



## Michael Joseph Hansen

December 20, 1934 - January 5, 2024

Michael Joseph Hansen, age 89, of Prior Lake, MN (formerly Bloomington, MN), passed away on Friday, January 5, 2024.

Michael was born December 20, 1934, in Council Bluffs, Iowa, Michael was the son of Harry and Pearl Hansen. He attended A. Lincoln High School and later pursued higher education at Wayne State College in Wayne, Nebraska where he earned his BA degree with honors. During his first week on campus Micheal met the love of his life, Darlene Rose Dietz. Their connection bloomed, leading to marriage on August 18, 1956. Micheal's pursuit of knowledge continued at Coe Fellowship at the University of Wyoming, where he earned his MA Degree in American Studies. Following that Michael served his country in the US Army, specializing in Military Intelligence and continued in the Army Reserves. This chapter in their lives took them to various locations across the country and sparked a love of travel.

Settling in Bloomington, MN, Michael dedicated himself to teaching History, English and Economics at Southwest High School in Minneapolis, MN, where he coached debate, judged track & field and tennis. While raising his children Catherine (Molenaar), Susan (Marker) and Steven Hansen. His passion for education persisted as he pursued further education as a graduate student at the University of Minnesota. Michael had a love for historical education and was the Founder and past President of the Minnesota Chapter of the Lewis

and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. After retiring from teaching high school, he began teaching American and World History courses to Adult education students through community education programs. He loved to travel and enjoyed golfing, fishing, boating, reading , watching his grandkids activities and sports, and spending time with his family & friends.

Michael was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Darlene, with whom he shared 68 years of marriage; as well as his parents, Harry and Pearl Hansen; brothers, Harry Jr. and Tim Larson; sister, Lois Hanske; and son-in-law, Steven Molenaar.

He is survived by his daughters, Catherine and Susan; son, Steven (Jill); grandchildren, Joseph, Julia, Ashley, Shawna, Ian and Paige; and great-grandchildren, Josephine, Declan and Tiernan.

Celebration of Life will be held on Monday, January 22 at 11 AM Washburn-McReavy Dawn Valley Chapel. Visitation one hour prior.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 22. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Dawn Valley Chapel  
9940 Bush Lake Road  
Bloomington, MN 55438

## Memorial Service

JAN 22. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Dawn Valley Chapel  
9940 Bush Lake Road  
Bloomington, MN 55438

# Tribute Wall

JG

“ *Mr. Hansen's AP History was one of my toughest classes at Southwest. Good preparation for college. He also supervised the debate team that I participated in. His remarkable legacy: the thousands of students enriched over his long and successful career.*

*Well done!*

*Jim Gust, '70*

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**Jim Gust** - February 09, 2024 at 11:51 AM

PB

“ *To Mr Hansen's family - I am sorry for your loss. He was my favorite teacher and really pushed me and others to be better students.*

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**Paul Barber** - January 22, 2024 at 06:19 PM

SW

“ From the moment Mr. Hansen came to our Junior High School to recruit for Accelerated Social Studies, I knew he was someone special. Three years in his classroom just reinforced that impression. He made things interesting, despite assigning some of the most boring reading I ever had. I think what he was really teaching was a course in preparation for college, and life. I don't remember all of the history, but I still recall some lessons, and quotations that I use regularly today, almost 50 years later. I only saw him lose his temper once, while he was leading the trip to the Soviet Union and a group of students from East Orange, N.J., was taking prohibited photos at the border with Finland. Even then, you would have had to have known him very well to tell he was angry.

*Mr. Hansen was the most influential teacher of my lifetime. I am very sorry to learn of his loss. May his memory be a blessing to you.*

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**Steven Webster** - January 22, 2024 at 12:42 PM

RJ

“ Mr Hansen was one of those rare teachers who broke through the noise to reach students like me. I am so grateful for his passion for history and for teaching. Condolences to his family and friends at this difficult time.

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**rachael jarosh** - January 21, 2024 at 11:05 PM

MS

“Uncle Mike” (how he sometimes referred to himself but we would never address him that way) had a profound impact on all of us during the three years we were fortunate enough to have him teach “Accelerated Social Studies” at Southwest. I never worked as hard in college writing papers or taking “blue book” tests as I did for Uncle Mike. He not only made us appreciate the importance of learning history, we learned the importance of learning, and how to do it. Throughout my career in college and medicine, I never had a better teacher than Uncle Mike. My condolences to the family. It sounds as if he truly had a life well-lived even after his high school teacher career ended. I could never have thanked him enough.

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**Michael Stiegler** - January 21, 2024 at 09:39 PM

EB

“Mr. Hansen was my History teacher at Southwest and he was one of my favorite teachers! He was able to bring stories to life about events and places that made the subject matter more interesting. I always enjoyed his class and his style of teaching. My sympathies to his family and friends for their loss.

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**Elaine Barr** - January 21, 2024 at 11:40 AM