



## Peter H. Froehle

May 7, 1937 - January 3, 2022

Peter H. Froehle, age 84, of St. Cloud, MN, passed away on January 3, 2022, while surrounded by loved ones, following an extended and courageous battle with Parkinson's Disease. Peter was the eldest of eleven children, born on May 7, 1937, to Harold and Violet (Ehresmann) Froehle of Melrose, MN, and later of Thief River Falls, MN. In high school Peter excelled at sports, particularly football and track, making it to the State meet as a shot putter; and declining a football scholarship at North Dakota State to attend St. John's University.

At St. John's Peter continued his track and football career until he experienced a career ending knee injury his sophomore year. Peter graduated from St. John's University in 1959 with double majors in Physics and Mathematics. More importantly, while at St. John's Peter met his wife of 61 years, Caroline Pfeffer, who was attending The College of St. Benedict. The two were married February 27, 1960 and had three children: Stephanie, Stephen, and Susan.

Peter began student teaching at St. John's Preparatory School in Collegeville, MN (SJP) in 1959 and continued as a teacher and coach at SJP for 52 years until he retired in 2011. While at SJP Peter coached Football, Wrestling, Track, and he started a Nordic Ski team. During Peter's 23 years coaching Football, SJP secured five Don Bosco Conference Football Championships. During

Peter's 42 years coaching Track, SJP secured seven Don Bosco Conference Championships, and in 1970 Peter coached SJP to the Minnesota Catholic Schools State Track Championship!

In addition to teaching Physics, over the years Peter taught almost every level of high school Math and was a Driver's Education instructor. He published regularly in The Physics Teacher, Physics Today, and participated in 14 separate fellowships with the likes of: 3M, US Dept. of Energy, National Science Foundation, Minnesota Higher Education Fellowship, Corning Company Fellowship, Woodrow Wilson Fellowship. A fond highlight was co-directing SJP's NASA Project from 1995-2003 during which SJP students developed seven experiments, one of which launched on Space Shuttle Discovery on August 10, 2001!

Peter's list of awards and acknowledgements is long and includes: several times being named to the Who's Who Among America's Teachers and Educators; a number of regional and national excellence in teaching awards; 1988 Central Minnesota Conference Athletic Coach of the Year; and in 1995 Peter received the Armor of Light Award from SJP for his exceptional service and commitment to the school.

Peter enjoyed bringing Physics and Math to life for students: conducting experiments in front of the school; shooting rockets off to prove a theory; and showing students that special spot in Stearns County where cars actually roll up hill.

Peter was a hard-working, kind, and generous man. Peter was also an avid family man, and he enjoyed: family camping trips, family card games, regular penny ante poker games with friends, chess, arm wrestling competitions, bicycling, cross-country skiing, canoeing, the outdoors, woodworking, a love of chocolate (Hershey bars and Caroline's chocolate chip cookies were his favorites); and the times that Caroline and he spent with their children and

grandchildren.

Peter lived by a thoughtful philosophy and definition of success, and his life was abundant in such success.

Success:

To laugh and love much

To win the respect of intelligent persons and the affection of children

To earn the approval of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends

To appreciate beauty

To find the best in others

To give of oneself without the slightest thought of return

To know that even one life has breathed easier because you have lived

Peter is survived by his wife, Caroline; children, Stephanie (Ron), Stephen (Liz), Susan; siblings, Tom, Ken, Bill, David, Mike, Bernadette, John; grandchildren, Ronald, Joseph, Kristina, Jonathon, Katy, Tracy, Meghan, and William.

He was preceded in death by his parents; siblings, Harry, Mark, Mary Jo; and grandchild, James Peter.

Visitation will take place at Wenner Funeral Home in Cold Spring on Sunday, January 9 from 2:00- 4:00 PM. Due to COVID, surgical masks will be required, and social distancing observed.

On Monday January 10 at 2:00 PM a private service will be held at the Wenner Funeral Home in Cold Spring for the immediate family, and the service will be live streamed via <https://my.gather.app/remember/peter-h-froehle>. A private interment will follow. Entries may be made in the virtual Guest

Book at [www.wennerfuneralhome.com](http://www.wennerfuneralhome.com).

Memorials to family are preferred in lieu of gifts or flowers.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 9. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

Cold Spring, Wenner Funeral Home

600 Red River Ave S

Cold Spring, MN 56320

(320) 685-7762

[office@wennerfuneralhome.com](mailto:office@wennerfuneralhome.com)

<https://www.wennerfuneralhome.com>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Peter H. Froehle*

January 29, 2023 at 09:26 AM



“ *I was very sad to learn about Mr Froehle's passing. He was one of my favorite teachers at Prep during my exchange semester in MN. Mr Froehle had so much patience with me when I had troubles understanding sinus and cosinus (mainly due to English as being a foreign language to me) and took extra time to sit down with me and study and explain. What a wonderful, caring teacher! I want to share this picture of him and me at the "Austrian dinner" we made at SJP as well as his entry in my book I let everyone sign before I left. My dearest condolences from Melk, Austria. Valerie Mayr (Kleemann)*



**Valerie Mayr** - January 24, 2022 at 08:51 AM



“ *Just saw the online obituary of “Mr. Froehle”, as our son (Steven) used to refer to him as his teacher at SJP. We were saddened to learn of his death. Such a nice man and wonderful teacher. Peace, David and Gay Noack, St. Cloud*

**Gay Noack** - January 17, 2022 at 12:02 AM

DW

“ Extending my condolences to Peter's family and friends. During my time at SJP, I recall a teacher, instructor and coach who was very encouraging and open to new ideas. Helpful and approachable, he certainly made math and science class more interesting and relevant to the everyday.

*An enthusiastic, supportive and keen Track and Field coach, an all-rounder who was equally interested across all events inspired us to do our very best - so much so - that under his leadership and guidance, we won the State Championship. His beaming face, as he got on the bus to a round of applause, will be forever etched in my memory.*

*Dan Wollmering  
Class of 1970.  
Melbourne, Australia*

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**Dan Wollmering** - January 11, 2022 at 03:49 PM

DK

“ With great sadness I heard the news of Peter's passing. Like other younger cousins, my age did not provide a lot of contact with him. With my family living by the airport and having a home available for State Hockey tournaments we were able to have access to the Froehle family. My fondest memories are ones of my parents reactions to a visit to their home or ours. Dad would get a twinkle in his eyes along with both of them smiling as they shared their stories. Each member along with their spouses were talked about in high regard. I also appreciated their kindness to Mom after Dad's had passed away by making efforts connecting with her through the years. You all brought much joy to my family. God bless during these difficult days ahead.

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**Debbie Ehresmann King** - January 10, 2022 at 08:30 AM

HP

“My name is Peter Froehle, but you may call me Mr. Froehle.” Thus in 1965 I met an exceptionally gifted and giving man. I was lucky enough to have my four daughters taught by Mr. Froehle a well. Few people I know were as dedicated and capable as Mr. Froehle. Mr. Froehle “The world is a better place because you were in it”. Thanks.

Henry Padgett SJP class mod 1969

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henry padgett - January 09, 2022 at 06:58 PM

M'

Henry:

My name is Martin "Marty" Harrington, SJP Class of '66. I am from the Republic of Panama, & was involved in Varsity Sports (football, basketball, baseball, track) & Coach Froehle helped me very much along with Coaches Evans & Elmer Kohorst, & that trio of persons were exceptional. Coach Froehle was also an exceptional person who assisted undersigned in his first USA educational experience when my arriving at SJP in the Fall of '62 when our generation's political hero JFK was President. May God hold Coach Froehle in the hollow of His hand. MARTY (mdharri ngton7@hotmail.com).

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Martin Daniel Harrington - SJP '66 - January 10, 2022 at 12:13 AM

SS

“Pete and Father Otto Weber were my high school role models at SJP ... Pete was such a nice man...he made all of his students feel important .... my thoughts and prayers go out to all of his family and friends... Setz.... Steve Setzler.. Apple Valley MN.

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Steve Setzler - January 08, 2022 at 09:16 PM

LM

“ *I didn't know cousin Peter, as I was 16 years younger than him. So sorry to hear of his passing*  
*Louise Mozealous (Leistikow)*

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**Louise Mozealous** - January 07, 2022 at 09:26 PM

## “ A Final Lesson



*The news arrived as such things usually do—through an official email from the school. It was quickly confirmed by additional notifications on social media--an old physics and chemistry teacher had died.*

*I read his obituary with genuine sadness. Suddenly, an odd comment caught my attention. The obituary mentioned that he used to show his physics students a spot in Stearns County, Minnesota where a car could roll uphill.*

*I thought to myself, “What? He never showed our class that spot!” I then reflected for a moment and thought, “I need to find that location so I can understand the science behind it!”*

*I then paused and marveled further. Even from his grave, my old teacher, Pete Froehle, was still piquing my curiosity.*

*As I reflected further, I recalled a favorite lesson. The prep school I attended is located in central Minnesota and in January it was not uncommon for the school day to start with the temperature hovering near 20 degrees below zero Fahrenheit (minus 29 degrees Celsius).*

*One day, my senior year, he asked his chemistry students which would freeze first—cold water or boiling hot water.*

*“What a stupid question,” I remember thinking. The answer is obvious—cold water because it is closer to zero degrees—the temperature at which water freezes.*

*Mr. Froehle then asked us to conduct our own experiment. I recall heating some water on a beaker to boiling point and then placing equal amounts of cold and boiling hot water in separate containers and placing both outside the door of his first-floor classroom into the*

*subzero morning temperatures. Alas, the bell rang before the experiment was completed.*

*I was one of the fortunate few to have study hall immediately after the class and was thus able to monitor the experiment. After about 15 minutes in the freezing temperatures, I was stunned to discover that the boiling water was turning to ice first.*

*If memory serves, Mr. Froehle never returned to the science behind the counter-intuitive effect but a few years ago I recalled the experiment and went to the internet to better understand the phenomenon. I learned this apparent quirk of nature is known as the "Mpemba Effect" and is named after the Tanzanian high school student, Erasto Mpemba, who first observed it in 1963.*

*Ironically, after I learned of my old teacher's death, the temperature in my hometown of Minneapolis was a minus 10 Fahrenheit. For old times' sake, I reran the experiment I had first conducted 40 years earlier.*

*The results were different! The cold water froze first this time. Employing the scientific method, I conducted the experiment a second time. Again, the results showed the cold water freezing first.*

*It turns out that hot water can freeze before cooler water only under certain conditions.*

*I could explain to you why this is the case, but then I wouldn't be a very good teacher would I? The best way to learn is to conduct experiments yourself and when the results are either counter-intuitive and/or they are not consistent the key is to stay curious.*

*Pete Froehle was a great teacher. He was extraordinary not because he gave his students all of the answers but because he encouraged us to have an open mind and keep asking questions.*

*I could tell you more about Pete Froehle but I have to go--I have a*

*spot to find in Stearns County where a car can roll uphill.*

*Jack Uldrich  
St. John's Prep '82*

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**Jack Uldrich** - January 07, 2022 at 06:47 PM

AN

“ *My deepest condolences to the family on such a significant loss.*

*Mr. Froehle taught me that I can do hard things. Math was not my strong suit, but I was an A physics student thanks to this outstanding educator. He recognized very early on that I had a different learning style and took the time to understand how I processed the material. He would ask me to stay after class to show me videos he thought were interesting and relate it back to the class material - detailing the concepts and asking me to explain it back to him to spot the gaps. It only took him a few extra minutes after class, but he helped me recognize how I learn best and had the patience to help me succeed. He was genuinely excited to hand back my quizzes and tests and made learning feel like a team effort he was invested in. His class triggered my curiosity and boosted my confidence.*

*I now work in data science and always share that my high school teachers would be shocked - with the exception of my physics teacher. To his family and those who loved him dearly, his legacy is walking all over this world thanks to his powerful impact on minds of all ages.*

*Ana Litchfield (Mullin)  
SJP Class of 2007*

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**Ana** - January 07, 2022 at 12:53 PM

JS

“*Mr. Froehle set an example of excellence in teaching and coaching that all educators should aspire to. He always had an open door to help with my frequent math questions or to just listen and give straight forward advice.*

*From high hurdles, discus, shotput and triple jump in track & field to blocking and tackling in football, he coached you with such positive energy, enthusiasm and respect. He made a truly positive impact on my life. One of the few great teachers you never forget.*

*Justin Smith, SJP class of 1980*

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**Justin Smith** - January 07, 2022 at 12:27 PM

PH

“*Mr. Froehle was my math teacher at SJP. He was a great teacher and I remember most how encouraging he was to me in my young years as I was trying to find my way, I appreciated his great commitment to his teaching and to his students. He was a kind caring, and skillful teacher- a real laborer in the Lord's vineyard. May He Rest In Peace.*

*Pat Held  
SJP class of '69*

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**Patrick Held** - January 07, 2022 at 12:21 PM

AR

“*Mr. Froehle was an amazing man who lived a meaningful, purposeful life. He had a profound effect on my life, and I know he had a similar impact on so many others.*

*I loved reading about his own test for success. It wonderfully captures his spirit and it also reflects another of his admirable traits: humbleness. In fact, I chuckled when reading the last element of his own test — “to know that even one life has breathed easier because you have lived” — the degree of understatement with respect to Mr. Froehle was shocking! The number of people who breathed easier, and lived better, because of Mr. Froehle is truly innumerable.*

*I am sure many of his former students have unique stories about the meaningful role Mr. Froehle played in their lives. I would like to briefly share just one. He and I had started an independent study project, and before long, I was not holding up my end of the bargain. He let me know it in no uncertain terms. When I was ready to admit to myself that he was right, he welcomed me back with compassion and pushed me to be the best student and person I could be. With Mr. Froehle, I learned to fail and bounce back stronger than I was before. Decades later, I still think about and value this and the many other lessons I learned from him.*

*I offer my deepest condolences to the entire Froehle family. Mr. Froehle was a wonderful man and will be sadly missed by many. But there is great joy and hope for the future in considering what a profound and positive impact one person can have on the lives of so many.*

*Alex Rinn  
SJP '99*

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Alex Rinn - January 07, 2022 at 11:58 AM

MD

“ I had the privilege of having Mr. Froehle as both my physics teacher as well as my Track & Field Coach at St. John's Prep. Mr. Froehle had a natural and nurturing way of educating his students and engaging them into the learning. I spent many practices focusing on placement of our markers he made for us and learning from him about the physics and science of long/triple jumps that would impact our success in the sport.

I also have vivid memories of taking a test in his classroom when we found out the news of 9/11. Mr. Froehle's calm, warm and comforting nature guided us through that uncertainty during that time period - and has been an everlasting memory of his leadership and care for each of us during that tragic day.

My sincere condolences to the Froehle family during this difficult time. The pain is deep because of the love that he gave to everyone. I am forever thankful to have had him as an influential leader and teacher.

Melissa Doll (Schneider) SJP Class of 2003

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Melissa Doll - January 07, 2022 at 09:35 AM

DH

“ He was a great teacher and positive influence. He taught me physics, drivers ed and X-country skiing. Prep class of 1985.

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David Howard - January 07, 2022 at 07:33 AM

BW

“ My condolences to Stephanie and all the Froehle family on the death of Peter. He was one of the best teachers I ever had. I used the algebra he taught me in high school, to make it through college chemistry, a step I needed to get into nursing school. He would give me a ride home when I had to stay after for detention. He was the only teacher who ever talked with me about what my family was going through with the loss of my sisters. I know he really loved us students. May he rest in peace. Betsy Reker Westerhoff

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**Betsy Westerhoff** - January 07, 2022 at 12:30 AM

JR

“ Mr. Froehle had a lasting effect on my life. He taught physics to me at SJP in 1990-1991 and inspired me to continue with physics after high school. I eventually earned a PhD in aerospace engineering from UCLA and have had a long and successful career with NASA. I still recite his "Cheer" when working trigonometry problems:

*Sine Sine Cosine Sine*

*Cosine Cosine Sign Sine Sine*

*which translates to:*

$$\sin(a+b)=\sin(a)\cos(b) + \cos(a)\sin(b)$$

$$\cos(a+b)=\cos(a)\cos(b) - \sin(a)\sin(b)$$

*I'm a better person and engineer for knowing and learning from Mr. Froehle.*

*Jack Ryan*

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**Jack Ryan** - January 06, 2022 at 08:32 PM