



I pray that I may  
**LIVE To fish**  
Until my dying day,  
and when it comes to  
my **LAST CAST**,  
I then most humbly pray:  
When in the Lord's  
great landing net  
I'm Peacefully Asleep,  
In **HIS** great mercy  
I will be judged  
**BIG ENOUGH**  
To keep!



but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and  
not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Isaiah 40:31 NIV



[www.RosierFuneralHome.com](http://www.RosierFuneralHome.com)



On Saturday afternoon, October 1st 2022, Larry got an urgent message from his sweetheart, Marilee, asking to meet at the River Jordan to go fishing! Larry left the football games on the TV, and headed for the Pearly Gates. Left behind, were his son, Kevin, (Tricia McDaniel) Steward and grandchildren, Dylan (Kenzie Williams) and Jolena of Grand Lodge. Larry's daughter, Karin (Cheryl Gaskill) Steward-Raymond and granddaughter Ashleigh Raymond of Sunfield, his brother, Bill Steward, of Pottersville, his sister, Nancy Jo Steward-Terry, of Kalamazoo, and his sister-in-law, Shelley Townsend-Steward of Lake Odessa, did not get to witness the reunion.

Larry Edward Steward was born to Dorothy (Coppess) and (Orval) Dale Steward in Lake Odessa, MI, on Christmas Day in 1937. Dot and Dale brought their handsome blue-eyed boy home to Grandma Jenney's house in Sunfield. The family soon expanded with two more sons, Wendal and Bill. Larry's FAVORITE sister, Nancy Jo, was born next, followed by youngest brother Jeff.

The whole bunch was soon helping their grandparents, George and Mae Coppess, with farm chores. Other childhood pastimes were fishing, riding ponies, taking buggy rides, hunting mice and sparrows for a bounty collected from Welches' Hardware, or collecting burlap sacks full of Milkweed pods for the war effort.

At Sunfield School, Larry got a reputation for being a talented athlete. He not only played, but lettered in several sports: baseball, track, basketball, and football. He always said, "If everyone didn't play everything, there weren't enough of us for a team." Larry and Marilee, Homecoming King and Queen, graduated from Sunfield High School in 1957. Larry often remarked that he WAS in the TOP 12 students of his 12 classmates.

Larry was recruited by Olivet College to play football and became the first of his family to attend college. After one year, and one lost tooth, Larry decided to transfer to Huntington College where his sweetheart Marilee was attending. It was at the Huntington YMCA where Larry met his other love for the first time... WRESTLING! Larry and Marilee were married in June 1961; Larry graduated from HC in 1962 with a BS in Education. In 1964, he started a brand new wrestling program at Ionia HS! Soon after the birth of Bulldog Wrestling, Larry and Marilee had two children, Kevin and Karin.

Mom and kids enjoyed helping Larry with his Wrestlers; they hosted team burrito parties, washed uniforms, and Marilee even wrote a team newspaper, the "Grappler's Gazette". Mrs. Stew was often cheering in the stands for her many "wrestling sons", and would shoot hours of super 8 films to gift to each senior, while Larry yelled himself hoarse by the mat.

Summers were for wrestling camp, gardening, and then camping trips to Canada to fish for Walleye. Sometimes the family would take picnic lunch to the prison where Larry taught summer school. He earned the respect of the inmates, and even assisted in foiling an escape attempt! Another of his summer jobs was Driver's Education. Larry's favorite instruction to give the new drivers was, "turn left, right here!"

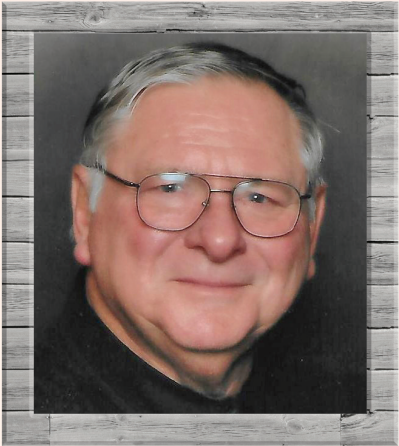
By 1973, Larry had coached his Bulldogs to the Class B State runner up trophy! Larry spent 31 years as head wrestling coach at Ionia before stepping down to retire. In 2002 his fellow coaches elected him into the Michigan Wrestling Coaches Hall of Fame. In 2016 he was inducted into the IHS Athletic Hall of Fame for his coaching.

Retired life saw Larry and Marilee caring for family, heading out for as many fishing trips as he could pack in, as well as Bluegrass Concerts, Jaw Harp Festivals, and driving the AL-CAN Highway three times pulling a trailer. Together they volunteered several times to cook for multiple mission trips to Laurel Mission. They saw all 50 states at least once. Marilee also dragged Larry off to China where they climbed the Great Wall together, and then to Germany to see the Black Forest.

To help Marilee out in the kitchen (at first), he learned to enjoy cooking. Larry's special treats often brightened the day of someone he cared for. Delicious homemade rolls and apple butter from the family copper kettle, fluffy waffles from an antique waffle iron with real maple syrup that he and Kevin made, bags of delicious "Crystal Corn" from the whirly popper, German Lebkuchen cookies: 50 dozen nestled in a giant tub, and his famous "Tail end of the Garden" Vegetable Beef Soup. All were carefully crafted and then gifted to the lucky.

At the age of 83, Larry was given a challenging diagnosis of leukemia, but he fought hard and won nearly an entire year before he was called home at the age of 84 years and 9 months.

Instead of flowers, please consider a Memorial Donation to be sent to Laurel Mission in Big Laurel, Kentucky.



# *Larry Edward Steward*

## **Date of Birth**

December 25, 1937

## **Date of Death**

October 1, 2022

## **Celebration of Larry's Life**

11:00 AM – Friday

October 7, 2022

Sunfield United Brethren Church

## **Officiating**

Pastor Darrel Bosworth

## **Pallbearers**

Kevin Steward   Karin Steward-Raymond   Dylan Steward  
Jolena Steward   Matt Steward   Gabe Steward  
John Roberts   John Slater

## **Interment**

Lakeside Cemetery  
Lake Odessa, Michigan