



Lee J. Turner

September 5, 1947 - February 6, 2023

Lee J. Turner, age 75 of Farwell, passed away peacefully at the MyMichigan Medical Center of Midland surrounded by his family. On September 5, 1947, Lee was born to Lyle and Viola (Datta) Turner in Winona, Minnesota. Lee first honed his winning debate skills at Winona Senior High School as a member of the Class of 1965 and later at Winona State University. Lee's time at Winona State proved fruitful not only educationally, but personally. As a Winona State student, Lee crashed the St. Mary's College (all-boys) Freshman Mixer with the College of St. Teresa (all-girls). It was there that Lee met the love of his life, Beth (Betty Davey). On April 5, 1969, Lee and Beth were united in marriage for what would be 53 wonderful years together.

As a young college graduate and new father, Lee began teaching English classes to high school juniors and coaching the school's speech and debate team. After moving to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida to teach at Pine Crest Preparatory School, Lee was named Teacher of the Year receiving the school's Behring Award. At Pine Crest, he coached his students to a national championship in speech and debate while winning the Coach of the Year award from the National Forensics League (NFL). He went on to earn the distinguished honor of being a triple diamond key coach in the NFL as well as receiving the NFL's distinguished service plaque for the fourth time in 1992—a feat that had previously only been accomplished one time since 1925. Lee had earned over 200 citations for service to the NFL and to his students. After

obtaining his master's degree at Florida Atlantic University, Lee transitioned from teaching to administration, becoming a high school principal.

Lee eventually moved to Michigan where he concluded his impressive 46 years in education as the Clare High School principal in 2015. Lee had a strong sense of duty and always chose the "right" path, whether or not it was an easy path. As a proud honorably discharged member of the U.S. Army National Guard and Reserve, Lee demonstrated his appreciation of Veterans by honoring them during his Clare High School Veteran's Day assemblies. The appreciation expressed by the veterans he recognized fulfilled him. Wherever he went through the years, Lee immersed himself in service to education, school sports teams, to his church, and to his community. He was involved in too many volunteer positions to mention, always lending his keen mind and tremendous work ethic to better the world around him. He found joy in hearing from former students about the life-changing positive impacts he had made in their lives. However, those that knew Lee best would tell you that family was his most cherished passion and family reunions in Winona, Minnesota were treasured highlights.

Lee is survived by his wife Beth Turner of Farwell, and his children Carrie (Justin) Schoeman of Reston, VA, Kristin (Mark) Wilkinson of Canton, GA, and Robert (Gurminder) Turner of Simi Valley, CA. Other survivors include his grandchildren Megan and Kelsey Schoeman, both of VA, and his siblings Scott (Kathy) Turner of WI, Lynn Turner of ID, and Jim Turner of MN. Lee was preceded in death by his parents Lyle and Viola Turner, and his sister Jane Turner.

A memorial mass in honor of Lee will take place on Thursday, February 16, 2023 at 12:00 P.M. at the Our Lady of Hope Parish—St. Cecilia Site, with Monsignor Francis Koper officiating. Friends may visit with the Turner family at the church on Thursday the 16th from 11:00 A.M. to the time of service at 12:00 P.M. Burial with military honors will follow in the St. Cecilia Catholic

Cemetery of Clare. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in honor of Lee are recommended to support two-year-old Easton Millar, the son of Lee's niece, Courtney Millar and her husband Kyle. Easton is bravely fighting craniopharyngioma, a rare tumor that will require lifelong treatment and management. GoFundMe contributions can be made at <https://gofund.me/ea8e683c>. For those unable to attend services, online condolences may be expressed at www.stephenson-wyman.com

Cemetery Details

St. Cecilia Catholic Cemetery

411 Schoolcrest Ave.
Clare, MI 48617

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **16**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Our Lady of Hope Parish, St. Cecilia Site
106 E. Wheaton Street
Clare, MI 48617

Service

FEB **16**. 12:00 PM (ET)

Our Lady of Hope Parish, St. Cecilia Site
106 E. Wheaton Street
Clare, MI 48617

Tribute Wall

LS

“ Mr. Turner was my speech and debate coach at Richfield High School in Minnesota in the mid-1970s. I had tried to reconnect with him for a few years now without success; and every so often I look him up on the Internet. Sadly, I chanced upon this notice today. He was one of two teachers who most impacted my ability to think, write and speak; he also awakened in me challenge of reasoning critically. He was patient beyond measure with his students and had a sense of humor that made his classes challenging and fun. I was in 12th grade in 1973 and I remember asking him if his little daughter could debate. His reply was that she couldn't but that she could say "inherency", a concept he had been trying to explain to us for a while in class. If I felt the calling to become a teacher after I left high school, it was in part due to the influence of Mr. Turner. May you rest in peace, dearest teacher. - Lincoln Thomas Sampong

Lincoln Thomas Sampong - May 29, 2025 at 10:22 AM

AS

“ Beth,
I remember Lee as such a diligent, hard-working and caring man who was the Lord's hands throughout his life. Will always be praying for you, your family and friends.
With much love,
Anita Swanson

Anita Swanson - February 27, 2023 at 05:32 PM

GN

“ Many years riding our bikes .You your 160 Honda that your DAD bought in Prairie du Chien and me my Yamaha 100.Also dinners at Country Kitchen .THANK YOU FOR THE YEARS. BLESS YOU LJ

gerry okland 20798 115th ave ne - February 25, 2023 at 07:34 PM

LN

“ *Laura J. Nigro lit a candle in memory of Lee J. Turner*



Laura J. Nigro - February 20, 2023 at 07:53 PM

LN

Thank you, Mr. Turner, for teaching us with rigor, conviction and expectation — while sporting a smile that dared failure itself to defy you, and us. It upped my game and equipped me for worthy demands and opportunities that came later in life.

Now my prayers hold you, Easton and all your loving family. God bless.

*Laurie
Eng III Hon
1979 - 1980
Pine Crest School*

Laura J. Nigro - February 20, 2023 at 08:14 PM

MS

“ *Beth and family. My heart is so sad for your loss. Lee has always had a special place in my heart. He was an amazing friend and the best boss I ever had. May the Lord guide you and hold you in his arms as he welcomes Lee to Paradise.*

I am so sorry we were unable to make it to his services. We are in FL. I have prayed for, and will continue to pray for all of you at home and at mass each week.

Love, hugs, and prayers.

Margo Smith - February 18, 2023 at 07:50 PM



“ *Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Lee J. Turner.*



February 14, 2023 at 09:22 PM



“ *Bob and Lori Zalokar purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Lee J. Turner.*



Bob and Lori Zalokar - February 13, 2023 at 05:50 PM



“ *Rich and Susan Davey purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Lee J. Turner.*



Rich and Susan Davey - February 13, 2023 at 11:47 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Lee J. Turner.*



February 12, 2023 at 01:15 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Lee J. Turner.*



February 12, 2023 at 01:09 PM



“ *Sending our deepest condolences to the Turner Family. May his soul rest in peace. You are all in our thoughts and prayers.*

Sonia Sehmi - February 12, 2023 at 01:01 PM



“ *Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Lee J. Turner.*



February 12, 2023 at 06:40 AM



“ *Beth and family I am so sorry for your loss Lee was a great person and I really enjoyed working with him and for him . My real joy was being able to coach your son Robbie in football and basketball and having Lee there for great support.*

Karl hop - February 11, 2023 at 08:17 PM

RB

“ I would like to extend my deepest sympathy to Beth, Carrie, Kristin, and Robbie in the loss of your husband and dad. I had the honor to know the Turner family at St. Clements before I joined the Pine Crest community . I always enjoyed working with Lee. Prayers to you all as you navigate these difficult days.

Ruth Bresnahan

ruth bresnahan - February 11, 2023 at 03:32 PM

KJ

“ Prayers and hugs to you and your family. What a pleasure it was to work with Lee during our Rotary years. Hold on to those precious memories!💕💕

Karen Jones - February 11, 2023 at 08:12 AM

RP

“ I enjoyed working with Lee and it was obvious he genuinely cared about the students and their welfare. He also supported teachers. Beth, I extend my condolences. You now have an angelic advocate in Heaven.

Richard Palmaccio

Richard Palmaccio - February 10, 2023 at 12:44 PM

DB

“ Sad news. I enjoyed my time working for Lee and he was a wonderful leader and example for young men. This world is better because Lee was a part of it. God bless and R.I.P.

Dave Benson

Dave Benson - February 10, 2023 at 11:57 AM

KR

“ I remember Lee as being very professional and a strong leader. What a mostly remember is how how much he loved his family. Beth was his biggest cheerleader. My deepest condolences. Kim Aberle-Rash

kim aberle rash - February 10, 2023 at 09:28 AM

AM

“ Reading everyone else's memories, my heart is warm to see how he was loved and admired. When he was Principal of Pine Crest Prep School and I his Vice Principal, I got to know him well and admired him more and more as years passed. He was one of a kind, with great work ethic and deep faith. God graced the world with the 75 years we had him. My love and prayers for Beth and family. The Lord is with them in this difficult time.

Anamaria G McKee - February 10, 2023 at 08:23 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Lee J. Turner.



February 09, 2023 at 02:18 PM

TR

“ *Beth and family,*

My heart is heavy with sadness. Lee and I grew up together all thru school. TOYE and TURNER were always next to each other.

Lee was one of a kind. I was fortunate to call him my friend. I could also see why Lee fell in love with Beth. As I got to know her, I fell in love with her too.

This world was a better place with Lee in it. He will now bless the Heavens with his grace.

You are all in my thoughts and prayers. May your memories bring you comfort and a smile to your face.

RIP my dear friend.

Tammy Toye Rench

Tamara Toye Rench - February 09, 2023 at 01:30 PM

KL

“ *A great man and leader in our district. He genuinely cared about the students and staff and supported all programs both curricular and co-curricular. He talked with me often about his family. He was so proud of their accomplishments. And, of course, when Beth walked in the door at his office he smiled ear to ear. RIP Lee*

Kelly Luplow - February 09, 2023 at 12:07 PM

MW

“ *Lee Turner was a mentor to me both personally and professionally. He supported me when I was facing adversity. His passing is sad news. Clare Public Schools is a better place due to his leadership.*

Mark Weaver - February 09, 2023 at 09:33 AM



“ *Lee was an outstanding boss who always reminded us not to fall into complacency but to always do better and be better.*

James Winkler - February 09, 2023 at 08:26 AM

PS

For our family Lee was a cornerstone of strength and gave us all much love. He will be missed greatly, all who knew him held him in the greatest respect and admiration for all the goodness of all he did for the community, students, and his family. Well done, Lee, rest in paradise.

Patricia Schoeman - February 11, 2023 at 06:36 PM

TJ

Dear Beth, Carrie, Kristin, and Rob,

My family and I send our thoughts and prayers and sincere condolences to you and to all your family on the sad loss of your beloved husband and father, Lee.

At Pine Crest School, I knew and admired Lee as a deeply respected and superlative, award-winning English teacher and as an outstanding administrator. He was a highly esteemed friend and colleague, one of the finest teachers I have known, noted for his superb skills and expertise, particularly in his teaching of debate and the research paper, two aspects that were of immense value to his appreciative students in college and in life.

As an exceptional Forensics Coach, Lee brought great honor to his students and to Pine Crest when his talented teams won the national championship in speech and debate, and Lee garnered the very impressive and well-deserved award as National Coach of the Year. As PC's high school principal, Lee distinguished himself by his amazing energy, leadership, and organizational skills, as well as by his tireless efforts to help our students and staff to succeed. Personally, I will be forever grateful to Lee for his wise advice and strong, unwavering support for me and my wife Mary and our family during some trying times.

I know that my beloved Mary was there, along with many other relatives and friends and members of the PC community, to greet Lee with big, heavenly hugs and to welcome him into his NEW life with God.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

Love and Friendship,

Tony Jaswinski and Family

Tony Jaswinski - February 15, 2023 at 01:42 PM