



Ronald T. Poness Sr.

September 18, 2023

Monday, September 18, 2023 at age 81. Survived by his loving wife of 56 years, Gaye; children, Ronald Jr. (Jessica), Robin (Tom) Hernandez and Michelle Vittone; grandchildren, Katherine (Dennis) DeVries, Leila and Mia Hernandez; special niece, Anne Berry; cousins and dear friends.

Ron was a proud 1960 graduate of Jefferson High School in Rochester, New York. He enlisted in the US Marine Corp, served three tours in Vietnam, and was honorably discharged as a Sergeant (E-5) in 1966. After the military, Ron then earned his Bachelor's degree from SUNY Brockport followed by his Master's degree at the University of Rochester. Ron also attended the University of Miami in 1966 where he met his wife Gaye Anne and celebrated 56 years of marriage.

Ron began his Social Studies teaching career at Gates-Chili High School and retired from there after 25 years. While at Gates Chili he had a strong leadership role in the Teachers Union. He also enjoyed skiing on the slopes at Swain with the Ski Club he advised for many years, and you would always find him cheering on his students and athletes at the weekly Football games. "Mr. Poness" as he was known by his students was a giant personality, strong and tough exterior, but a gentle caring heart, always helping out others in need or those in danger of losing their way.

Ron became closely involved with the Veterans Outreach Center and became an advocate for helping out his fellow Vets. He continued his lifelong friendships with his fellow Marines and attended reunions throughout the

country on a yearly basis.

Ron enjoyed an active retirement life spending time with family and friends. Ron and Gaye traveled between their home in Vero Beach Florida and summer home on Lake Ontario so he could spend time near his children, grandchildren, and friends. He will be greatly missed by anyone fortunate to know him.

Family and friends may call at the Leo M. Bean and Sons Funeral Home Monday 4-7pm. Funeral Mass Tuesday 10am at St. John of Rochester Church, 8 Wickford Way Fairport, NY 14450. Interment, Holy Sepulchre Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Veterans Outreach Center.

Cemetery Details

Holy Sepulchre Cemetery

2461 Lake Avenue
Rochester, NY 14612

Previous Events

Calling Hours

SEP **25**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Leo M Bean and Sons Funeral Home
2771 Chili Avenue
Rochester, NY 14624
(585) 426-7830
beanfuneralhome@rochester.rr.com
<http://www.beanandsonsfuneralhome.com/>

Funeral Mass

SEP **26**. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. John of Rochester
8 Wickford Way
Fairport, NY 14450

Tribute Wall

FB

“ I just found out that Ron has passed away. So sad to hear that awful news. Ron and I were friends and roommates at the U. of Miami. I remember him as being a really cool guy--a real-life Fonzie driving his Pontiac convertible. Ron was a man's man. Imagine volunteering to join the Marines at the height of the Vietnam war. He was a ladies' man, too. He had that magical star quality that him irresistible to women. Although we lost touch after college, leading separate lives in different places, in recent years we connected through email. I got worried when he stopped responding. Now, sadly, I know why. Goodbye, Ron, I'll never forget the good times we had when we were young, and I'll always remember you, my good buddy.

Frank Brady - September 22, 2024 at 09:44 AM

JB

“ The Veterans Outreach Center extends our deepest sympathy in Ronald's passing.

We acknowledge and are truly grateful for his service to our country.

Joan Brandenburg - September 26, 2023 at 06:20 PM

NC

“ Gaye, we would like to send our love and condolences to you and the family. Ron was a Marine brother to our Danny, and we will always remember him that way. He would always be the one to reach out, a call a surprise visit a time to remember, he would be there. It is hard to think of any of the Danny's Marine Corp days without Ron being a part of it. We will always remember the calls on 10 November, in our family it is not only the Marine Corps Birthday but mine and our grandson Carter's birthday but we always knew Ron would call to put the day in focus. Ron will always be a part of our family story and 10 November will never be celebrated without us remembering him. The Carters, Natalie, Danielle, Christine and Courtney.

Natalie Carter - September 25, 2023 at 07:58 PM

FM

“ Gaye and to your Family, Frank and I are keeping you and your family in our prayers. You and Ron had a very special marriage. Thinking of you and your family. Love, Flo & Frank

Florence Morris - September 25, 2023 at 03:16 PM

CW

“ Had the pleasure of meeting Ron & Gaye at their lake house on Willow Ln thru are good friends Millie & Gerry about 5 yrs ago. So many good times around their fire , Millie's porch. Some of the best stories and cigars ever!!! You will be missed.... Jack & Carol Welch

Carol Welch - September 25, 2023 at 01:49 PM

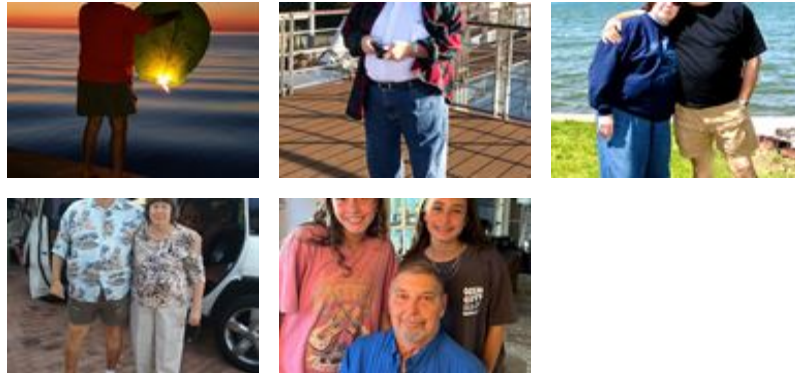
PG

“ Dear Gaye, i was very sorry to see the news about Ron in Sunday's paper. Sending sincere sympathy to you and your family. Fondly,
Pat Genberg

Pat Genberg - September 25, 2023 at 10:26 AM



“ 100 files added to the album *LifeTributes*



Leo M. Bean and Sons Funeral Home - September 25, 2023 at 09:43 AM



“ *Safe travels MY FRIEND!! Rick Howe*

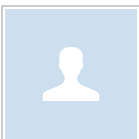
Richard Howe - September 25, 2023 at 08:45 AM



“ *All our love, Kellie & Craig Ronald purchased the Love's Journey for the family of Ronald T. Pones Sr..*



All our love, Kellie & Craig Ronald - September 24, 2023 at 07:09 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Ronald T. Pones Sr..

September 24, 2023 at 05:53 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Ronald T. Pones Sr..*



September 24, 2023 at 05:53 PM



“ *Our hearts and prayers go out to the Pones family. He was a great friend, teacher and colleague to many people. RIP Ron.*

John Lindblad - September 24, 2023 at 10:36 AM



“ *I am so sad for Ron's family. Ron was truly a "man's man" but under that tough exterior beat a heart of gold; he loved his family and would do anything to help those who needed him. The love that he and Gaye shared was so apparent whenever I had the pleasure of being in their company; I have never seen a more devoted couple. Ron will be missed by so many; I feel fortunate to have known him and experienced his kindness. RIP Ron.*

Cynthia Dana

Cynthia Dana - September 24, 2023 at 09:22 AM



“ *Ron lived well by the code of honor, courage, and commitment to God and country. Hoorah.*

Ronald Gerace - September 23, 2023 at 10:59 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Ronald T. Poness Sr..*



September 23, 2023 at 05:52 PM



“ *Mr. Ponnes was my all time favorite teacher at Gates! I had him for 3 years and took away so much knowledge. Mr. Ponnes was tough and fair in equal measure. He could get the whole class laughing at the drop of a hat but still reminded us of the importance of humility, honor, honesty and grace every day. A truly remarkable and unforgettable human!*

Sharon Kartlick - September 23, 2023 at 02:16 AM



“ *I met Ron in the late 1990s when the Vietnam vets from the 2nd Battalion 3rd Marines 3rd Marine Division was coming to age to form yearly reunions. He always presented himself as a leader but more importantly as a good listener. I can see what was written about him, shows Ron as a person to respect. He knows what he is talking about. I'm so glad that I took the time to sit down next to him at this year's past reunion in Branson and have a good talk. I will indeed miss him. He was a real Marine. Semper Fidelis, Fred Hellmann (from 81 mortars and the author of his Vietnam book, "Never Give Up".*

Fred Hellmann - September 22, 2023 at 06:58 PM



“ *R.I.P. BROTHER. SEMPER-FI*

C. MARK HAMM - September 22, 2023 at 06:07 PM

MM

“ Ron was my teacher, for 3 yrs at GC. Class of '88. I absolutely loved his classes and his stories. He was a tough teacher, but fair. Under the rough Devil Dog, unfiltered camel smoking exterior, he was a kind and gentle soul. I had issues at home, and I think he picked up on the fact that I desperately needed a father figure.

Upon graduation, I joined the Army and we kept in touch via mail. He was always excited to hear of my exploits! When I was deployed to Desert Storm, he wrote me, and we became friends. His advice and support meant a lot to me, and he understood all the feelings that go along with serving in combat. I was lucky enough to have a beer with him down at Tut's, after my tour. I still wasn't old enough to drink, but he bought me a beer and said if I was old enough to go to war, I was old enough to drink a beer! I learned a lot from Ron over the years, he was someone I considered a mentor. Although I never did get used to calling him Ron! They didn't "break the mold" with him, he WAS the mold! There will never be another one like him!

My sincere condolences to his wife Gaye, his kids, grandkids, and family, and all who loved him. He will not be forgotten! Semper Fi, Mr P! Save me a beer!

Michelle (LeFleur) Mark - September 22, 2023 at 05:28 PM

KA

Michelle, that was beautiful.

Kathy - September 22, 2023 at 06:01 PM

MM

Thank you. 😊

Michelle (LeFleur) Mark - September 22, 2023 at 09:44 PM

LO

“Mr. Poness” was one of my all time favorites at G.C. His humor and teaching style made him a wonderful teacher. Condolences to his family & friends, and may he rest peacefully.

Laurie Cervini O'Hara
Gates-Chili
Class of '75

Laurie O'Hara - September 22, 2023 at 03:03 PM

ER

“ I took his well known “US Power” elective as a Junior. I give him credit for truly presenting both sides in these lessons. I never forgot that. Thank you Mr Poness for all of your service and my condolences to the family.

Ellen Robillard - September 22, 2023 at 01:33 PM

KN

“ So very sorry to hear that Mr. Poness passed. He and my Dad (Ted Natkin) were good friends and colleagues at Gates Chili High School. Ron has known me my entire life and I have fond memories of him from when I was a student at Gates. Gaye, I am sending you and your family prayers of comfort.

Kathy Natkin - September 22, 2023 at 01:11 PM

JG

“ Mr. Poness was, without a doubt, one of the best teachers I ever had the pleasure of knowing. He taught us that learning history can be more interesting and fun than I ever thought possible! Moreover, if the class was being well-behaved, he would also share some of his own personal "life lessons" in between. From what little I knew of him, as his student, I found Mr. Poness to be a remarkable person for whom I held great respect. Now, as an adult, I only wish I could have known him better as friend.

Rest in peace, kind sir. You left a good impression on all of whom you taught and we will never forget you.

You will forever be a legend in Gates-Chili's history.

Sending my deepest condolences and prayers to his family and friends.

Joseph Grasso - September 22, 2023 at 12:18 PM

S.

“ RIP Ron. We had some great times skiing over the years. And having one at "Tuts " You were a really nice guy and teacher.

Steve .Howard - September 22, 2023 at 10:53 AM

MI

“ A "Charter Member" of our Association, Ron remained very influential since 1997 in steering our Association with knowledge, honor, compassion, humility, and dignity. And he used his wit, often dryly, to defuse situations or make a point that brought all within' hearing back to reality.

He became a friend to every Marine who met him. He will be sorely missed but will remain in our thoughts and prayers forever. We pray too for his beloved Family.

"Fair winds and following seas" Marine. Semper Fidelis.

Mick Hughes,

President, 2nd Battalion Third Marines Vietnam Veterans Association.

Mick - September 22, 2023 at 09:49 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Ronald T. Pones Sr..



September 21, 2023 at 10:14 PM

DH

“ Mr. Pones taught with great passion, I admired how he was able to get the class totally involved in the lesson. I was happy to see him at a party I was attending not too long ago and I was thrilled that he remembered me. We chatted for quite awhile, he asked me to call him Ron because "Mr. Pones" made him feel old. Such a sad loss for all who knew and loved him.

Donna Harnischfeger-Wells - September 21, 2023 at 09:59 PM

BS

“ *Mr Pones..have some great memories being your student...RIP Sir*

Bob Skinner - September 21, 2023 at 09:33 PM

JB

“ *I often think of the right minus wrong tests he gave in his class.*

john belt - September 21, 2023 at 09:13 PM

KW

“ *I always remembered what an awesome teacher Mr. Pones was. My sincerest condolences. Mr. Pones truly made a difference in his students lives.*

Kelley Wester - September 21, 2023 at 08:54 PM

DP

Mr Pones was a memorable teacher loved his no BS hard edge and kind heart .

I remember is lessons on the economics of widgets ,crackin the yardstick on your desk if you wernt paying attention and good convesations while he smoked his camel straights at the smoking lounge. Kindest regards to his family.

Dean Popoli. class of 79

Dean Popoli - September 22, 2023 at 11:10 AM

AV

...and God Said, "Ron, I can't give you more than Nine lives, the cats will be angry. Besides I need you up here to straighten some of these routy anagels, come I have a special place for you."

We were all so blessed to have him in our lives, I will miss our Buffalo games, I will miss your friendship, I will miss you, marine. God Bless. Tony and Joanne ventura

Anthony Ventura - September 23, 2023 at 12:10 PM

JJ

I never had Mr. Poness as a teacher but he knew one of the karate masters I was training under when I was 17 and we talked martial arts whenever we saw each other in school. He was always interested in how I was doing. He was a caring and great guy.

*Jim Irene
Class of 1973*

Jim Irene - September 24, 2023 at 11:58 AM

KR

I will deeply miss our spirited debates on any number of controversial topics. He debated fiercely but always with friendliness and respect. I hope he enjoyed our conversations at least half as much as I did. He is irreplaceable.

Kellie Ronald

Kellie Ronald - September 24, 2023 at 07:17 PM

HV

So very sad to learn of Ron's passing. He was such a gentleman and so very kind in any of our interactions. It always made us smile to see him. Gaye, love to you and your family during this difficult time. Our thoughts are with you.

*Andy and Holly Vomastek
Vero Beach*

Holly Vomastek - September 25, 2023 at 03:01 PM

MM

Mr. Poness was the best teacher I ever had....ever! He was tough but fair and you honestly couldn't sleep in his class or he'd break a yardstick on your desk (the nerve! LOL) But man, you were 100% prepared for that Regents Exam in the spring. I just hope St. Peter gave him a "right minus wrong" quiz before he entered the pearly gates just for good measure. Rest in peace "sunshine". You are a Gates Chili HS legend. Mary Miller (Russell) Class of '79.

Mary Miller - September 29, 2023 at 02:12 PM