



James Graf

April 25, 1948 - November 13, 2010

CEDAR FALLS- James Graf, 62, of Cedar Falls, died Saturday, November 13, 2010 at Sartori Memorial Hospital.

He was born April 25, 1948 in Mason City, the son of Peter and Mary Richter Graf. He married Grace L. Powell on June 9, 1990 in Cedar Falls. She died October 3, 2010.

He received his Masters Degree in Education and taught fourth, fifth and sixth grades in Cedar Falls Community Schools for thirty-three years.

Survived by three daughters, Lori (Dave) Rezek of Des Moines, Anna Graf of Cedar Falls, and Elizabeth (Blaine) Freeman of Waterloo; a son, Joseph (Jana) of Cedar Falls; two stepsons, Michael (Kourtne) Powell of Cedar Rapids, and Adam Powell of Minneapolis, MN; nine grandchildren; three brothers: Mike Graf of Ankeny, Charlie (Pauline) and John (Margaret) Graf, both of Mason City; and two sisters, Pat Patrick of Mason City, and Mary Lou Johnson of Coon Rapids, MN.

Preceded in death by his parents; two brothers, Peter and Arthur Graf; and a granddaughter, Emily.

Mass of Christian Burial will be held 10:30 a.m. Thursday at St. Patrick

Catholic Church with burial in Greenwood Cemetery, both in Cedar Falls. Friends may call from 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at the Richardson Funeral Home where there will be a 7 p.m. vigil service. Visitation also for one hour prior to services Thursday at the church.

A memorial has been established.

Online condolences may be left at www.richardsonfuneralservice.com.

James Graf was born April 25, 1948 to Peter and Mary Graf in Mason City, Iowa.

He graduated from the University of Northern Iowa in 1972 with a bachelor's degree in education. He taught for thirty three years at Southdale and Orchard Hill Elementary Schools in Cedar Falls. He married Grace in 1990 and the two of them provided love and support to their entire family. She preceded him in death on October 3, 2010.

He received his master's degree in elementary education from Viterbo University in 1998. His passion for teaching was contagious. Three out of his four of children are educators and the fourth one keeps them in business with her large family. He could rarely go out to the store without being recognized by one of his former students.

Jim was an honest, intelligent, caring, and genuine man in life, and his footprint on this earth is huge. He made everyone around him feel better about themselves, whether he was teaching, giving advice about life choices, or consulting about a home remodeling project that he usually ended up being the foreman on. There was no project he would give up on, and the job was never done unless all the tools were put away. If he did not know how to do something he taught himself.

Jim was a devoted listener and never rushed to judgment. One of his most important lessons that he taught us was patience. He had to be patient to love the Cubbies like he did.

As an angler he consumed the great outdoors. He often said how much he loved to just float. It could have been a 37-inch northern who squirted snot all over the boat, a giant catfish that talked back, or a tiny sunfish, but he always gave a little chuckle once the thing was landed.

His latest hobby was chewing up the highway on his motorcycle. That opened up a new avenue he hadn't visited since the '60's. It allowed him to feel free and exhilarated. Life rushed by him too fast, but he took time to enjoy his family and friends, always putting their needs before his. We will all continue to benefit from what Jim brought to the world.

He is survived by four children: Lori (Dave) Rezek of Des Moines, IA, and their children Seth and Julian; Anna Graf of Cedar Falls; Joseph (Jana) Graf of Cedar Falls; Elizabeth (Blaine) Freeman of Waterloo, IA, and their children Samantha, Summer, Autumn, Addison, Dillon, and Skyler; two stepsons: Michael (Kourtne) Powell of Cedar Rapids, IA, and their children Michaela and Riley; Adam Powell of Minneapolis, MN, and his son, Gabriel; three brothers: Mike Graf of Ankeny, IA, John (Margaret) Graf and Charlie (Pauline) Graf both of Mason City, IA; two sisters, Pat Patrick of Mason City, and Mary Lou Johnson of Coon Rapids, MN; and a sister-in-law, Joann Graf of Garden Grove, CA.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers, Peter and Arthur Graf; and a granddaughter, Emily

Tribute Wall



“ We were so sad to learn of Jim's death. He was our son's 6th grade teacher at Orchard Hill. Jim was a great teacher and role model for his students. We also knew him as a fellow Cedar Falls School teacher. Whenever you saw Jim, there was always a smile and a good word. May your memories comfort you during this difficult time.

March 29, 2013 at 02:50 PM



“ We were saddened to hear the news of a great neighbor on Balboa Avenue. Jim was always quick to flash a smile or honk his horn as he rode past our house. We appreciated his friendly greetings, and will remember you in our prayers as we remember him.

March 29, 2013 at 02:50 PM



“ I was sorry to hear of Mr. Graff's passing. Your father made Orchard Hill's sixth grade a good place for my son, Bob Sherkat. He was a good male role model for many young men. May your memories comfort you in this time of sorrow.

November 22, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ I wasn't the best of students...but he was one of the best teachers. RIP Jim.

November 19, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ I'm heartbroken over the news. Jim was my 6th grade teacher at Orchard Hill Elementary. He is, to this day, one of those educators who had such an impact on me that I often ask myself if he'd be pleased with what I've accomplished in life. My thoughts are with him and his family.

November 18, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Mr. Graf was my sixth grade teacher at Orchard Hill, and he always stood out as one of my favorite teachers. He challenged me and helped so many of his students see what truly stood out about themselves. He will be missed. I'm praying for Liz and the entire Graf family during this time.

November 18, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ Mr Graf was one of my most favorite teachers. He was my 5th grade teacher at Southdale. He was always kind, gentle, understanding and patient. He cared about each of his students and it showed in his teaching. He will be missed.

November 18, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ I am sorry for your loss. I really enjoyed having him as my 6th grade teacher and I know my sister did too. He would say something about how kids with messy rooms still grew up to be great adults anyway and I know my sister reminded my mom of that many times as she was growing up -and it turned out to be true. May Jesus hold you all extra close.

November 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *To Jim`s family. We were saddened to hear of Jim`s passing. We live across the street from him (421) and we would talk alot, about motorcycles and families, etc. He was a great neighbor, and he will be missed. Our thoughts go out to you and you are in our thoughts and prayers.*

November 17, 2010 at 12:00 AM