



Paul E Mertz

February 27, 1943 - November 8, 2023

Paul E. Mertz, 80, of Shoreview, Minnesota, passed away Wednesday, November 8, 2023, after prolonged illness. He died peacefully with family by his side.

Paul was born February 27, 1943, in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and grew up in a number of locales in Oklahoma, Texas, Alabama, and Kansas. He attended Phillips University in Enid, Oklahoma, where he studied history and political science. He also played baritone in the college band, where a saxophonist named Lyndall caught his eye. They dated and, in 1966, married. He also completed graduate studies at the University of Oklahoma, earning a doctoral degree in history and the distinction of Woodrow Wilson National Fellow. In 1969 Paul accepted a teaching position at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. As an articulate and precise lecturer, who set high standards for his students, he eventually served as department chair for several years. He and Lyndall shared many adventures leading students on two semester abroad trips to London. Paul also led several UWSP summer bicycle tours in various regions of France, where he got to try out his French, with varied and amusing results.

He was also a talented and tenacious researcher who has many publishing credits, including *New Deal Policy* and *Southern Rural Poverty*. His love of research continued after he retired from UWSP and was named Professor Emeritus in 2006. Even in his final years he took research trips to conduct interviews and track down archival documents for his latest project.

Paul was a devoted husband and father who encouraged curiosity and critical thought by making the past relevant to the current situation. He showed his children by example how to be lifelong learners, to find joy in reading and writing, and to value the important lessons history holds for creating a more just and peaceful future. He was also a man of faith with a strong moral compass. He was active in Frame Memorial Presbyterian Church in Stevens Point, and, more recently, Presbyterian Church of the Way in Shoreview.

Paul was much loved by his family, and they will very much miss his knowledge, storytelling, and dry sense of humor. He had a calm, measured manner that family found comforting and that often forced them to slow down and enjoy life a little bit more. He was especially proud of his grandchildren Rose, Christopher, and River, and he delighted in their activities and learning and never hesitated to join in their games and play, even if it meant wearing silly hats and humoring their imaginative whims.

He was preceded in death by his parents Floyd E. and Mary Olive; brother, Neil; and nephew, Brian Mertz. He is survived by his loving wife Lyndall; two children, Mary (Tom) Carney, of Shoreview, and Paul Eric (Amy) Mertz, Jr., of Lincolnshire, Illinois; sister, Janet Mertz, of San Antonio; sister-in-law, Paula Mertz, of Socorro, New Mexico; niece, Andrea (Raymond) Gurrola, of Albuquerque; brother-in-law, Dean Kauffman, of Palm Springs; and his three grandchildren, Christopher Mertz, and River and Rose Carney.

Visitation will be at 10 a.m. on Thursday, November 16, at Presbyterian Church of the Way, 3382 Lexington Ave. N, Shoreview, MN 55126, with a funeral service at 11 a.m. and a luncheon to follow.

Memorials to the Minnesota Historical Society or Presbyterian Church of the Way are much appreciated.

Tribute Wall

LV

“ *My husband and I partnered with Professor Mertz for a few years as judges for National History Day. Paul was the consummate professional. He never talked down to the high school students and used that opportunity to expand their research using primary sources. Our condolences to his family.*

Lin Vogel - November 16, 2023 at 12:00 AM

TC

“ *He was a great father-in-law!*

Thomas Carney - November 14, 2023 at 12:00 AM

MK

“ *I have so many memories, and all good, about Paul. A kind, witty and smart teacher. I remember well for the wonderful European bike trip we did together. Between the two of us we dealt well with French and German languages -- we laughed a lot, and in the end the Europeans "got us". Paul, you'll be missed.*

Mark Arthur Koepke - November 12, 2023 at 12:00 AM