



Scott Bernell Swanson

January 18, 1942 - January 1, 2025

Scott Bernell Swanson passed away peacefully on January 1, 2025 at Corewell Health Butterworth Hospital Grand Rapids with his beloved son, Peter by his side. He was 82.

Scott was born January 18, 1942 to Carl and Mary (Gallapoo) Swanson in Tustin, Michigan. He spent his childhood living in the Heritage Hill Historic District Neighborhood in Grand Rapids Michigan. Educated at Central High School, Scott was an accomplished competitive swimmer medaling several times over before graduation. Scott attended Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. He married his high school sweetheart and love of his life, Ruth Lamb in Bethlehem Lutheran Church Grand Rapids before graduating with a Bachelor of Science.

Scott moved to Cadillac in 1973. A natural athlete, passionate outdoorsman and avid sportsman, Scott found his forever home with his family. He forged many lifelong friendships during his life in Cadillac. He was an avid skier, cyclist, spiritual fly fisherman with a trip to Yellowstone with friends a highlight, a golf enthusiast, bird hunter, sailor, passionate dog lover especially his English Setters and student of music until his last days. Scott enjoyed sharing his cabin on 40 acres in the Upper Peninsula with family and many cherished friends throughout his lifetime. If those walls could talk!

A devoted Dad, he encouraged his children athletically, academically and artistically.

He loved skiing with the family. An ultimate family road trip was the first Swanson Family ski trip to Aspen and Snowmass Colorado spearheaded by his wife Ruth. Several trips west with family and friends followed to several ski destinations. Dad often said, "I'll ski until I die and then I'll ski in Heaven".

He loved people and welcomed all with open arms. He was very active in the local community. He was a lifelong member of the Caberfae Ski Club. A former member of the Cadillac Mitchell Yacht Club aka The Boat Club (Thank you to the Garbers) and Cadillac Country Club. He proudly served on the CAPS School Board for many years. Scott was an active member in Zion Lutheran Church serving on the Church Council. He enjoyed fellowship friendship and fun with his church family finding great peace and comfort during trying times in his life. Scott had great admiration respect and love for Pastor Scott Torkko.

Scott was a devoted company man to State Farm rarely missing a days work before retirement. After retirement, Scott was happiest on the slopes of Caberfae Peaks with his dear friend, John Sayler and their ski posse at the ski club including Ed Bosworth and many others. Scott also loved cycling with John happily stating, "it's slopes or bike saddles for John and me". Their rides covered endless happy miles together. Scott also cherished bike rides with his beloved friend Rit Portuesi with whom he shared a loving friendship.

Scott enjoyed being in the company of dear friend, Tom Jobson. Into the woods, dogs and coffee in tow they would go. The duo enjoyed many breakfasts together and coffee talks. Trusted confidants and loyal friends. Scott liked to say "you can't make old friends." Scott enjoyed playing music with his friends from Manton and a recent highlight was playing for the residents at Maple Ridge. He cherished his coffee group with friends including

Allen Meyer, Nick Nelson, Mike Lueder, the late Ed TenHouten, the late Dave Reiser, Jack Dillon, Woody Durham, Mark Holdship, Bruce DeRuitter, Herman Suhs, Mike Coy, Mike Filkins and many others. Scott shared many coffee stories from the table of knowledge with his son, Peter and daughter, Jackie. The coffee stories are legendary. He also loved socializing with many friends in Manton.

Dear friends Sandy and Denny joined Scott as he proudly watched his Grandson Jack graduate from NMU in Marquette Michigan December 2023. A memorable milestone for a grateful Grandfather and Grandson. Dad was also very moved (thank you to Peter) by a surprise visit from his Grandson Jack and daughter Jackie this past December. They joined him at church along with dear friend Doc Al Meyer for what would prove to be Scott's last day in attendance at Zion Lutheran Church. Dad was elated. A memorable day for all.

A great provider, Scott was a devoted loving husband, Dad, Grandfather, brother, uncle and friend. Always there when you needed him.

Scott was preceded in death by his loving wife, Ruth and his two beautiful daughters, Becky Paige and Lori. Also preceded in death by his dear brother, Paige and their parents. And his childhood best friend, Bruce Smith.

Scott is survived by his son Peter Swanson, daughter Jackie Swanson (Andrew Smith) of California and grandson, Jack Scott of Washington. Scott is also survived by his dear godson, Scott Smith. Plus many loving nieces and nephews. And his loving brother-in-law, Lou Armstrong. Scott is also survived by his former son in law, John Sovis and wife Toni. Both near and dear to his heart.

Scott was an eternal optimist. Dearly loved and will be dearly missed. Dad will always be sunshine on our shoulders.

The Swanson family would like to thank the entire Hospice Care Team at Spectrum Butterworth Hospital Grand Rapids including the doctors and nurses who provided compassionate exemplary care for Scott.

Memorial visitation will be held from 5-7 PM Thursday, January 9, 2025 at Peterson Funeral & Cremation Services in Cadillac. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to Zion Lutheran Church or to the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital. An online guestbook is available at www.petersonfh.com.

Previous Events


Memorial Visitation

JAN 9. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Peterson Funeral Home
205 E. Cass St.
Cadillac, MI 49601
(231) 775-3411
info@petersonfh.com
<http://www.petersonfh.com>

Tribute Wall

DN

“ I want to send my condolences and love to Jackie and Peter and extended family and many friends and family on the passing of Scott, a longtime friend of mine. I have such fond memories of ski runs shared and several cycling adventures. I'm sorry I was unable to visit with you at his visitation but know that I've been with you in spirit. I know that his love of his family and his many friends will sustain you as you heal from your loss. I'm thinking of you all tonight. 

Doug Nelson - January 09, 2025 at 07:53 PM

DT

“ To the family of Scott Swanson, I read his obituary twice, it was so interesting to learn about what he accomplished over his lifetime! I didn't know him very well but my husband, Ed TenHouten shared many moments sharing stories and having coffee. He was always very kind to Eddie and gracious to me. RIP Scott a life well lived!!

Denise TenHouten - January 09, 2025 at 05:16 PM

NN

“ *Whispers of heavenly death murmur'd I hear,
Labial gossip of night, sibilant chorals,
Footsteps gently ascending, mystical breezes wafted soft and low,
Ripples of unseen rivers, tides of a current flowing, forever flowing,
(Or is it the plashing of tears? the measureless waters of human
tears?)*

*I see, just see skyward, great cloud-masses,
Mournfully slowly they roll, silently swelling and mixing,
With at times a half-dimm'd sadden'd far-off star,
Appearing and disappearing.*

*(Some parturition rather, some solemn immortal birth;
On the frontiers to eyes impenetrable,
Some soul is passing over.) poem by Walt Whitman*

nick nelson - January 08, 2025 at 11:19 AM

DT

What a beautiful image 🙏

Denise TenHouten - January 09, 2025 at 02:43 PM

SS

“ You meet a lot of people over the course of your life, but a few etch themselves into your consciousness and live on with you daily. My namesake and Godfather Scott was one such soul. The friendship he and my father Bruce shared was amazing to witness. I know my dad absolutely cherished his friendship with Scott. I don't think I've ever seen him happier than when they were together, especially sharing tales and spirits at "the cabin". So much of who I became can be traced back to Scott, his influence on me was remarkable. His door was always open. I remember the last time I saw Scott was a few years ago when he was visiting my dad in Goodyear, AZ. He shared with us an experience he had had a couple weeks earlier in which he was awakened by the voice of his departed wife Ruth asking if he was ready to come join her. My father, never a religious man, was somewhat perplexed and asked "you mean you dreamt she spoke to you?" Scott without hesitation resolutely affirmed "oh no, it was her, not a dream, and it was as clear as if she was at the foot of the bed". I'm thankful to Scott for sharing that experience with us and for his testimony and witness that death was conquered by our savior, and passing is merely a return home. I look forward to seeing both of those men again someday, just not right now...which is more or less what Scott told Ruth that morning. My love and thoughts to Peter and Jackie. Your Dad was a wonderful man and a fisher of men. Scott L Smith



Scott L SMith - January 07, 2025 at 05:26 PM

DT

Great story and remembrance ❤️

Denise TenHouten - January 09, 2025 at 02:46 PM

SA

“ Scotty, Shane, Yolanda, Jordan, Kelli, Cheyenne, Lucas, Caleb, Adam purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Scott Bernell Swanson.



Scotty, Shane, Yolanda, Jordan, Kelli, Cheyenne, Lucas, Caleb, Adam - January 07, 2025 at 04:36 PM

SA

“ Scotty, Shane, Yolanda, Jordan, Kelli, Cheyenne, Lucas, Caleb, Adam planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Scott Bernell Swanson.

Scotty, Shane, Yolanda, Jordan, Kelli, Cheyenne, Lucas, Caleb, Adam - January 07, 2025 at 04:36 PM

TC

“ Scott was a wonderful person who always brought a ray of sunshine when he visited our State Farm office in Lake City. He always treated our policyholders with empathy and compassion as our auto adjuster over the years. Condolences to his family and many friends. Terry and Deb Coaster

Terry Coaster - January 07, 2025 at 11:50 AM

HL

“ Our condolences to the Swanson family. Scott's musical talents shared at Maple Ridge were a welcome event for our late mother. No doubt long walks and good friends were there to greet him in Heaven.

Helen Mackey Lehman - January 07, 2025 at 11:42 AM

TF

“ A loving tribute to a loving man. It's a beautiful reminder of the "Mr. Swanson" we knew as kids at the boathouse - and a touching glimpse of the wonderful father, grandfather, and friend that he was to be for so many. Sending our love and prayers. The Miller Family

The Miller Family - January 06, 2025 at 11:10 PM

NN

“ Dear Scott, Over 50 years I have had the pleasure of your friendship. We traveled together on many fishing trips out west and many times to your cabin in the UP. That cabin is where I learned to get along without potable water, how to fish in a river and how to get along without electricity. I owe a lot to your friendship. Rest in peace my dear friend. Nick Nelson

Nick Nelson - January 06, 2025 at 05:22 PM