



## Richard Louis Westerman

October 27, 1926 - April 7, 2023

Richard L. “Dick” Westerman took his last breaths on April 7, 2023 at Boardman Lake Glens in Traverse City, surrounded by family. He practiced law in Kalkaska for 35 years.

Dick was born on October 27, 1926 in Jackson, Michigan to the late George and Carmen (Wagner) Westerman. He was the eldest of four children. His parents built a log cottage “Trails End” on Torch Lake in the 1930s where Dick spent his summers working at Rice’s General Store and falling in love with northern Michigan.

After graduating from Jackson High School in 1944 Dick enlisted in the Army Air Force and served in the 3705th AAF Base Unit until being discharged after World War II ended.

Dick attended Michigan State University while working at A & P grocery and at Sager Concrete Products in Jackson, and at Industrial Transport Company in Lansing. After graduating with a B.A. in 1949 he built, owned and operated a golf driving range in Jackson before moving to Ohio to attend law school. There he worked at Firestone Tire & Rubber Company and in the Treasurer’s Office at Ohio Northern University where employees thanked him for getting their paychecks on “pay day” for the first time in five years.

Dick met Janet "Pat" Taft in Jackson in 1952; they married in 1954 and had a daughter, Laura, in 1956. After graduating in the top two from Ohio Northern University Law School class of 1956, Dick took a two-year position as Assistant Trust Officer at the Mount Union Bank in Alliance, Ohio prior to moving his young family to Kalkaska to be near his family's summer home. In 1958 he opened a law office in downtown Kalkaska, upstairs over a hardware store. To his surprise his first client found him while he was moving his furniture in. Clients kept him busy for the next 35 years, and they followed when he moved his law office to Walnut and Third where he also opened a Title Insurance company. For a number of years Dick also served part-time as Kalkaska County Prosecutor. Dick always loved to forage in the woods for morels and berries and he discovered that an off-road motorcycle was fun. He needed a sturdy jacket to protect him from brambles, but didn't think a black leather jacket befitted a prosecutor, so he got a white leather jacket. His family still laughs about him riding his motorcycle in his white leather jacket with a cigar in his mouth. They were all grateful when he gave up cigars.

Dick often joked that any time he missed a meeting he got elected president of something, so he tried not to miss any meetings. Over the years he proudly served as president of the Kalkaska Trout Festival, the Kalkaska Rotary Club, and as a Board member of the Traverse City Old Town Playhouse. After retirement when he and Pat spent winters near Las Vegas he was an active volunteer with the Salvation Army.

Dick always enjoyed sharing his knowledge and helping others. He is survived, and deeply missed, by his loving wife Pat (married almost 69 years), his daughter Laura, his brother George "Bill" Westerman (wife Lucille), many nieces, nephews and dear friends he loved. Dick was preceded in death by his parents, his sisters Lynn (Will) White and Anne (Rick) Disler, and by a premature baby daughter, Jean.

Dick's family wishes to thank the caring staff at Boardman Lake Glens who are like family, and Hospice of Michigan who provided great comfort during his last days.

A Celebration of Life will be held later in the spring and the date and time will be announced when available. Arrangements have been entrusted to Kalkaska Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

# Tribute Wall

SD

“ *What a beautifully well written tribute to Mr. Westerman! My heart goes out to you, Pat and Laura. After reading more about your husband and dad, now I know why my dad called him "one of my best friends." Dad (Don DePeel), was always in a better mood after visiting with Dick. Not just because Dick employed him for remodeling jobs and such, but because they truly enjoyed each others company from what I remember in the 1970's and 80's. As Dick is at Peace in Heaven, may you be comforted with good memories, good friends and family, and a loving God.*

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**Susan DePeel** - April 19, 2023 at 06:22 PM

DT

*Pat and Laura, This is Susan DePeel's sister, the oldest of six of the DePeel family. Dick was a special person and we enjoyed seeing him and talking to him around town, or at my mom and dad's house. I remember my dad, Don DePeel, saying that Dick always said when he died he wanted Don DePeel to build him a pine box to bury him in! I have many fond memories of Dick. May God bless you! Dawn DePeel Triplett*

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**Dawn DePeel Triplett** - April 21, 2023 at 05:28 PM

PR

*Pat and Laura, My sincere sympathy to both of you in the passing of Dick. I remember numerous conversations and meetings with Dick in his years as an attorney, and as Kalkaska County Prosecuting Attorney, and my years as County Clerk & Clerk of the 46th Circuit Court. Dick was always friendly and polite and always great to converse with. I had lost contact with you folks after Dick's retirement and your moving from your home in Kalkaska. Dick never met a stranger and could converse with anyone about anything. I know this leaves a huge void in your family, but know how much he loved and enjoyed both of you, as he conversed with you both in mind. Hold your many memories close, they do help, and know he is at peace now and you will see him again.*

*Patty Rodgers*

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**Patty Rodgers** - June 04, 2023 at 11:51 AM

AL

“ *Our deepest sympathies to you Pat and family. We remember you well as Aunt Joyce and Uncle Bob's neighbors and friends.  
Warmly, The LaForest Family*



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**Amy LaForest-Thomas** - April 19, 2023 at 03:37 PM