



Robert L. Parsons

APR 5, 1943 - APR 3, 2014



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Big Rapids - Dr. Robert L. "Bob" Parsons, 70, of Big Rapids, was welcomed into the arms of his Lord and Savior on Thursday, April 3, 2014. Bob graduated from Clarkston High School, and Michigan State University, where he earned his Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD degrees. While at MSU, Bob married Nancy J. Jennings, his high school sweetheart. He worked as a campus police officer, and as well as in the office of Governor William Milliken. In 1972, he came to Big Rapids to create the Criminal Justice Program at Ferris State College. The program under his direction became nationally recognized, and is the largest degree program on campus and off, and he was also instrumental in bringing grants to the program. Dr. Parsons retired from Ferris in 2002 after 30 years of service. During his career Bob achieved the level of seventh degree black belt in Karate. He taught Korean style martial arts for many years and had organized clubs at MSU and Ferris, and his passion for the martial arts continued into retirement. Bob assisted law enforcement agencies around the country as an expert witness in police procedures and use of force. He also worked with Meijer Corporation to develop their companywide Loss Prevention Program. In retirement he was active in missionary work through the Big Rapids First United Methodist Church. Special areas of interest were trips to Haiti, starting the Hope Garden with his wife, and assisting with children's' ministry. Bob was a member of the MSU Alumni Association and was honored by them with placement of his name on their Wall of Fame for his lifetime achievement in Criminal Justice. Ferris State University honored Bob by naming their firearm training range after him. Everyone who knew Bob knew that he considered his own greatest achievement as being a devoted husband, father and grandfather. Bob is survived by his loving wife, Nancy, two children; son, John Parsons of North Carolina, daughter, Julie (Jeff) VanderWiere of Schoolcraft, three grandchildren, Megan, Bryce and Jaden. Also surviving is an uncle, Richard Lorenz, brothers and sisters-in-law, Joseph



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Jennings, Robert Jennings, Jeffrey and Denise Jennings, Edward and Kerry Jennings plus many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents. A memorial service for Bob will be at 11:00 a.m., Thursday, April 10, 2014 at the Big Rapids First United Methodist Church with Pastor Rebecca Morrison officiating. His family will greet friends from 3-6:00 p.m. on Wednesday at the Mohnke Funeral Home in Big Rapids, and beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday at the church. Memorial contributions may be made to the Big Rapids First United Methodist Church (BRFUMC), designated for Hope Garden or Haiti Missions.



Tribute Wall

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FY

Francis Yap, Jr. posted:

My family and I lived next to Bob and Nancy in Spartan Village in 1965. I remember his red GTO, beautiful Nancy, and John as a newborn. I ended up working for Lockheed and earning a degree in Criminal Justice. I remember Nancy and Bob as newlyweds. Such love is never forgotten. F. Yap, Jr.

October 16 at 4:40 PM

DM

David Meyer posted:

I shall always miss Bob.

May 15 at 8:00 PM

VR

Vance Ritz posted:

I would like to thank "Doc" for setting me on a lifelong journey through martial arts. It is because of the foundations and examples of integrity that he laid, that I still continue to train 25 years later. He will always be in my heart each and

April 22 at 8:00 PM

BW

Barbara White posted:

Nancy and family, You are in my thoughts and prayers at this time of loss.

April 13 at 8:00 PM

RJ

Robert & Joan Jansma posted:

Joseph & Family, we are so saddened to read of Bob's death. We are praying for you and family. hugs

April 13 at 8:00 PM

PA

Patrick Aseltyne posted:

My condolences to Bob's wife and family. I knew Bob as an expert witness and consultant in defense of civil cases involving police officers and their departments. He was highly regarded by members of our law firm as a man of wisdom, integrity, and d

April 9 at 8:00 PM



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DS

David Steeno posted:

Bob recruited me for the FSU Criminal Justice Program in 1985. He was a salesperson extraordinaire. He may have been the only person capable of negotiating the roadblocks that existed with regard to the implementation of his idea in 1972 of combining Mi

April 9 at 8:00 PM

KC

Kevin Christensen posted:

I was in the class of 1978. what a great legacy of all the C.J. careers he helped start.

April 8 at 8:00 PM

RD

Rhonda K. Delong posted:

Dr. Parsons touched so many lives, including mine. He was a man of integrity and gave so much to the students at Ferris. His life was one of service and love. He will be greatly missed, but his memory and legacy will live on in our hearts and lives.

April 8 at 8:00 PM

TB

Tobi (Rice) Belanger posted:

Dr. Parsons thank you for believing in all of us through the Criminal Justice program, we would not be where we are without you. With you, we have all succeeded. You are so missed.

April 8 at 8:00 PM

SS

Shann Spence posted:

I had the pleasure of working with Dr. Parsons over the past 15+ years through my employment with Johnson, Rosati, Schultz & Joppich, P.C. in Farmington Hills, MI. He had an extremely kind and personable nature. I doubt he ever had a bad day as

April 8 at 8:00 PM



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DB

Derek Brand posted:

It is with great sadness to hear of the passing of Dr. Parsons. As a FSU CJ alum, he was a great educator and mentor to those who he taught. Most importantly, he was a good person who genuinely cared for the people he came across. My sincerest condolences

April 8 at 8:00 PM

UB

Undersheriff Ralph Boudreau posted:

Dr.Parsons it was an honor to know you, may you rest in peace.

April 7 at 8:00 PM

BS

Bob Schneider posted:

am very saddened by the passing of this great man. I first met Bob in 1980 when I became an adjunct instructor in the Criminal Justice Program and I worked with him on various projects until his retirement from Ferris, including 6 years full time working

April 7 at 8:00 PM

PJ

Pastor Bob And Carol Jones posted:

Nancy, So sad to hear about Bob. We appreciated his support of missions.

April 7 at 8:00 PM

MC

Msu Karate Club posted:

Rest in peace. You will be remembered for all your contributions to the martial arts, our Karate Club and the Pukang Tang Soo Do Association.

April 7 at 8:00 PM

RH

Richard Hawkins posted:

I am so sorry to hear about Bob's passing. He was a great person, a good friend and I enjoyed working with him in the College of Education.

April 6 at 8:00 PM



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MM

Mike Mohr posted:

I was luck to have had Dr. Parsons as a professor while attending Ferris State University. I was blessed to have known him and had occasions to speak with him in the community over the past 14 years while working for the Mecosta County Sheriff's Offi

April 6 at 8:00 PM

EC

Ellie & Rick Boyd, Chester, Va posted:

About 25 years ago Dr. Robert L. Parsons hired me at Ferris State University. He was an admirable man, great boss and mentor to me for so many years. Because of him, my career in higher education started as an Account Clerk I in the Criminal Justice Progr

April 5 at 8:00 PM

SC

Sgt Bill Clock posted:

RIP Dr Parsons, thanks for all you did with FSU and the training you provided.

April 5 at 8:00 PM

JY

Julie Yunker posted:

For anyone who ever met or knew Bob Parsons, his passing is a true loss. I enjoyed being his student in the classroom at Ferris, but also later in life as our paths crossed often. His true joy was his family, and for all of them - but especially Nancy,

April 5 at 8:00 PM

PS

Peaches Staton posted:

JP and family, I am so saddened to hear about the passing of your Dad. I know exactly what you all are going thru, it's never easy to say good bye but I do know that God don't make mistakes, even though we don't understand it but we will bye

April 5 at 8:00 PM



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NC

Nancy Cooley posted:

I was saddened to learn of Bob's passing. He always impressed me with his professionalism, courtesy, and dedication to our students. His was a life well lived and he was an inspiration to all who knew him. -Nancy Cooley, former Dean of the College o

April 4 at 8:00 PM

KM

Kitty Manley posted:

What an amazing professional and educator who made a SIGNIFICANT difference in the lives of his students, his colleagues, and his family! My sincerest sympathy. What a blessing to know how much he was respected and admired!

April 3 at 8:00 PM

RK

Rick And Becky Kowalkoski posted:

We were so saddened to learn of the passing of Bob Parson. We worked with him at Ferris on a number of academic committees and also worked with him at the First United Methodist Church where we were all members. Bob will always be remembered and truly wi

April 3 at 8:00 PM

CM

Craig Macphee posted:

I attended Ferris 1992-1995. I always respected Dr. Parsons teaching style along with his everyday being. He had an instructional style that was academically strict yet when you were done you felt accomplished. He was a tall man in stature but an even

April 3 at 8:00 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Robert by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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