



Rod Yates

September 30, 1927 - October 16, 2021

Rod Yates, age 94, died October 16 at Hope Landing, in Charlotte Michigan, due to complications of Covid-19. Born September 30, 1927 to Anne Van Dyk and Joseph Maltby "JM" Yates, Rod lived nearly all his 94 years in Charlotte. His childhood home at 313 East Harris was next door to the Hayes Green Beach Hospital. After graduating from CHS in 1945 he attended Michigan State College, earning a mechanical engineering degree in 1949. He met Joyce Cridler that summer at the Barlow Lake roller rink near her home of Middleville and they married in 1951.

Rod started a career with General Motors in Grand Rapids after college. In 1953 he left GM to take over the business from his ailing father and moved Joyce and baby Susan to Charlotte. Yates Hardware proudly served customers at 116 East Lovett from 1953 to 1999. Rod's commitment to customer service and quality merchandise earned him many loyal customers. He was known for his engineering knowledge and ability to explain to customers how to repair anything. With a machine shop in the back of the hardware he would gladly make parts for customers if one could not be found.

Rod was a lifetime Rotarian and past president. He was active in multiple community organizations. Rod, Joyce and their girls loved to camp in Ludington State Park and to ski at Caberfae with other local families.

After retirement Rod and Joyce took several memorable well-earned vacations and then settled in as snowbirds in Venice, Florida where Rod co-chaired the bicycle and the cribbage club and hosted "Michigan" dinners with their Florida friends.

Rod and Joyce were very proud of a four generation Spartan legacy. When Joyce returned to college in 1979 he enjoyed premium seats in Spartan Stadium because Joyce's 1949 enrollment provided top-notch student section tickets. All four daughters attended MSU as did three grandchildren, including one with an engineering degree.

Rod is survived by daughters, Susan Yates of Williamstown, MA, Judith Yates and Kathryn (Thomas) Cizek of Traverse City; grandchildren include, Chris (Gina Dominguez) of Austin TX, David (Molly Schranz) of Boston, MA, and Libbie Weimer of Durham, NC, Andrew (Nisa) Williams of Seattle, Colin Williams of Traverse City, and Cameron Williams of Seattle, Laura (Michael) Gorman of Grand Forks, ND, and Donovan Cizek of Auburn Hills. He was preceded in death by his grandson, Jesse in 1983; daughter, Cynthia in 2003; great-grandson, Cristobal Weimer in 2013; wife, Joyce in 2017.

A brief memorial service will be held on Friday October 22, 2021 at the Pray Funeral Home Gardens at 3:00 PM with visitation following until 5:00 PM. The family welcomes you to this outdoor service and respectfully request you wear a mask. The service will also be webcast so you may watch it from any computer or smart phone by going to Rod's Tribute Page at www.PrayFuneral.com and click on the webcast button within the photos and videos tab. Guests who prefer to remain in their car should notify Pray Funeral Home for assistance. Please honor his Spartan pride by wearing green and white. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Rod's name to Michigan State University or to the Rotary Club of Charlotte, PO Box 484, Charlotte, MI 48813. The family is in the care of Pray Funeral Home.

Cemetery Details

Maple Hill Cemetery

801 Tully Brown Rd.
Charlotte, MI 48813

Previous Events

Memorial Service

OCT **22**. 3:00 PM (ET)

Pray Funeral Home Gardens
401 W. Seminary St.
Charlotte, MI 48813

Visitation

OCT **22**. 3:30 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Pray Funeral Home Gardens
401 W. Seminary St.
Charlotte, MI 48813

Tribute Wall



“ *Pray Funeral Home, Inc created a Webcast in memory of Rod Yates*



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - October 22, 2021 at 11:00 AM

PE

“ *As Rod's next door neighbors at RCR, we were saddened by his death and will miss him greatly. I remember the nice times we had together with him and Joyce. They were instrumental in introducing us to the joy of bike riding.*

Rod was always so kind and a perfect gentleman. Any gift of food or other assistance to him promptly led to lovely hand written thank you note delivered personally by him.

I remember how happy he was when we were able to help him get his covid vaccine so it was sad to here he had contracted the illness.

We were able to view his memorial service and it was so nice to hear of his life story and see how loved and admired he was by family and friends just as he was at RCR. Rod and Joyce have enriched our lives. We were privileged to have known them.

Our deepest sympathies,

Pat and Peggy Kelly

Pegg - October 27, 2021 at 10:06 AM

SC

“ One of my favorite memories was u was in 8th grade working for my dad at Smith's and he and Russ Bar Hill sent me to the hardware to get a "shelf stretcher", so when I told Rod what I was after, he laughed and knew that they had pulled a joke on me, he then grabbed a sledge hammer and sent me back to the store to "stretch the shelves". We all had a good laugh! Rod and Joyce were always two of my favorite customers at the store and two of the kindest sweetest people in town! Hugs and prayers to the family ❤️

Scott and Penny Cooper - October 22, 2021 at 08:56 AM

AS

“ We spent hours camping and bike riding with Rod (and Joyce). We met about 20 years ago at Royal Coachman Resort camping for the winter season. They were two of the greatest friends we had and they will both be missed. Rod was instrumental in the bike club and as Joyce said "Rod was born on a bike." We probably have hundreds of miles riding together and every time I get on my bike I will think of my buddy Rod. May he rest in peace. I picture him riding bikes with Joyce now and forever. Carol and Al Santini

Al Santini - October 21, 2021 at 08:24 PM

TH

“ I had a phone conversation recently with Mr Yates. What a wonderful man. He asked if he could call every now and again. What a great conversation.

He lived right around the corner of my mother. I live in Hastings so I would bring him strawberries from Cotants farm market. He sent me this \$5 bill and this card. It is in the shoes on my fireplace mantle.

♥ He wanted to make sure I had gas money for my “troubles”. No trouble at all was glad to do it. Rest In Peace my dear friend.

Teresa Hamilton



Teresa Hamilton - October 21, 2021 at 05:49 PM

CS

“ A good neighbor and a better friend.

Chris Stanton

Chris Stanton - October 20, 2021 at 09:27 AM

SL

“ I first met Rod in the summer of 1962 when he called me to come in for an interview (I had not even applied for a job). I got the job and worked my high school senior year after school and Saturdays. Rod was the best man, and boss, I had ever met. He was patient, kind, helpful, always soft spoken, and seemed to enjoy helping me, and customers, learn everything there is to know about fixing things. I learned from him how to work in his machine shop, and bicycle shop. He taught me customer service and "everything hardware." Almost all of the county farmers would come in from time to time for "fix it projects." Even city DPW workers would come in for advice. Eleven years later I was married and working on fixing up our "old house" near downtown. Rod gave me a key to the store and told me I could go get anything I needed, anytime, even at night. I needed only to keep track of the items and settle up with him once a month. That's trust Rod Yates remained a close friend and mentor for all these years. I am forever grateful that he made that first call to me. My thoughts and prayers to his family.

Steve Latchaw

Steve Latchaw - October 19, 2021 at 02:44 PM

JS

“ Grew up a half a block from Yates hardware and remember the store well. I have very fond memories of the Yates family store. They always treated us kids with respect and were very helpful. Rod and family were a huge part of downtown Charlotte for many years . My deepest sympathy to his girls and there families.

Jeff Smith - October 19, 2021 at 12:54 PM

RM

“In the 1940's I had the pleasure of working with Rod in the bicycle area of Yates Hardware.
I can remember his patience in teaching me how to respoke and true a bicycle wheel.
We had a lot of fun together and many memorable moments.
He will be missed.

Ron Monk

Ron Monk - October 19, 2021 at 10:46 AM

JR

“My husband and I bought an old cottage at Gun Lake in 1994 and as luck would have it, we were 2 doors down from Joyce & Rod! What a lucky break for us! Rod's parents had owned our cottage at one time so he shared a lot of history of our place and knew all the little quirks of an old cottage. And of course Rod knew how to fix EVERYTHING and had all the right tools! We were all faithful Spartans and met for football and basketball games on occasion. Beyond that, our family truly loved the Yates and always looked forward to seeing them at Gun Lake. We were saddened by the loss of Joyce and now with the loss of Rod. Please know that you are all in our thoughts and prayers. Rod and Joyce were wonderful people and we were blessed to know them.

Judi Roelof - October 19, 2021 at 07:34 AM

RB

“I remember my mother buying my brother and me our very first bike from Yates I was very scare riding it home after that he was very friendly when we would go into the store

Robert Blair - October 19, 2021 at 06:23 AM

GW

“ I was one of the first young men to knock on the Yates door to date his daughters. He was always a very kind gentleman to me and enjoyed the times I spent with the Yates family. He was always willing to offer me the use of their new convertible when Sue and I went out. I always declined that gesture out of fear. So sorry and sympathy to the girls and their families.
Gary Wells

Gary Wells - October 18, 2021 at 07:43 PM

AH

“ I grew up working in a Charlotte hardware store which was a competitor of Yates Hardware. I recall the time that I first met Mr. Yates when he came into my dad's store to purchase something that his store did not carry. I panicked and went to get my dad to help him. Well in the years that followed, I grew to know Mr. Yates a little better. I will always remember him as a kind, gentle and soft spoken individual. Maybe that has something to do with having 5 females in the house. I was fortunate enough to visit him at Hope Landing in August. We reminisced about the hardware business, downtown Charlotte, and the path that lead him from and back to Charlotte. Good times. I will always think of him as one of Charlotte's finest individuals. My sincere condolences to Sue, Judy and Katy.

Alan Hanson - October 18, 2021 at 07:02 PM

CB

“ Chuck Brandon lit a candle in memory of Rod Yates



Chuck Brandon - October 18, 2021 at 01:51 PM