



Gerald H. Matthews

June 27, 1934 - September 15, 2022

Gerald "Jerry" Matthews of Laingsburg, Michigan passed away on Thursday, September 15, 2022, at the age of 88.

Jerry was the guest of honor at an event at the Grand Hotel acknowledging his lifetime contributions to the game of golf and unexpectedly passed away later that evening. He was with his wife Carol (Watt) Colein at the place where they were married 23 years prior, and where many happy memories were created in the years since.

Jerry was born on June 27, 1934, in Grand Rapids, Michigan to Wallace Bruce Matthews and Doris (Sprague) Matthews. He grew up in Comstock Park, Michigan, next to the Green Ridge Country Club, where his father was the long-time Club Manager. His first start in the industry was at age twelve, working on the golf course maintenance crew during the summers.

Jerry graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in Landscape Architecture. He then served two years as a commissioned officer in the US Army stationed in Anchorage. Once discharged, Jerry returned to school, earning a master's degree in Urban Planning. Soon after graduation, he teamed up with his father who had recently resumed his earlier career as a golf course architect. Together they worked on over one hundred golf courses within Michigan. In 1979, his father retired, and in 1985, Jerry became the

sole owner of Matthews & Associates, PC.

Much has been written about Jerry's contributions to golf. He applied his talents to over two hundred courses; many of which achieved award-winning status. Jerry was an advocate of minimalist architecture, utilizing natural landforms and existing vegetation to their full advantage. He then worked his magic to create the memorable courses he is known for. He also served a term as president of American Society of Golf Course Architects and was an inductee to the Michigan Golf Hall of Fame. But teaching the next generation brought equal career satisfaction. In addition to mentoring other aspiring architects, he, and his design associate Gary Chapman, taught a class in golf course design and construction at Michigan State University.

Over the years, he developed many long and rewarding friendships within the industry including clients, contractors, material suppliers, and golf course superintendents. He was gracious and unassuming, listening more than he talked. He had a trusting nature and was respected as a man of his word. And he often caught people off guard with his dry and witty sense of humor.

As successful as he was at creating golf courses, Jerry did not golf very often and was happiest with a fly rod in his hand. He grew up in a family that spent a considerable amount of time fishing and hunting, and he treasured the time he was able to spend with family and friends who shared his passions. He particularly loved fly fishing and tying his own flies and he excelled at both. Over time, fishing became catch-and-release and hunting became observing.

Campfires were an endless source of contentment, whether at home, or at the cabin on the AuSable River. Swapping fishing stories with fellow members of the Flint Rainbow Club or sharing almost daily deer-spotting reports with Steve, his neighbor of 55 years, never grew old. He could not walk past a puzzle without putting in a few pieces. An avid reader, he particularly enjoyed

books about westward expansion, the Civil War, Native Americans, and Alaska.

Jerry loved his family unconditionally and his keen interest and unwavering love has given everyone the gift of wonderful memories of their time with him. Over his lifetime, he made the effort to also stay in touch with his extended family including siblings, in-laws, nieces, nephews, and cousins. They too, warmly recall the memories and the special bond they shared with him. He will be dearly missed.

He was preceded in death by his parents, brothers Wallace and George Matthews, sister Marilyn Magee, and his son, Rick Matthews.

In addition to his wife, Carol, he is survived by his children Randy Matthews, Renee (Mark) Joncas, Tami (Tony) Behland, stepdaughter Katie (Reid) Colein Southby, grandchildren Serena (Joe) Small, Zane Matthews, Jaclyn, and Erin Behland, Cole and Maya Southby, and three great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his sister Kate McDermid, cousins, several nieces and nephews, and his former wife Gail (Kidnie) Matthews.

A celebration of life will be scheduled at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family would prefer a donation be given to the MSU Corey Marsh Ecological Research Center (CMERC) with a notation that the donation is in memory of Jerry Matthews. <https://www.canr.msu.edu/cmerc/get-involved/>

Galer Funeral Home & Cremation in Pickford, Michigan, is serving the family. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.galerfuneralhomes.com.

Tribute Wall



“ *Gerald H. Matthews*

October 05, 2023 at 09:54 AM



“ *Gerald H. Matthews*

October 02, 2023 at 10:14 PM