

Ronald Kallinger

March 14, 1937 ~ February 10, 2023

On February 10th, Leo Ronald "Ron" Kallinger, 85, left this earthly life after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease. He was surrounded by his family, and joined his beloved wife Mary Lou in heaven. For Ron, health difficulties may have been obstacles, but never barriers. All who knew and loved him would readily agree that his was a prime example of a "life well-lived."

Ron was born in 1937 in St. Joseph MI to Leo Raymond and Adah Mae (Smith) Kallinger, and was the youngest of three children. He spent his childhood in "St. Joe," Grand Rapids, and Cadillac MI. He entered Albion College in 1955, with plans to become a Methodist minister. While singing in the Albion College Choir, he met the love of his life, Mary Lou Burgess, of Dearborn MI. They married in August 1958, and celebrated 64 years together before her passing in August 2022. They had two children, two grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Upon his graduation from Albion in 1959, Ron was called to minister to two rural Methodist congregations near Battle Creek MI. The couple, with their first child David on the way, moved into a church parsonage there. Soon, however, Ron decided to pursue a career in public education. He and Mary Lou moved into Battle Creek proper, where he began teaching at Northwestern Junior High School. Their daughter Linda was born in the Spring of 1963.

During their time in Battle Creek Ron was active in working for the benefit of his fellow teachers as a dedicated member of the National Education Association. In 1966 he was elected and served one year as president of the NEA's local chapter. In 1968 the family moved to East Lansing MI, where Ron taught at McDonald Middle School. He also completed his coursework and obtained a masters degree in education from Michigan State University.

An extensive vacation to the West in 1969 became an eventual move to Fort Collins CO in 1972, where Mary Lou pursued her masters degree in pipe organ performance at Colorado State University, while Ron taught at Boltz Junior High School. During his time teaching in Fort Collins, he once again served a year as president of the local NEA chapter.

After teaching for nearly two decades, Ron made his final career change in the early 1980s. He was recruited by a good friend to come to work as a salesman with New York Life, where he thrived. In 1986 Ron and Mary Lou moved to New England—first to Connecticut, and then to Essex Junction VT, where Ron continued with New York Life, becoming a sales trainer.

Upon his retirement in 2000 Ron and Mary Lou moved to Logan UT, to be closer to their grandkids in Salt Lake City. Ron was later diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease, and this spurred their relocation to Salt Lake. As the disease progressed, and with Mary Lou suffering from Alzheimer's Disease, they moved into an assisted living facility at The Ridge Cottonwood in Holladay UT. To no one's surprise Ron both embraced, and thrived within, the Ridge Community, and was beloved both by his fellow residents and the care staff in return.

For Ron, the desire for continued education, curiosity, and awareness of the world around us never stopped. He loved to read, followed the news, and kept abreast of world events with a passion. And he loved being able to shine at The Ridge Cottonwood's weekly trivia gathering!

Ron was preceded in death by his wife Mary Lou; parents Leo and Adah Kallinger; sister Dorothy Ann Kallinger Muske, and brother Richard Lee Kallinger. He is survived by son David Alan Kallinger (Judi), Millcreek UT; daughter Linda Ruth Kallinger (Wendy Shedd), South Burlington VT; grandson Nicholas Allan Kallinger (Jamie) and great grandson Marcus David Kallinger, West Valley City UT; and granddaughter Adriane Elyse Kallinger, Millcreek UT.

As was the case five months ago at Mary Lou's passing, we wish to express our deep gratitude to the director and staff at The Ridge Cottonwood for the love and care they have provided for Ron. We are also profoundly thankful for the comfort and support provided to Ron, and to his loved ones, at the end of his life's journey by Utah Home Health Care and Hospice.

In keeping with his last wishes, a memorial service will be scheduled later in the year, after the return of warmer weather. In lieu of flowers, we invite donations to the St. Paul's Food Pantry, 261 South 900 East, Salt Lake City UT 84102; or to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, at www.michaeljfox.org.