



## Roger Neal Swan

February 7, 1924 - June 12, 2019

Princeton – Roger N. Swan, 95, of Princeton, IL, passed away peacefully at his home on Wednesday, June 12, 2019 surrounded by loved ones.

Roger was born on February 7, 1924 in Keokuk, IA to Carl and Achsa (Hayes) Swan. He attended elementary school in Wyanet and junior high and high school in Princeton. He graduated in the Class of 1941. He received a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Education from Northern Illinois University in 1947 where he also played basketball. He furthered his education and received his Masters of Science in Education from Northern Illinois University in 1953. He also received his Masters of Science in Mathematics from the University of Wyoming in 1964. He married his sweetheart, Joanne Conley, on May 15, 1949 at the First United Methodist Church in Princeton, IL. They recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. Joanne was Roger's main care giver in the later stages of his life, a labor of love; but she wouldn't have it any other way.

He worked as a teacher and coach at Malden High School for one year, he worked as a teacher and coach at Malta High School for seven years, where he also served as school treasurer and vice chairman of the Community chest and a member of the Tuberculosis association of DeKalb County. He then began his career at Princeton High School where he started as teacher and coach, then Principal, and retired as the Princeton High School

Superintendent in 1983. During the summer months when he wasn't working as a teacher, he worked as a hail adjuster for State Farm.

Roger was a member of the Elks Club, Rotary Club, Perry Memorial Hospital Board, Draft Board, as well as serving on several committees at the First United Methodist Church. He was a member of the Northern Illinois Athletic Hall of Fame and served as the Grand Marshall of the Princeton Homestead Festival. He is also the namesake of the Swan-Eickmeier scholarship along with Roger Eickmeier for the longtime Rotarians and leaders in the community. He was a life-long, avid Chicago Cubs fan, a member of the Truth Table coffee group, and an honorary member of the Turkey Buzzards. He enjoyed playing pitch, bowling, and horseshoes with friends. He enjoyed watching Jeopardy and Wheel of Fortune, and doing Crosswords and Sudoku. He was a forever fan of all Princeton High School activities. Wherever he went, he went out of his way to drive down Euclid Avenue to see his beloved PHS.

He was drafted into the US Army in March 1943. His first day of combat was December 13, 1944, three days before the Battle of the Bulge started. He saw extensive action in the Battle of the Bulge. He earned his Purple Hearts because he had been wounded three times in the space of 45 days from late January to early March 1945. He earned a Bronze Star for meritorious service and for being wounded three times and refusing to be evacuated. His second Bronze Star was earned during the crossing of Remagen Bridge. This was the only bridge across the Rhine River that the Germans failed to blow up on their retreat, known as the Battle of Remagen. Roger was part of the force preventing the Germans from regrouping east of the Rhine and consolidating their positions. The battle was even made into a movie, *The Bridge at Remagen* in 1967. Roger was a true American Hero.

Roger is survived by his loving wife of over 70 years, Joanne Swan; four

children, Christy (Cal) Gramer of Princeton, IL., Tom (Becky Pace) Swan of Dekalb, IL., Tim (Connie) Swan of Westmont, IL., and Jennifer (Robert) Merth of Princeton, IL.; 12 grandchildren, six boys, Noah (Michelle) Grove, Ethan (Sarah Joynt) Grove, Andy (Brooke) Gramer, Nicholas (Amanda Hobson) Merth, Austin Swan and Conner Swan and six granddaughters, Tiffany (Kirk Schiebel) Grove, Carrie (Brook) Predeger, Caley (Chris) King, Chelsea (Charles Labozzetta) Merth, Kylie (Kyle Minden) Merth and Carsen Swan; thirteen great grandchildren, seven great grandsons, Matthew, Noah Jr., Jarred, Quillan, Mannix, Finn and Reid, and six great granddaughters, Kira, Lina, Kaitlyn, Kamera, Verity and Cassidy; one sister, Virginia Nelson; two sisters-in-law, Flory Swan and Marcia (Bob) Hudson; as well as many nieces, nephews and cousins.

He is preceded in death by his parents; two brothers, Everett Swan and John Swan; one sister, Joanne Klingenberg; two brothers-in-law, Wilbur Nelson and Wilbur Klingenberg.

A visitation for Roger will be held on Friday, June 14, 2019 at Norberg Memorial Home from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Services will be held on Saturday, June 15, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church of Princeton, IL., officiated by Reverend Brian Gilbert, followed by a graveside service at Oakland Cemetery to include military honors.

In lieu of flowers memorials may be directed to Princeton High School or the First United Methodist Church.

Arrangements by Norberg Memorial Home, Inc.

Online condolences may be left at [www.norbergfh.com](http://www.norbergfh.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Oakland Cemetery

Park Avenue  
Princeton, IL 61356

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUN 14. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Norberg Memorial Home

## Service

JUN 15. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church  
316 S Church Street  
Princeton, IL 61356

## Graveside

JUN 15. 2:00 PM - 2:30 PM (CT)

Oakland Cemetery

# Tribute Wall

MR

“ I'm sure this picture was taken at Malta HS during my algebra class. He never gave up on me as I struggled through the class. He was a wonderful teacher. I'm sure you remember he coached my brother, Bill Marshall. And, ironically, Bill passed on May 11th. I'm sure they are discussing basketball plays in Heaven. Hope you are doing well, Joann. Bill's wife also cared for him the last 8 years as he had dementia. They had been married 64 years.

*May all your memories give you comfort in the days ahead. Jerry and I have been married 58 years. I babysat your kids I remember.*

*Mary Anne (Marshall) and Jerry Roberts*

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**Mary A Roberts** - June 17, 2019 at 10:27 PM

JH

“ Roger was my favorite teacher in high school. He was such a decent man and a serious teacher. He was very kind to my dad in his later years. What a wonderful life.

*John Hoebel PHS 1965*



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**John Hoebel** - June 15, 2019 at 10:26 PM

BH

“ On behalf of the Huskie Varsity Club and NIU Athletics, I wish to extend heartfelt condolences to the Swan family on the passing of Roger.

*Roger earned bachelors and masters degrees at NIU, and he played basketball for the Huskies in the late 1940s.*

*Roger remained a huge NIU fan and supporter throughout his life, and he attended NIU Men's Basketball Alumni Days at the NIU Convocation Center into his late 80s and early 90s.*

*Current NIU Athletics student-athletes and staff encounter Roger nearly every day when walking the hallways of the Convo. His image is among those included in the collage just outside the NIU Athletics marketing and Convocations Center administration offices.*

*Rest In Peace, Roger! Huskie Pride!*



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**Bradley Hoey** - June 14, 2019 at 02:51 PM

BD

“ Princeton has lost a true gentleman.

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**Bonnie (Britton) Doty** - June 14, 2019 at 12:39 PM

CB

“ I will always remember Roger as a wonderful neighbor, principal, and father. Growing up across the street for so many years was an opportunity to see him on a nearly daily basis and to know his wife and children. It was great to see him and Joanne last September. He still remembered me as my nickname of Cookie. He was kind, sincere, caring, teasing and I will always remember his infectious smile. God be with his family as you celebrate Roger's life.

*Carolyn (Krase) Burns*

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**Carolyn Burns** - June 14, 2019 at 10:44 AM

WF

“ 5 files added to the album Photos I had of Roger (my mom's 1st cousin) - from Wendy Filip



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**Wendy Filip** - June 14, 2019 at 08:57 AM

WF

“ 5 files added to the album Memories Album



Wendy Filip - June 14, 2019 at 08:53 AM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Roger Neal Swan.



June 14, 2019 at 03:41 AM

AB

“ I got to know Roger during numerous group coffee mornings/afternoons that I went to with my dad, Hank Sale, when I was home on my annual visit. He was a pleasure to talk to and always ready with a gentle smile. I most recently spoke to Roger last November in 4 and 20. Though he had slowed down a great deal since I last saw him several years earlier, his delightful character still shone through. What a lovely man!

*I am very sorry for your loss. You and all your family have my deepest sympathies.*

ann sale bradley - June 14, 2019 at 02:29 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Roger Neal Swan.*



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June 13, 2019 at 10:53 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Roger Neal Swan.*



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June 13, 2019 at 09:40 PM



“ *Roger was a great gentleman, a member of a great generation that is becoming lost to the ages. He was good friend of my own father, Their friendship goes back to our time on South Church street, when we first made Princeton our home. Roger, Don Ecklund, Glen Fensterman and dad would get together for pitch games regularly, something thy all look forward to. I know he is in a better place, still we will miss him with much regret.*

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**Peter and Laurie Doyle** - June 13, 2019 at 09:32 PM



“ *Roger was a Princeton treasure and an educator of excellence. My love and prayers to Joanne and family.*

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**Judy Turpen** - June 13, 2019 at 09:32 PM

BS

“ I can't even begin to express what Roger Swan meant to me and my family. He was my favorite teacher, tough on me but taught me so much. He was my home room teacher for 4 years and math teacher for 2 years. I have a fond memory of he and Joanne dancing at my junior prom when they were expecting their youngest. Christy Swan was one of my sister's friends so I got to see first hand what a great family man he was. My parents were lucky to have Roger and Joanne as their friends - I know my dad thought very highly of Mr. Swan. And my most recent memory is coming back to visit Princeton and walking down town and running into Mr. Swan and having coffee and probably a sweet roll with him. That is probably a mixed up, not very grammatical tribute from an English major but I can only say he was a wonderful man who will be missed by his family and all who knew him

*Bonnie Sears Schwarzentraub*

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**Bonita Schwarzentraub** - June 13, 2019 at 09:19 PM

CC

“ It was so wonderful to see Rodger and Joann at our 50th class reunion (1968) last September ! He was a great man and we were honored to have him as a role model. Please rest in peace !  
Catherine Ann Schafer Cavanaugh (class of 1968) from Indiana.

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**Catherine Cavanaugh** - June 13, 2019 at 06:32 PM

CB

“ My heart goes out to Roger's family. He was a wonderful man. Happy & smiling much of the time yet strict and stern when he needed to be. He was respected throughout the community and made PHS a great school. It was an honor to know him!

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**Connie Dant Bauer** - June 13, 2019 at 05:51 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Roger Neal Swan.*



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June 13, 2019 at 05:10 PM



“ *always looked forward to Roger coming in to Flour House for coffee and visiting with so many people there. He was a great man indeed. REST IN PEACE ROGER. glendon and carol allicks*



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**carol allicks** - June 13, 2019 at 04:44 PM



“ *5 files added to the album Great Uncle Roger from Brian*



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**BRIAN MCLAWS** - June 13, 2019 at 02:17 PM