing teacher and human being!

Doris Hansen - October 05, 2023 at 12:00 AM

ND

“ Dear Mary and family,
We send you our deepest sympathies as you shoulder your profound loss. We hope that the many warm memories that you share will ease your pain.
In friendship-
Nancy DiFronzo and Rob Fernandez-Larsson

Nancy DiFronzo - October 05, 2023 at 12:00 AM

KP

“ Mary & family, You have our sympathies & prayers for comfort at this difficult time. We were so fortunate to be in your Seahorse family, with Mark as coach. We are grateful our daughter, Betsy learned so much more than soccer skills from your truly remarkable husband & father. She was on the team with your Sarah. There is a line in the movie; *It's a wonderful life*: "Each man's life touches so many other lives" Mark had an inspiring impact on hundreds of lives, more than anyone else we have personally known. He lived a stellar wonderful life.



Kathy Olson & Jim Piwoni - October 05, 2023 at 12:00 AM

“ As we get together to both celebrate Mark's life and deal with his passing, we recall two of the very many ways Mark made our community a better place.

We first came to know Mark (and Mary!) when he and Joe served on the Lake Park Friends Board. Mark was in charge of the Musical Mondays concert series. At the time there were only three concerts each summer but, under Mark's leadership, the series grew to six concerts. Mark's work may have been behind the scenes but Musical Monday's would not be the success it is without the foundation Mark built.

We remain grateful that Mark's commitment to kids went beyond his classroom. Mark founded and served as Director of the East Side Milwaukee Kickers, which is still going strong today. Because of Mark's work, over the years thousands of kids enjoy the Fall and Spring in the Park and along the Lake, kicking a ball, and developing lifelong skills that go far beyond the field. And, as a side note, it became a seasonal ritual for our three kids to leave the forms in the cooler on the porch!

And so, it was especially fitting the Lake Park Friends recognized Mark's quiet and longstanding dedication to the Kickers with a plaque in Lake Park, which he also loved and sustained. He is honored as Coach, Mentor, Referee, Scheduler, Board Member, and Director from 1982 to 2011. Next time when you are in the Park take a jaunt by the warming hut and read the quote from Mark. You will surely walk away a happier person and grateful that Mark was in our lives.

One final thought. Be it trips to Denmark, Musical Mondays, youth soccer, or any of the many other gifts of time and talent Mark gave, it was never done with the expectation of recognition or praise. Mark was content doing often unrecognized work, knowing that it made our community a better place to live. In a time that is rife with division and strife, Mark's legacy of devotion to the community reminds us of what can be accomplished when we work together. Both Joe and Alice, and Lily, Cole, and Gus extend warm thoughts and prayers for healing to Mary, Joseph, Sarah, Jason and the extended Horowitz family.

From The Wilson Family

Joe and Alice Wilson - October 04, 2023 at 12:00 AM

LB

“*Dear Mary, Although I never met Mark, I learned through you of his many accomplishments and tremendous impact on others in his career as an educator. My deepest sympathies are with you and your family.*

Linda Burns - October 03, 2023 at 12:00 AM

JG

“*Mary you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. You and Mark had an incredible marriage and life together. I will always recall your story how you met him as a 19 year old and fell in love with him. Reading his obituary, I understand why. Please know at this hour in need you have many friends-jim*

James Gajewski - September 29, 2023 at 12:00 AM

JG

“*Mary, please know you are in my thoughts and prayers. I oft remember your stories of meeting Mark when you were student teaching under him. How you fell in love so quickly. While I never met Mark, your stories about him let me feel as though I new him well. His life work for public schools made a lasting impact. Reading his life story I understand what an incredible force for good he was and still is. Please know you have friends at this time of grief. We are here for you and your family*

James Gajewski - September 29, 2023 at 12:00 AM

LF

“ *Mr. Horowitz was my 4th grade teacher at Golda Meir. I spoke to him a few years ago. This truly hurts my heart. He was an incredible person and he will truly be missed.*

Lillie Foster - September 26, 2023 at 12:00 AM

PB

“ *I was serving as a docent at the Milwaukee Art Museum when Mark brought his students to see the art there. As the group gathered in front of each painting, he would gently but firmly instruct the students to position themselves so that all could see. "Those who are taller should come to the rear so that students who are smaller can see." That's what I remember: Mark wanted all to participate, all to experience with dignity.*

Peetie Basson - September 25, 2023 at 12:00 AM

SW

“ Mark Horowitz was a long-term, wonderfully giving friend that I met playing the racket game of squash. He played college squash for the University of Rochester. In Milwaukee we played squash at least weekly in the winter likely starting in 1973. We traveled to squash tournaments and even played doubles-squash together in Madison several years. We both were ranked in the top 10 in the state. When we both had our first children in the same year, our wives organized a playgroup with several others the same ages. When it came time for soccer, we both volunteered to coach in the local Milwaukee Kickers organization. As we aged, Mark and I became the co-directors of the Eastside Kickers, with responsibilities of finding coaches and refs, and doing scheduling for all teams for both fall and spring seasons. As was his common commitment, Mark did the bulk of the work. He continued for years after I stepped away, thinking 13 years was enough. Oh yes, Mark convinced me to play men's soccer for several summers. He continued to play long after I stopped. He also became two of our sons' terrific fourth-grade teacher. And he advised us to where to send our kids to school after his class. Mark was also my prime source on insights on teaching in MPS. Mark was incredibly committed to helping others succeed in whatever they did.

Mark also created the music for our Fourth of July marching band on our block starting in 1976. And for many, many years he got our motley crew together to practice before going public. We still play with the music he created for us. Aside from all these activities my wife and I had much fun socially with Mark and his wife Mary. We greatly miss him. We have also missed Mary, as she committed much of her recent years in making Mark's life as good as possible

Sam White - September 24, 2023 at 12:00 AM

AS

“ Mark was an exceptional educator and person. All, especially school principals, would be fortunate to know and have the opportunity to work with him. We first met when he served as a student teacher at the former Meinecke Avenue School. We met again, luckily, when he joined our staff at Golda Meir School. He was smart, had drive, and knew what he wanted students to master, He worked hard on instilling kindness and care and respect for others, along with a strong academic background. So many people gained so much from knowing him. We all were fortunate to work with him. I truly feel the world is a better place because of Mark Horowitz. While I read the thoughts about Mark they confirm my feeling that an elementary teacher can and many times does have a significant impact on a student's entire life. I believe that Mark was an elementary teacher with this ability. I know that we all rate him and his life a straight A .

Albin Kaczmarek, principal retired, Golda Meir School - September 24, 2023 at 12:00 AM

MM

“ Mr. Horowitz was my 4th grade teacher at Golda Meir but was also the teacher across the hall from my mom Cindy Marino for many years so we got to know his family well. As a teacher, he was one of the most special, He always welcomed us for lunch hours for chamber emsemble, or to hang and do some early algebra or simply play his piano and sing. We made beautiful art projects as we learned about the world. I will always remember some of the early coding on the Apple 2Es and the way Mark had us all achieving well beyond our age. He was simply the best! Thinking of the Horowitz family.

Meredith Marino - September 24, 2023 at 12:00 AM

KB

“ It goes without saying that Mr. Horowitz was my best (also favorite) teacher, ever. I am sure many students feel the same. There are so many vivid memories of 4th grade which was almost 40 years ago. Famously there's the spelling lessons; world history and restaurant trips (Three Brothers became my favorite in adulthood but I still think about Siam Siam and Grants Soul Food); camp JCC where I learned to use a compass and hunted teachers, salamanders, and turtles; making T shirts; playing Little Sally Walker in the round at the end of the day when we were good; the quick change to soccer coach with the whistle necklace; music lessons; and most influential in my life - writing code for and inventing our own apple floppy (!) disc video games. You were a gentle and powerful force of life long learning in the lives of your students Mark Horowitz.

Kayt Brumder - September 23, 2023 at 12:00 AM

CM

“ I was lucky enough to work with Mark at Golda Meir. I was his "across the hall" colleague as well as a parent of two students lucky enough to have his as a teacher. Being a gifted educator was only one of Mark's amazing contributions to our community. He was committed to equity and access for all and supported many students in pursuing excellence outside of the classroom in areas like sports and music. That being said, Mark's main focus was always his family. His children became part of the extended Golda Meir family. Mark loved his family above all else and was so proud of Mary and her amazing accomplishments. He loved telling the story about how they met and married. Mark changed lives for so many....his family, his students, his friends, and his community. I have personally missed him so much as he struggled with this horrific disease but am comforted by his legacy. Rest in peace dear friend.

Cynthia A Marino - September 23, 2023 at 12:00 AM

KB

“ Hi, Mary, so very sorry to hear about Mark. Thinking of you in this difficult time. Karen Ballen

Karen Ballen - September 22, 2023 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ What a ride! Working with Mark Horowitz for many years getting students ready for the Denmark trip and the Amsterdam finish. We looked at Van Gogh 's artwork., we painted sunflowers, created amazing chair paintings , none of which were yellow! (Mark always called it the yellow chair) and immersed in the van Gogh experience for months! My joy was going with the class for the week and seeing the fruits of our labor! People from other countries, following the kids around as they talked about their paintings, and wondering how they got all that knowledge!! Mr. Horowitz I hope that you've been able to greet the real Van Gogh in heaven!! He ,like all of us , will be happy to know you!! In all the time I painted with the students I never had a chance to finish my "after Van Gogh " until retired !! I chose watercolor and realized the challenge we gave to the students , to reproduce the painting, they chose to talk about!! RIP Mr.Horowitz ! Thanks for the challenges you gave to me and my son Evan and all of your Golda Meir 4th graders!!

Sandy Szymkowski - September 22, 2023 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ *Mr. Horowitz was my 4th grade teacher 2008-2009 and he truly changed my life. I will never forget the memories and values he instilled in my classmates and I's lives. He taught me so many things that I still implement in my life today. Being able to learn about and be open to different cultures, learn computer programs, and be set to a standard and rising to the occasion meant so much to me growing up. I haven't been camping in a tent since I was 8, but I'm glad I can say I did because of him. I will forever be a S.M.I.T. because he said so. Mange tusind tak, Hr. Horowitz and fly high. <3*

Savanna Samuels - September 21, 2023 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ *17 years later, Mr. Horowitz still has an impact on my life as he did when I was in the 4th grade. My passion for travel & being immersed in other cultures all started by having him as a teacher & I am forever grateful and appreciative of the opportunity. The absolute best teacher a kid could have!*

MaShawnda Howard - September 21, 2023 at 12:00 AM

DE

“ *Always supported my children. Very grateful.*

Dianne Erickson - September 21, 2023 at 12:00 AM

BM

“*Mr. Horowitz changed my entire life and I credit him for developing my passion for learning and education. He was my 4th grade teacher at Golda Meir and also my dad's 4th grade teacher! How about that?! Wild! My dad also credits Mr. Horowitz as his most influential teacher. He was so important to me as a teacher that when my own daughter was heading to 4th grade, I strongly considered moving back to Milwaukee from Atlanta, just so she could experience him as a teacher too! I wish we could clone him for every classroom around the round because everyone should experience a teacher as great as Mr. Horowitz. He not only taught me about 4th grade education, but he taught me how to be a world citizen; how to be a lover of all cultures, hungry for knowledge, sensitive and respectful of people's traditions. As a 37 year old travelling the world now, I always think of Mr. Horowitz when I take a flight out of the country and when I visit a new culture. He taught us so much about being a good citizen of the world. I still remember so vividly all of my experiences in 4th grade with him, from travelling to Denmark to spending summers at Jewish summer camp. Truly he was a phenomenal teacher, a good human, a great man who touched the lives of so many people. He surely made a huge impact on me and my family.*

Brenda Nicole Moorer - September 21, 2023 at 12:00 AM

CC

“*I was involved in environmental education when my children Wendy and Chris Carlson were in Mark's class. Mark let me set up learning centers in the classroom including one with live earthworms. Mark tolerated my messes and always encouraged my passion for environmental education. He was my mentor and my friend.*

Cari Taylor Carlson - September 19, 2023 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ I never met Mark Horowitz, but I have heard about what a wonderful man he was from my sister Gretchen for years. I offer my condolences to Mary and the rest of the family.

Sue Melter

Sue Melter - September 19, 2023 at 12:00 AM

PM

“ Mark and his family have had a profound influence on me and my family. I was fortunate to have been a colleague of his in the late 70's at Golda Meir School. He was so giving, caring, knowledgeable...and he loved being a teacher. I have heard from several former students of his decades later and they all stated that "Mr. Horowitz was the best teacher I ever had." Mark was also my daughter's soccer coach in her early teens and she loved being a Seahorse. After scoring 4 goals in the first 10 minutes of her first game on his team, Mark moved her to defense so the other team wasn't totally crushed. That was routine for him to make sure that winning wasn't all that mattered. Teamwork and communication were always emphasized. I so enjoyed being with Mark's family at those games, kicking the ball with Joe on the sidelines, watching Sarah streak down the field, and chatting with Mary. It's been so sad to know he's gone. His goodness lives on, though.

Paul Matzner - September 19, 2023 at 12:00 AM

JW

“ I will never forget Mr. Horowitz! He taught me so much at Golda Meir and challenged me. I will never forget not being able to enter his classroom because I didn't know my danish vocabulary LOL! He made sure we all were ready for Denmark and it's a memory I cherish 25 years later! My condolences 🕊️

Jessica Woolridge

Jessica Woolridge - September 19, 2023 at 12:00 AM

TS

“ Mark Horowitz was my 4th grade teacher & has always been so memorable. So memorable that he runs across my mind often, & I am almost 31 years old. Its almost like yesterday! He really believed in teaching & giving the the best experiences. We really did learn so much from him. Some people you just never forget! He taught us how to create our own computer games from scratch with codes that we had to come up with ourselves, he taught us Danish & took my class across the world to Europe as he had been traveling with students for years!!! I got my first passport at about age 9 because of him. There's so much I remember about him & his classes. Just to name a few things. Golda Meir School for the gifted & Talented, & I was so honored to have Him as he had contributed so much! It's amazing the impact you can make on people, the world, as you may not even know it! May he rest in peace. He will truly be missed. 🇩🇰

Takala Small - September 19, 2023 at 12:00 AM

MC

“ Mark Horowitz was our hero and changed the trajectory of our lives. At one time, my wife Cathy and I had decided to move to the suburbs in search of better education opportunities for our three children. During a suburban school tour, a teacher suggested that we consider Golda Meir School before moving, specifically mentioning an extraordinary teacher - Mr. Horowitz. We toured Golda Meir and had a chance to see Mr. Horowitz in action. Cathy and I were so impressed with Mr. Horowitz and his great teaching talents that we immediately decided to stay in the city and apply to Golda Meir. Our children have attended wonderful schools and have experienced excellent teachers, but all three will say that Mr. Horowitz was the best teacher in their lives. Our family is just one example, but there are thousands of families like us whose lives have been changed forever by Mr. Horowitz. Nothing is more important than the education of children and we can never thank Mr. Horowitz enough. Perhaps we can only pay that favor forward to others. A life well lived and Godspeed Mr. Horowitz. Mario and Cathy Costantini

Mario and Cathy Costantini - September 19, 2023 at 12:00 AM

DL

“ Mr. Horowitz was not only my 4th grade teacher at Golda (an absolute favorite) but also BOTH my son and my daughter's fourth grade teacher (with Ms. Opie). He instilled a legacy of excellence I won't soon forget. Mr. Horowitz is the reason why my son is a computer engineer to this day and why I was so interested in computer programming. We will cherish his memory. May he rest in peace. 🌸

Deirdre Lafford - September 18, 2023 at 12:00 AM

MW

“ I am the parent of Alice Gilliam, who was a 4th grade student of Mr Jay Horowitz. What a DEDICATED LOYAL CARING TEACHER Mr Horowitz was.
MPS was BLESSED to have a teacher of Mr Jay Horowitz caliber

Marsha Ward-Marshall - September 18, 2023 at 12:00 AM

CJ

“ Awwwwww mannnn let me tell you about Mr. Horowitz. Literally my first teacher I remember vividly. To the community he built with our class. Shout out to class 96 in Mr. Horowitz class, cuz I'm still cool with all y'all! To teaching us danish, taking us to Amsterdam to Anne Franks house, to taking us to Denmark and the castle. To chamber ensemble where I played the flute. To volunteering at Jewish nursing homes and playing with the dreidel. To taking us camping and my first time going into a tent. To allowing us to come back as junior counselors when we left him and finding out he was cheating the whole time during our night time teacher hunt in the woods 😂 man he was such a legend. The greatest 4th grade teacher ever.

Courtney Johnson - September 18, 2023 at 12:00 AM

L(

“ *My Condolences to the family. Mr Horowitz was an amazing educator. He made a lasting impression on me and my daughter. We both had the privilege of being one of his 4th students at Golda Meir. I remember the camping trips, writing letters to pen pals in Denmark back in the 80's. Having matzo ball soup for the first time on a class trip he organized. Fiddler On The Roof is still a favorite of mine thanks to Mr. Horowitz. My daughter was actually able to experience different cultures, food and lifestyles traveling to Denmark, Sweden and Amsterdam with their class in 2009-2010. I learned to respect others no matter where they came from because of the many multicultural experiences he introduced to the class. May he Rest in Peace.*

Latasha Teague (Smith) - September 18, 2023 at 12:00 AM

PF

“ *We first met Mark and Mary when he was our son's fourth-grade teacher, more than 4 decades ago. He was an extraordinary teacher, providing passion, wisdom, expertise, and humor to that class, and 3 years later, to our daughter's class. We were lucky not just to have him as their teacher, but we became friends with him and Mary. What can I say? He was a gift.*

Paula Friedman - September 17, 2023 at 12:00 AM

NC

“ Mark was a phenomenal teacher, coach, father, husband, mentor, and friend. I have many memories of him that I will always cherish, but for some reason, the image that sticks in my head the most is being in 4th grade and watching him play in the student-teacher basketball game. He was dressed head to toe in 70s-era basketball gear: a bright orange and yellow striped headband with matching wristbands, tight highcut orange shorts, and a bright yellow tank top. Like everything he did in life, he tried as hard as he possibly could during the entire game, stealing the ball from little kids, blocking their shots, and driving hard to the hoop over them. And he spent every play he didn't agree with yelling and arguing with the referee. When I was his student teacher years later, he did EXACTLY the same thing, including the orange and yellow uniform! He was so passionate about everything he did, and he cared so much for his students. Every year was the "best group of kids he'd ever had." He said that every single year, and I think he genuinely believed it each time. He has influenced the lives of so many, and his presence will be felt for years to come. The profound impact that he had on the world is impossible to measure, but it was surely great, and definitely much greater than most. He was a great man, and he will be missed.

Nick Costantini - September 16, 2023 at 12:00 AM