



Ramon LaCoste

July 27, 1923 - February 22, 2008

Ramon E. "Ray" LaCoste, 84, of Bourbonnais, died Friday (Feb. 22, 2008) at Riverside Medical Center, following a short illness. Visitation will be from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Monday at Clancy-Gernon Funeral Home, Bourbonnais. A funeral Mass will be celebrated at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Bradley. The Rev. John Antczak will officiate. Entombment will be in All Saints Cemetery Mausoleum. Mr. LaCoste was a retired music education teacher and band director from Kankakee School District 111, where he taught at Kankakee High School and previously Kankakee Junior High School and Westview High School. He was born July 27, 1923, in Kankakee, the son of Elmer E. and Florence Holland LaCoste. He received his bachelor's degree from Illinois Wesleyan and his master's and advanced degree from the University of Illinois. He served in the U.S. Army, in the 41st Division, the first group to occupy Hiroshima after the bomb. He earned three Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star. He was a member of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Bradley. He was director/drum major for Kankakee Blackhawks Drum and Bugle Corps in the 1950s, played 40 years with the Community Band in Kankakee and taught private music lessons at Veronda's. He was a former member of the Elks Lodge, a member of the Bradley VFW and the Kankakee American Legion. He was honored with "Grandfather of the Year" for the state of Illinois in 2001. Surviving are his wife, the former Velma F. Palmer, whom he married June 25, 1949, at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Kankakee; one son and daughter-in-law, Dr. Bruce and Mary LaCoste of Bourbonnais; one

daughter, Julie LaCoste of Bradley; and three grandchildren, Brian and Kathryn LaCoste, and James "Bobby" LaCoste.

Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the album Tribute Album



Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes - December 07, 2010 at 02:48 PM



“ Mr. LaCoste taught the flute to my 12 year old daughter. i;½She started lessons last summer. i;½She enjoyed her lessons.

I always sat in on the lessons and found Mr. LaCoste's style of teaching

very refreshing. i;½He had a great sense

of humor and was always joking with her.

I am deeply sorry for your loss. i;½I will miss him and his smile.

Joyce Raspolich i;½###imported-begin##Joyce & Katie Raspolich###imported-end##

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ We are extremely sorry to hear about your loss. Mr. LaCoste was a great instructor and played a major part in stimulating our interest in music. Take care, Velma, and know that there are people thinking about you whom you might not expect. You've been great to work with over the past few years, and we hope to see you soon. May all those who have been touched by Ray in some way keep that memory within their hearts. I know we will.###imported-begin##Peter & Keith Mullady###imported-end##

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ Mr. LaCoste became my band instructor in 7th grade at West Junior and continued throughout my 4 years at Westview. I have many fond memories of Mr. LaCoste. I have thought of him often throughout the years and will continue to remember him with great respect. He certainly will be missed.##imported-begin##Lisa Maass##imported-end##

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ Dear LaCoste Family,

Please accept my sincere condolences on the passing of Ray. Ray was a significant influence in my development, and ultimate enjoyment of percussion music! I can recall his constant reminder of: "Band you are only as good as the least talented individual here today". Those words resonated with me because if you think about it, we each had to better ourselves, in order for the whole band to perform better. I also have very fond memories of our annual visits to Northwestern college campus for what was known as band day. One day I recall there were over 6,000 band members from across the country in attendance. Bruce, I recall how proud your father was of all your accomplishments, and reminded us as band members of the commitment of time and resources it took to make that college experience happen for you. I trust and hope your dental career has been treating you well over the years.

In parting, your fathers kind, and when needed stern reminders have stayed with me for the past 35 years, and I will always cherish them.

Dan Micha, Westview Class of 1975 (Drum Section)##imported-begin##Dan Micha##imported-end##

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ Dear Velma & Family

So sorry about Ray. He was a kind, gently man. We know he will be greatly missed.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you today and always
Don & Virginia
Dominick

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ Dear LaCoste Family, I was so sorry to hear about your loss. Mr. LaCoste was one of the most influential teachers that I had throughout my educational years. He instilled his love of music and band countless numbers of students and it has been passed on to my three children -- all of whom were in high school (and college) marching band. Bruce, I remember how proud he was of you for your commitment to the Northwestern University Marching Band throughout both your undergraduate and graduate years. My thoughts and prayers are with you. Ray will be deeply missed.

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“ John and I both taught with Ray at West Jr. & Westview. We know how sad his passing is for you so we pray God's loving embrace to hold you and give you comfort and peace. May your fond memories help ease your loss.

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ Velma and Family:

Our teaching years at Westview are remembered fondly when we think of Ray. ĩ½He worked hard to give his students the best they could get, but he was also a great associate who had much to contribute to any project under way. ĩ½Those memories linger on and make his passing a time to celebrate the accomplishments he experienced and the contributions he made to the musical scene here in the Kankakee area. ĩ½We add our prayers to those of many others who knew Ray for his repose and for the family members who will miss him most. ĩ½God bless you all as you move ahead.

With deepest appreciation.

Ric Edwards & Sonia Baspineiro-Edwards###imported-begin###Ric & Sonia Edwards###imported-end###

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ Mr. LaCoste was both of our band instructor for 6 years (1969 - 1974). ĩ½He played an insturmental part in our growth and love of music. ĩ½He was one of our favorite teachers and we have nothing but fond memories of him. ĩ½In fact, due to his influence of the love of music, both of our daughters were involved in band. ĩ½He will be missed greatly by both of us.###imported-begin###Steve and Debbie Busch###imported-end###

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ Bruce, Mary and Family ĩ½we are still in Phoenix and wanted to extend our sincere condolences on the passing of your father.###imported-begin###Darla and Terry Meyers###imported-end###

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ I took piano and clarinet lessons from Ray at Veronda's several years ago while I was in high school. Ray promised me that he would never make me play classical music, and he stuck to that promise. He introduced me to big band and jazz music, and always made the music fun and meaningful. He touched my life through music, as I am sure he did for so many others, and I will always remember that. He was a great man and teacher and will be missed.##imported-begin##Amy Lorenz##imported-end##

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ Velma,

I can't begin to tell you how much we will miss Ray here at Veronda's Music.

For over 20 years he has been a fixture in our studios. I will miss him running down the stairs to have me come listen to one of his star students. ĩ½We have all lost a great friend and a great mentor. ĩ½I was always proud to share his illustrious past with new customers. ĩ½Take care and remember we are right next door for you.##imported-begin##Bill Veronda##imported-end##

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ I graduated from Westview in 1975. ĩ½I played the baritone and I have many, many fond memories of band and Mr LaCoste. ĩ½I am married to a band teacher, and all my kids play instruments. ĩ½My youngest son plays baritone now also. ĩ½You have my deepest sympathy.

Jennifer Roop Troutman##imported-begin##Jennifer Roop Troutman##imported-end##

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ Even though I attended East Jr., the old Kankakee H.S., and
Eastridge H.S.,
I still heard alot about teachers on the
"other side of town", even more so
when music was a part
of all those years....Mr. LaCoste was one of those teachers. From
what I was told, you not only learned about making music, but you
also had a good time doing it!!
And I'm sure even now the
Heavens are
rejoicing thru his music!##imported-
begin##John Stith##imported-end##

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ I went to Westview High School from 1974 to 1978. I was in the Kayhawk band at the time. We had a nickname for Mr. LaCoste. We called him "Brother Ray". Some of my favorite high school memories are of the band. Whether we were out on the football field getting ready for a game or playing at a pep assembly. I remember going to Northwestern for Band day. I remember Bruce was in the band at NIU at the time. Ray was so proud of him. I would have to say that most of my friends were in the band. I can remember when Mr. Lacoste would work as the hall monitor during lunch hours. When we were done eating some of us would go to where he was stationed just to visit with him. I was at the concert at LCC last week; I know Ray would have been very proud. I know I was. I have a daughter that is a senior at KHS this year. She has been the percussion section leader for 2 years. I have heard her say that no matter what classes she had to take..she wouldn't drop band. It is the FUN class. She studies hard the rest of the day. I must say that most of her friends are in band too! I remember about 6 years ago, my oldest had started taking piano classes at Veronda's. I saw Ray up there giving lessons and we visited for a long time. My daughter even remembered him from that day. I apologize for not getting to see you, but after the concert I had to get home to pack my younger daughter, because she was leaving in the morning with St. Paul's basketball team. God Bless you and your family. Joyce "Goesbeck" Witheft

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



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“ We were so sorry to learn about Mr. LaCoste's death. ĩ½We really enjoyed having Mr.LaCoste as a music teacher. He was a very caring teacher, who was always willing to listen to your problems. He enjoyed telling us about his son. ĩ½A great person!!!! Roger & Charlotte Barwegen##imported-begin##Roger Barwegen & Charlotte Schuler Barwegen##imported-end##

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM



“ Velma, I am so sorry for your loss. I remember being at your house so many years ago for a pool party when we all worked downtown. You hang in there. I will be seeing you. Sandy##imported-begin##Sandy (Johns) LaFrance##imported-end##

February 23, 2008 at 04:37 PM