



## Douglas C. Helmling

February 18, 1971 - February 28, 2025

Douglas C. Helmling, age 54, of Clare, Michigan, passed away suddenly on Friday, February 28, 2025, at his home in Clare. Douglas was born the son of John L. and Marjorie M. (Hartman) Helmling on February 18, 1971, in Livonia and grew up in the Brighton area. He was united in marriage with Lorissa Kavanaugh on July 4, 1998. Douglas lived the past 26 years in Clare, having moved from Mt. Pleasant, where he graduated from Central Michigan University. He was a career educator, most recently teaching English at Evert High School after many years at Gladwin Junior High School. Douglas was instrumental in starting the Clare High School soccer program, which began in 2000 as a club sport before transitioning into a varsity-level sport in 2002. He coached the school's first boys' teams and then later also coached the girls' teams in their early years; he retired from coaching in 2019. He remained involved with soccer as a referee. Douglas was a member of the Clare Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and was involved with the Emerald Isle Project. He was also on the Brookwood 2.0 Project Committee and helped with the building of the Brookwood Playscape. In his spare time, he enjoyed comics, watching sports and games of all sorts.

Douglas is survived by his wife, Lorissa, and their sons John and Charles, both of Clare; brothers Greg (Pauline) of Bay City, Brian of South Lyon and Keith of Brighton; as well as two nieces and four nephews. He was predeceased by his parents.

Visitation will be held on Sunday, March 9, 2025, at the Clare Chapel of

Stephenson-Wyman Funeral Home from 3 to 6 p.m. Graveside Prayers will be held on Monday, March 10, 2025, at the St. Cecilia Catholic Cemetery at 11 a.m. with Monsignor Francis Koper officiating. Memorial contributions are suggested to Eliy's Sunflowers or Clare County Community Foundation (CCCF) for the Emerald Isle Project. Online condolences may be left at [www.stephenson-wyman.com](http://www.stephenson-wyman.com).

# Cemetery Details

## St. Cecilia Catholic Cemetery

411 Schoolcrest Ave.  
Clare, MI 48617

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR **9**. 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Stephenson - Wyman Funeral Home (Clare)  
1005 North McEwan St.  
Clare, MI 48617  
(989) 386-7451  
wymanfh@chartermi.net  
<https://www.stephenson-wyman.com/>

## Graveside Committal

MAR **10**. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Cecilia Catholic Cemetery  
411 Schoolcrest Ave.  
Clare, MI 48617

# Tribute Wall

JS

“ Writing this was definitely difficult. Doug was such a great person and had impacted so many people. He was a great mentor, community member and friend. If you needed someone there to cheer you along or cheer you up, he was your guy! There are so many memories shared with Doug from soccer to parks and rec programs and events over the last eleven years. He helped to guide me through my first soccer season and Doug and his family were there bright and early every soccer Saturday to open and run the concession stand. He always made sure that he had an apple fritter set aside for me, knowing that those were the only donuts that I liked. He always was a huge supporter of the Emerald Isle Recreation Complex and made sure that we had a new concession building out there. He worked with another community member to get the concession trailer and then his son was able to get it updated for his Eagle Project. He loved running soccer camp and all the kids and families loved learning from him. He was also a big supporter of childhood cancer research and awareness and we could always count on him to help spread the word.

We often spoke about music together because we had similar taste (he has great taste in music!). I will miss so much about you... our conversations, both serious and just for fun! I talk a lot and I definitely met my match with you and we could just talk forever about whatever.

You will be missed and Lorissa and John and Charlie and the rest of the family are in our thoughts and prayers.

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**Joy Simmer** - March 10, 2025 at 10:37 AM

DR

“ Sorry to hear of Doug's passing, I had refereed with Doug a few times in the past. My prayers go out to the family and friends.  
Dale



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Dale Ruff - March 10, 2025 at 09:17 AM

JJ

“ Risking all bodily harm to stop another open breakaway chance, Doug comes up with another unbelievable stop! That's our goalie! Who cares if we are getting blown out by 7? That's the first thing that comes to mind when I think about him. Never gave up.  
I grew up with Doug in Brighton and was lucky enough to call him my friend and teammate for over 10 years. We spent 2 outdoor seasons, 3 indoor sessions and traveling to various soccer tournaments together every year for years. Brighton youth soccer was the best and Doug was always there. From bicycling to his house on Redd Fox to eventually driving around like we owned the town, we always had fun.  
Reading everyone's stories posted from those who knew him after our times makes me very proud and inspired. That goofy guy never changed! Always honest, caring, dependable and so damn funny! My condolences to Lorissa, John, Charles and the entire Helmling family.  
Thank you for everything Doug.  
Love you, Jeremy Jaworski

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Jeremy Jaworski - March 08, 2025 at 06:00 PM



“ *Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Douglas C. Helmling.*



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March 07, 2025 at 05:33 PM



“ *The Ostrowski Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Douglas C. Helmling.*



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**The Ostrowski Family** - March 07, 2025 at 12:45 PM

CL

“ *Mr. Helmling was my teacher at Gladwin Jr. High. He taught my English, Creative Writing, and Computer classes. He was always so kind and funny. He was one of my favorite teachers, and still is and forever will be. He always encouraged me and was always genuinely interested in what I wrote, talked about, anything. We used to have a little DnD campaign after school, though we never actually played and the little group we had always just played random games, drew, or just talked and had fun. My favorite memory is when he challenged me to a typing test, stating he'd always win and could never possibly lose and then I beat him and even had time to get up and watch him finish the test.*



*Mr. Helmling will always be very special and important to me. He really helped me gain some courage in myself as a kid. It's unbelievably heartbreaking to learn he passed away and I spent a few nights crying over it.*

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**Cryptid Leugers** - March 07, 2025 at 12:32 PM



“ *I grew up with Doug living in Brighton and going to the same schools. We were in many classes together. We shared the love of soccer as I was on the Girls soccer team all four years of high school. I will remember him fondly.*



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**Joy Macklin** - March 07, 2025 at 12:03 AM

BS

“ *Bullock Creek Soccer purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Douglas C. Helmling.*



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**Bullock Creek Soccer** - March 06, 2025 at 11:58 AM

DB

“ *Doug,  
The shrill from a small whistle broke through the chatter of men. A ball came bounding toward you on the ground. You stretched a long arm downward as you watched the ball run through the grass-- through your gloved hand, until you cradled it under your arm, against your ribs.  
As you surrendered the ball to the referee, he said, "Well done!"  
Then your opponents all grasped your hand. They all said, "Good job, goalie!"  
You cracked your grin as you took several strides. When you reached your side, you broke into your best laugh as we ponded on your back.  
No disrespect--that's how I remember you best.  
You were more than a teammate, more than a coach, more than a colleague, more than just a friend.  
Thank you. God bless you forever!  
Peace, Dirk Brines*

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**Dirk Anthony Brines** - March 05, 2025 at 07:33 PM

KA

“ *I remember Doug as a highly competitive and successful goalie for the Brighton youth soccer program he will be remembered and missed by his coaches and team members.*

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**keith ammon** - March 05, 2025 at 07:16 PM

DG

“ I had him for 6th grade English in Gladwin he was one my favorite teachers always pushing me to be a better me and he was one of the first people who encouraged me not to be ashamed of just being me My thoughts and prayers to his family



Duen Govea - March 05, 2025 at 06:47 PM

CZ

“ I got to know Doug better during the Brookwood project. He was a nice generous man, he will be missed by many, RIP Doug! Prayer to his wife and boys.

Chris Zinser - March 05, 2025 at 02:13 PM

JH

“ Jennifer Hopp lit a candle in memory of Douglas C. Helmling



Jennifer Hopp - March 05, 2025 at 09:05 AM

CC

“ I had him for 6th grade English. He was always vibrant and energetic. He clearly loved his job. He was one of my favorite teachers as he was passionate and hilarious. I miss him. My condolences to the family.

Cole Cunningham - March 05, 2025 at 02:42 AM

BS

“ I was a student of Mr. Helmling when I was in GJRHS and I had him as my Reading Teacher. You were one of my favorite teachers! My condolences to the family. May you rest in peace Mr. Helmling.

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**Bryan Smith** - March 05, 2025 at 12:03 AM

DH

“ The passion Doug had for young people will be missed, but hopefully carried on by those who benefited from it. Thoughts are with his family and all of those who came in contact with this passion. RIP Doug

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**Doug Haggart** - March 04, 2025 at 08:02 AM