



Clarence 'Sonny' Means

November 27, 1927 - July 7, 2016

ADRIAN – Clarence T. 'Sonny' Means, Jr., age 88 of Adrian, passed away peacefully in his sleep Thursday, July 7, 2016 at Lenawee Medical Care Facility.

He was born November 27, 1927, in Saginaw, Michigan to Clarence and Elsie (Offenborn) Means, Sr., and in 1946 graduated from Saginaw High School where he was a basketball stand-out. Sonny went on to play varsity basketball at Michigan State University under Coach Pete Newell. He earned both his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from MSU.

Sonny served in the Army, stationed in Korea.

On March 25, 1950, Sonny married his high school sweetheart, Bess Speerstra, and they have celebrated 66 years together.

Sonny loved basketball and coached at Michigan State University, Western Michigan University, Adrian College, and most recently at Adrian Public Schools where he also taught, retiring in 1988. Sonny was an avid golfer and was a fixture at Centerview Golf Course where he also gave lessons. He was inducted into the Saginaw County Sports Hall of Fame for his contribution to the sport of basketball. He was a member of the First United Methodist Church.

In addition to his wife, Bess, he is survived by their children: Matthew (Pam) Means of Grand Rapids, MI, Timothy Means of New Jersey, Meredith Means of Heidelberg, Germany, and Melissa 'Lisa' (John) Havel of Carmel, IN; eight grandchildren: Lauren (Justin) Brock, Madeline, Rebecca, Natalie, and

Camille Means and Sarah, Danielle, and Eric Havel as well as three great grandchildren: Jayden, Chase and Calvin Brock.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

A memorial celebration of Sonny's life will take place at noon, Wednesday, July 13, 2016 at Wagley Funeral Home with Rev. Christopher Brundage officiating. The family will receive friends at the funeral home Tuesday from 4 to 8 p.m. and again Wednesday from 11 a.m. until the service.

Contributions in memory of Sonny are suggested to The Salvation Army.

Online condolences and memories may be shared at www.WagleyFuneralHomes.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 13. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Wagley Funeral Home (Adrian)
1501 W. Maumee St.
Adrian, MI 49221
(517) 263-1400
info@wagleyfuneralhome.com
<https://www.WagleyFuneralHome.com>

Tribute Wall



“ Clarence 'Sonny' Means

January 28, 2023 at 12:24 PM



“ Dear Meredith, Mrs Means and family,
When we got the news of your Dads passing we were traveling in the Netherlands and suddenly before our eyes the center lane was green & white. May your Dad rest in Spartan heaven. Love, Debbie & Alphonse

DebAGilbert - July 16, 2016 at 08:22 AM



“ Dear Meredith, Mrs Means and family,
When we got the news of your Dads passing we were traveling in the Netherlands and suddenly before our eyes the center lane was green & white. May your Dad rest in Spartan Heaven. Love, Debbie & Alphonse



Debbie Gilbert - July 16, 2016 at 03:26 AM

JA

“ *Meredith,
Thinking of you and your family during this time. The photos of
Sonny and your family are wonderful. I like to think of your Dad
"camel-walking" into his next adventure!
Blessed Peace,
Jane Williams*

Jane - July 14, 2016 at 12:15 AM



“ I wish to express my condolences to the family of Clarence Means for his recent death. When I read the obituary of Clarence Means in the Adrian Telegram, it gave me a twinge of nostalgia. I knew Clarence (I never called him Sonny) as a small child. We both lived in the same neighborhood on Saginaw's East Side near downtown. My name is Charles Cook, and I'm sure you have never heard of me. I lived in the 400 block of North Weadock Street, and I believe Clarence lived on or near Johnson Street, near Baum Street, and also near the Salvation Army Building. The Salvation Army building had a gymnasium and I am sure Clarence sent countless hours there shooting baskets and honing his basketball skills which would subsequently prove to be so important in his life.

My memory took me back to the early 1930's when I first encountered Clarence. I remember him as a scrawny kid in knickers, with a thatch of red-blond straight hair and lots of freckles. Most of us were scrawny kids in those days. We played together and he visited my house many times. I don't recall if he started elementary school at the same time I did, and attended Crary-Lincoln elementary school, then Central Junior School, and subsequently Saginaw High School. We were three days apart in age, Clarence was born on November 27 and I was born on November 30, 1927. I graduated from Saginaw High School in 1945. I am very proud of Clarence and the success he achieved in athletics and his professional life. I'm sure he was a loving and loyal husband and father. He came a long way in his life from relatively humble beginnings as a child in Saginaw.

I graduated in 1945 and a week after graduating I entered the Army Specialized Training Program at Michigan State University. I spent two years in the Army Air Force.

Also, I wed my wife in 1948; she also graduated from Saginaw High in 1945. She died last year, after 67 years of marriage, so I do understand the grief you and your family are going through. I'm sure your family provide a large measure of comfort during this ordeal.

I have resided in Tecumseh for 48 years and over the years have read articles in the paper concerning Clarence's career. It was

*heartening to see his success.
Again, my prayers are with the Means family.*

Charles Cook - July 13, 2016 at 07:30 PM

LB

*Mr. Cook,
Thank you for the kind words and for sharing these memories. I am
Clanence's oldest granddaughter, Lauren, and I enjoyed reading this
so much as "Papa" didn't talk of his childhood often. Thank you.
Blessings to you,
Lauren Means Brock*

Lauren Brock - July 14, 2016 at 12:21 PM

BW

“*Coach Means was one of the two father figures in my life. He
helped me become a better teacher, coach, friend, mentor, and
parent by both his advice and the way he lived his life. I can't thank
him enough for helping me. I will always have positive memories of
him. He was a great role model for me. Thanks Coach.*

Bill Vander Woude

Bill Vander Woude - July 13, 2016 at 10:01 AM

AP

“ Dear Meredith & Family,

We are so sorry for your loss. We wish you much strength during this time of sorrow. Your dad certainly lived a full life and gave so much back to his community through his love for sports.

Our condolences to your family,

Anne & Jeff Powers

Mary & Marty Malaspina

Anne Powers - July 12, 2016 at 08:50 PM

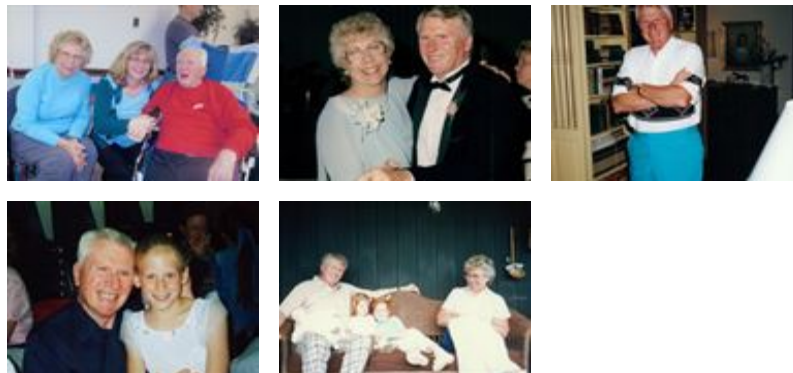
MC

“ *Bess I did not know Sonny, but do know that you cared about and for him diligently. Hope you are getting some needed rest and have some comfort in y our memories of your life together.*
Marjorie Castle

Marjorie Castle - July 12, 2016 at 12:03 PM



“ *83 files added to the album Life Tributes*



Wagley Funeral Home - July 12, 2016 at 07:50 AM

BS

“ *Barb Benington and her "Idiot Spawn" purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Clarence 'Sonny' Means.*



Barb Benington and her "Idiot Spawn" - July 11, 2016 at 05:06 PM

NS

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you Bess as you go through this time...Nicholas Schell...*

Nicholas Schell - July 11, 2016 at 04:35 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Clarence 'Sonny' Means.*



July 11, 2016 at 12:47 PM

MM

“ Matt:

I am very sorry to learn about you Dad. Growing up with you and your family in the neighborhood and watching your Dad on the sidelines coaching the Broncos at Read Fieldhouse are all fond memories. Sonny was always a presence in any room with his laughter, humor and humility. The fun he had with the other parents at the CMU football games makes me smile. Alzheimer sucks. It sucks the life out of everyone in the family. My thoughts are also with your Mom. Sonny was a good father, husband, grandfather and role model for his grandchildren.

I will not be able to attend the service in person but will be there in spirit. Love and prayers to you, your Mom, family and your father.

*John Wunderlich, I.C.E.
Vice President of Sales*

Matt Means - July 11, 2016 at 10:16 AM

LB

“ 7 files added to the tribute wall



Lauren Brock - July 11, 2016 at 08:04 AM

LB

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Lauren Brock - July 11, 2016 at 07:56 AM



“ Beautiful Whisper was purchased for the family of Clarence 'Sonny' Means.



July 11, 2016 at 07:44 AM

LF

“ Love, your BGSU volleyball family purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Clarence 'Sonny' Means.




Love, your BGSU volleyball family - July 10, 2016 at 04:49 PM

GH

“ Greg Hermann purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Clarence 'Sonny' Means.



Greg Hermann - July 10, 2016 at 01:59 PM


Michelle
Vaughn

“ *Sonny was such a joy to photograph at the fall balls and proms at Lenawee medical. I always looked forward to his smile. He will be very missed!*

*Michelle-
M L Vaughn Photography*

Michelle Vaughn - July 10, 2016 at 01:32 PM

LB

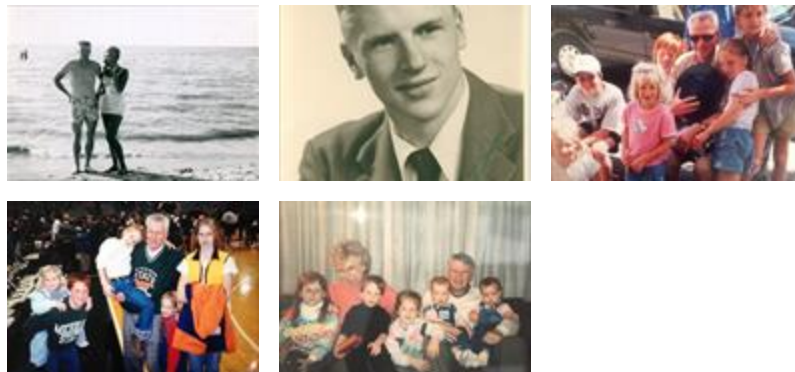
“ *5 files added to the tribute wall*



Lauren Means Brock - July 10, 2016 at 11:01 AM

LB

“ *6 files added to the tribute wall*



Lauren Means Brock - July 10, 2016 at 10:56 AM

CR

“ Although, we lost touch after 1978, what Coach did, taught and what he meant for this lost, lonely, broken young boy at Adrian High School ('74-'78), had a profound impact on me then and in my life, which helped shape to who I am today. He epitomized what tough love, discipline, endurance, compassion and care was, traits until I met him on the basketball court in '74, and up to that point in my life, I had never experienced in a man. His intuition and heart towards me was something I will never forget. Not that he felt sorry for me, because he didn't, and he certainly would not allow me to feel sorry for myself! He elevated my confidence to "survive" my high school "daze" and self-worth and potential life purpose after school. For this and his life I celebrate! Thank you coach. To the entire Means family, and especially to Melissa (since we were classmates) may God overwhelm you with support, peace, healing and LOVE. May you forever remember and live out the legacy of Coach.

Chris Ramos

Chris Ramos - July 09, 2016 at 02:37 PM

JR

“ Always a great neighbor with a warm smile and gracious words - another quality graduate of Saginaw High and Michigan State University!! Go Green and rest peacefully Sonny. My prayers for comfort and deepest sympathy to all of you; Bess, Matt, Tim, Meredith and Lisa.

Jackie Lemon Reynolds - July 09, 2016 at 11:04 AM