



Ralph Gerald Laven

February 25, 1932 - April 19, 2026

Ralph G. Laven, 94, formerly of Richfield, Minnesota, passed away peacefully on the evening of April 19th, surrounded by his loving family.

He was born on February 25, 1932 in Mankato. As an adventurous teenager, he hitchhiked up to the Minnesota State Fair and slept outside the fairgrounds at night. He later fixed up a Model T, which he drove to California with a friend. The car never made it back to Minnesota. A blind bowling date brought his wife Alice and him together for the first time in Pennsylvania. They did not take to each other at first, but friends insisted on a second group date, and sparks flew this time. The wonderful marriage that followed lasted more than 70 years. When Alice was stricken with Multiple Sclerosis, he did all he could to help her remain healthy. Together they made weekly visits to the therapeutic pool at Sister Kenny, even during snowstorms. After serving in the Mediterranean with the Navy, Ralph graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in electrical engineering. Northern States Power Company hired him, and he worked there until he retired. During his time at the University, he met a group of lifelong friends. They spent summers on the lake in northern Wisconsin and the cold months playing Bridge. They supported one another through the celebration of new births to the heartbreak of lives lost too soon.

He loved serving God through the Church and through The People of Praise.

He again found lifelong friends there who showed up for each other until the end. His curiosity about life and learning meant he insisted we find the book his men's group had recommended to him while he was in the hospital. A lifelong reader, eyes failing him, he stayed up all night to listen to it, worried the library would return it before he finished.

He spent his life caring for and loving his family, friends, and the community. A neighbor's Romanian parents visited one summer, and though they could not understand one another, they found a way to communicate and still remembered each other all these years later. Another neighbor fondly remembered Ralph, introducing Alice and him as the "Honeymooners." Their love for each other in their later years was undiminished from when they were newlyweds, and their beautiful partnership was an example for all who knew them.

Ralph wanted to connect with others and learn about their lives. He wanted others to know they were seen, they were important, and that he would be there to help them when needed.

He is survived by his wife Alice Laven, their children Douglas (Karen), (Melissa), Brian (Ann), Stephen (Amy), Jill (Paul), and grandchildren Chambray, Chelsea (Austen), Taylor, Jacob, Brooke, Lucas, Blaine, and Thomas, and 4 great grandchildren Elijah, Amaya, Lylianna, and Wendell. He was preceded in death by son Michael and grandson Justin.

A celebration of life will be held on April 29th at St.Peter's Church. In lieu of flowers, memorials to Battens BDSRA Foundation or the Multiple Sclerosis Society are appreciated.

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 29. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Peter's Catholic Church (Richfield)
6730 Nicollet Avenue South
Richfield, MN

Mass of Christian Burial

APR 29. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

St. Peter's Catholic Church (Richfield)
6730 Nicollet Avenue South
Richfield, MN

Reception

APR 29. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (CT)

St. Peter's Catholic Church (Richfield)
6730 Nicollet Avenue South
Richfield, MN

Tribute Wall

HS

“ *In the summer of 1981, my wife (Joni) and I had been married a year, had a newborn (Hugh Jr.) and could not afford to take a summer Vacation. Ralph and Alice allowed us to use their cabin! We have been blessed with having Ralph and Alice as dear friends for more than 57 years! ❤️❤️❤️*

Hugh Springer - April 27 at 11:55 AM