



## Francis Eugene Lemme

April 26, 1935 - September 20, 2020

Francis E. "Gene" Lemme age 85 of Dixon died Sunday Sept. 20, 2020 at OSF St Anthony Medical Center in Rockford. He was born April 26, 1935 in New Holland, IL the son of Victor and Catherine (Chandler) Lemme. Gene graduated from New Holland High School and earned his Bachelor Degree from Blackburn College in Education and Art. In his early years, his paintings won several awards. His Masters Degree was from Northern Illinois University. He worked at Henry Pratt Company in Dixon for 10 years and then began his teaching career, teaching one year at Amboy High School and then 25 years with the Dixon Public Schools, mostly in the 6th grade.

Gene was a veteran of the Army, serving as an MP and then in Military Intelligence. His tour took him to Germany from 1959-1961, where he and Joan were able to visit many European countries. He was chairman of the board of directors for Open Sesame Child Care center, a past president of the Dixon Teacher Association, and a volunteer and board member at the Leydig Center for 25 years where he served as board chairman for the last 10 years. Gene married Joan Franklin July 5, 1958 in Minocqua, WI. He and Joan loved to travel and added their 50th state, Alaska, on their 60th wedding anniversary. His family enjoyed his love of cooking and his wonderful meals will be greatly missed by all. When not volunteering, Gene and Joan spent their time in their beautiful gardens, Hosta Heaven, where over the years he bred over 10,000 daylilies. The gardens won the Chicago Tribune Glorious contest in 2006 which brought many visitors. All genres of music, reading,

Sudoku and word puzzles kept him busy when indoors. Times spent sitting on his porch, enjoying the wildlife, woods, and snows of winter, were greatly treasured.

He was preceded in death by his parents, two brothers Raymond and Charles, and one sister Ellen Wunderle.

Gene is survived by his wife Joan, children Marie (Bill) Popkin of Morrison, Eric (Cali) Lemme of Urbana, Kristin (Steve) Carlson of Dixon, 7 grandchildren Brady (Chyna) Popkin, Trevor (Bre) Popkin, Stirling Lemme, Connor, Caleb, Emma and Leah Carlson, great granddaughter Nyomi Popkin and twin great grandchildren on the way. He is also survived by several nephews and their families.

Cremation rites have been accorded. A celebration of life is planned for Saturday July 10th of 2021 in Gene's garden with his lilies at 875 Raynor Rd in Dixon from 1:00 to 3:00 with a short service from 1:30 to 2:00 PM. Feel free to bring lawn chairs to sit and visit. Light refreshments will be served. All are welcome. In lieu of flowers a memorial has been established to Kreider Services in Dixon.

# Previous Events

## Service

JUL 10. 1:30 AM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Hosta Heaven  
875 Raynor Rd  
Dixon, IL 61021

## A Celebration of Life

JUL 10. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Hosta Heaven  
875 Raynor Rd  
Dixon, IL 61021

# Tribute Wall



“ Francis Eugene Lemme

October 08, 2023 at 11:30 AM



“ Francis Eugene Lemme

December 31, 2022 at 02:40 AM



“ Dear Joan and family,

*I am so sad hearing about Gene's death. So many chance encounters over the years, since Washington School, and I enjoyed every one of them.*

*Please know that this lovely, caring man will be remembered. Joan, I'm sending hugs.*

Lavonne Rush - September 24, 2020 at 01:48 PM



“ My mother, Ruth Gerdes, just loved volunteering with Gene and Joan at the Leydig Center. She was broken hearted when I gave her the news. God has another Angel with Gene's passing. We are so sorry for your loss.

*-TyAnne Gerdes Schmidt-*

TyAnne Schmidt - September 24, 2020 at 01:39 PM

TH

“ *Mr. Lemme was one of my all time favorite teachers. We had so much fun in his class that it never felt like learning, but he taught us so much! He always knew who I was, even decades after being in his class. I am grateful for his years of service and gifts of teaching so many of us. Prayers to all of you during this time.*

**Tammy (Zimmerman) Helfrich** - September 24, 2020 at 12:45 PM

DA

“ *Dale Armstrong lit a candle in memory of Francis Eugene Lemme*



**Dale Armstrong** - September 24, 2020 at 04:35 AM

PH

“ *A true renaissance man...so very talented! Sending prayers and love to all of you and thanking God for blessing me with knowing your wonderful family. ❤️ patti hey*

**patti hey** - September 23, 2020 at 10:37 AM

CB

“ *So sad to hear of Gene's passing. He was a super nice guy. Our deepest sympathies to the family. Rick, Chris, and Landon Bollman*



**Christine Bollman** - September 23, 2020 at 07:57 AM

CG

*Dear Joan and family, I am saddened to hear of your loving Gene passing. There are no words to convey that sadness! You and Gene were part of my life for many years and what a treasure that will be for me to keep. Not only was he a man of many talents and interests but also a deeply caring man for others in his life. Truly, anyone who was in his classes, or on the same staff benefitted by his friendship and uniqueness. Rest In Peace, Gene, as a whole city will miss you. 🙏💕*

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**Carolyn Gunnon** - September 24, 2020 at 01:20 PM

KS

*Joan and family, Gene was one of my daughter Jahna and I's favorite people. karen stransky*

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**karen stransky** - September 25, 2020 at 05:18 PM