



Alan Arthur "Papa Al" Grambo

August 26, 1941 - January 16, 2024

Alan Arthur "Papa Al" Grambo, 82, of Indianapolis, passed away in his sleep on January 16, 2024. He was born August 26, 1941 in Cleveland, Ohio to the late Albert A. Grambo and Irene I. Ojala Grambo. Al was a graduate of Parma High School, Class of 1959 and received his bachelor's degree from Fenn College, which was the precursor of Cleveland State University.

He married Janet Cowgill in 1963, and together, they had seven children. They now have 36 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. He deeply loved his family. Following the example of his wife and children after nearly 40 years, he joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS).

At age 12, Al started playing table tennis with his father, and found a life-long joy of playing and coaching table tennis. He was an Olympic-trained member of USATT, the USA Table Tennis governing body, as well as various table tennis clubs.

Al was an electrical engineer. He retired from Naval Avionics after nearly 30 years of service. Deciding, "that's good enough for Government work," he spent the next decade teaching at Central 9 Career Center. Realizing that "there's no easy job," he retired a second time. In his spare time, he discovered another way to serve others; he became a forensic specialist, investigating the causes of electrical fires. He loved solving problems.

Al loved to tinker and make robots, having fun as he engineered enhancements. He enjoyed traveling, biking, snorkeling, and visiting National

Parks. His mind was quick, and he loved puns. He believed that seven days without puns makes one weak/week.

Visitation will be Friday, January 26, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. until the time of service at 11:00 a.m. at Fishers-Castleton Chapel, 9900 Allisonville Road, Fishers.

Al is survived by his children, Marcene Williams (Kenneth), Elaine Lee (Steve), Jeanette Watson (Val), Andrew Grambo (Janalyn), Cynthia Schofield (Chris), Beth Ashton (Jeremy) and Karen Bell (Michael); 36 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; and sister, Arlene Borthwick (Bill). Al was preceded in death by his wife, Janet, and his grandson, Timothy Grambo.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the LDS Humanitarian Fund.

Cemetery Details

Union Chapel Cemetery

8306 Union Chapel Road
Indianapolis, IN 46240

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 26. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Shirley Brothers Fishers-Castleton Chapel
9900 N. Allisonville Road
Fishers, IN 46038
(317) 841-7878
info@shirleybrothers.com
<https://www.shirleybrothers.com>

Funeral Service

JAN 26. 11:00 AM (ET)

Shirley Brothers Fishers-Castleton Chapel
9900 N. Allisonville Road
Fishers, IN 46038
(317) 841-7878
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Tribute Wall

JS

“ I know Al as Mr. Grambo. He was my electronics technology instructor at C9. Under his instruction I had my eyes opened to many things from programming to circuit fabrication. I was even able to compete in circuit assembly contests through my attendance. The program allowed me to obtain dual credit and admit to college before I was technically out of high school. It allowed me to skip SAT/ACT requirements. It opened the door to scholarship which sent me a residual from a surplus after I graduated with a four year degree. The scholarship money I had during my university years presented a cost savings that allowed me to matriculate in a Juris Doctor program and I am now an attorney. Looking back on the two year experience with Alan Grambo I can now see it opened my eyes a bit, while I would have otherwise been smoking cigarettes and throwing rocks at the trains that rolled through. The benefit bestowed on me from his instruction has become exponential. I was too young and uncivilized to realize what was happening to properly thank Mr. Grambo in my teenage years. Thank you Alan Grambo! He is among a small group of teachers who had a real influence on my rearing. I also remember he showed us his (a 57 maybe) Chevy. Rest in peace!

- J. Slagle

John Slagle - August 14, 2024 at 10:50 PM

KW

“ I first met Al when I started playing table tennis at the old apartment complex on 56th Street across the highway from Lawrence Central High School. He was the first person I met, and immediately started teaching the game. He gave me lessons for free and immediately made me feel like I was apart of the family. When my grandfather died in 2016, he unknowingly/unwittingly became like a grandfather figure to me. We would ride together to the table tennis club, and he give me a ride home. Always wanting to learn more about Spanish and even brought me back a souvenir from his trip Australia. Heartbroken as I am, I find happiness that the last time I got to see him and hear his voice, was when he dropped me off home one last time from our Thursday Morning Table Tennis. I'm incredibly heartbroken by this loss, but honoured to have a known such a friend like Al. T'estimo Papa Al. May flights of Angels sing thee to thy rest.

Krys Warfield - January 28, 2024 at 12:56 AM

TM

“ I was like a kid in a candy store whenever AL and I would get together and he would have little teaching lessons about electronics and electricity. I realized then what an important gem he was. His ability to explain Electronics was eye-opening, very comprehensible and it made me sad when I knew one day he will be going home. So I thanked God and cherished every opportunity that I had to spend with a good friend of mine for about 15 to 20+ years now. He taught me how to be a professional umpire in the sport of table tennis and was always interested in my development as an official. We formed a great Friendship over the years, he, his beloved late wife Jan and myself. They were always special to me treating me like I was family. You couldn't have asked for a better people to be friends with. And so to my mentor and teacher, I'm missing you already OI' buddy. God bless!

Tony Miller - January 27, 2024 at 09:38 AM

SH

“ AL GRAMBO

*Player, teacher, a friend and mo,
An exceptional person, Al Grambo.
Known, loved and respected by all,
Have a question? Just give him a call.
Meet him on the table, better bring your best,
He will most surely put you to the test.
Do they have tables in heaven? I surely don't know,
But if they do, Dick and Al will surely put on a show!!!!*

*LORD BLESS,
Ken*

Sharon - January 26, 2024 at 01:10 AM

SH

Thanks, Ken, for expressing how so many of us feel about AL. He certainly was an exceptional person and I am so privileged to have been his friend, enjoying many tournaments and coaching sessions and especially enjoyed the trip to Australia. You will be missed, my friend. Condolences to the family.

Sharon - January 26, 2024 at 01:16 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Alan Arthur "Papa Al" Grambo.*



January 23, 2024 at 08:03 PM

HR

“ I was fortunate to have Alan as my partner in a doubles table tennis tournament. Of course we won!

Harry Riebe, another Naval Avionics retiree

Harry Riebe - January 22, 2024 at 09:30 AM

JY

“ I worked with Al from 1977 to 79 at “NAFI”. This was the start of my career out of college. Al was a great mentor. He was always positive, wise, warm, smart and encouraging. I appreciate having been with Al and his investment in me.

James Y - January 21, 2024 at 10:58 AM

RP

“ Al was a great friend at the table tennis center and always helped me with my game. When the USTTA increased the diameter of the ball Al volunteered to modify my robot to accept the new size and it worked perfectly to this day. Condolences to family and friends. Al will be missed.

Richard A Powlen - January 21, 2024 at 10:09 AM

JP

“ Al Grambo was one of the kindest people I met in the sport of Table Tennis more than 35 years ago. Everyone that knew Al was a better person by knowing him. I would have never known Al if not for the sport. As far as I'm concerned he is in the TT HOF as a player, coach and umpire. His passion for the sport was unmatched. You will be missed by everyone who's life you touched. Condolences to his family and friends. ❤️

John Petty - January 20, 2024 at 05:33 PM

SG

I played table tennis for the last 50 years and Al was there from the beginning. A kind soul, witty, always ready to help others. Miss him already.

Steve Gaines - January 21, 2024 at 04:26 PM

ST

“ Thank you Mr. Grambo for being a great coach and friend. You were always kind and put others' needs before your own. You are missed.

Stephen Toroni - January 20, 2024 at 10:30 AM

BP

“ In the sport of Table Tennis, Al was a dedicated player, coach, and umpire for more than 50 years. In the 2007 National Senior Games, Al won Gold in Men's Singles, Silver in Men's Doubles, and Silver in Mixed Doubles. In the 2023 National Senior Games, he won an award in Men's Doubles. Al will be missed by his many table tennis friends throughout the United States.

Bob Petty - January 19, 2024 at 04:38 PM

MF

“ We were in another country serving an 18 month mission. Our front steps to our home were wearing thin and without any one requesting Al saw a need, grabbed his grandson, and proceeded to build the front steps every one entering our home uses. We were just one of the many Papa Al served without anyone asking or anyone knowing. Thanks Al we think of you always as we enter our home ❤️

Marcia French - January 19, 2024 at 02:34 PM

JS

“ When Chris and Cindy married 25 years ago, we were delighted to meet Al and Jan and they welcomed us as friends into their family circle. Even though a lot of distance separated us, we made sure to see them when they came to visit Cindy's family at least twice a year. I learned two things: never compete with Jan in word games and if Al can't fix it, it's unfixable and if it can be imagined, Al could make it!

Say Hi to Dennis and Cami for me, Al!

Joan Schofield - January 19, 2024 at 10:59 AM

KZ

“ In my adult life I kept saving and saving parts and pieces to build a train set. So when I embarked on my journey a year ago Al began to help me w my specialty engines. He had so much fun he built himself his own railroad!

Kim P Zylstra - January 18, 2024 at 05:35 PM