



Ralph E. Akana

February 17, 1932 - February 16, 2018

Ralph Akana passed away peacefully at his home on February 16, 2018.

Ralph was born in Kilauea, Hawaii on February 17, 1932, second son of George Akana and Eugenia (Fial) Akana. His father taught him the ways of his Hawaiian culture which included diving, hukilaus, luaus and fishing (his favorite past time). He attended elementary school in Kilauea before attending Kamehameha High School (Kam) on the neighboring island of Oahu. At Kam, he continued to learn about Hawaiian culture, the art of wood carving, as well as military training where he became a Cadet Second Lieutenant. After graduating from Kam, he attended California State University Sacramento where he studied Art and met the love of his life, Joan Luce, from Fort Jones, Ca. They were married in August 1953.

Ralph began his teaching career in Sacramento at Kit Carson Middle School in 1954. Soon after, Ralph was drafted in the Army in 1955 during the Korean War and was stationed at Fort Richardson, Alaska. After his honorable discharge he returned to Kit Carson until 1961 when he accepted a job as Art Teacher at Yreka High School (YHS) where he became known as Mr. Akana.

In addition to his love for teaching, Mr. Akana was involved with many aspects of the local community including Junior Chamber of Commerce, running food concession at local high school games, having his students paint holiday

scenes on merchant's windows, painting sets for the Drama Departments fall and spring productions and overseeing the Art building at the Siskiyou Golden Fair.

Mr. Akana also loved fishing and working with wood. He was well known for his hand-crafted fishing nets he constructed from exotic woods from around the world. Many of the nets and cutting boards he would contribute to local Organizations for fund raisers. His wood carving skills continue to be seen today at the Yreka Veterinary Hospital and the Discovery Park sign.

In 1991, Mr. Akana retired from full time teaching at YHS to spend more time fishing, making his wood products and spending time with his family. On a number of occasions, Ralph would travel back to Kauai to spend time with relatives and of course go fishing. He was very supportive of his grandchildren, attending many of their sporting events at local ski parks, soccer fields, and football fields and teaching them how to fish and tie flies – the kind fish would bite.

Ralph was an amazing husband, father, father-in law, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, uncle and friend to so many. He always had a soft-spoken kind word to comfort those in need or seeking his advice.

Ralph aka Mr. Akana will be truly missed by all.....

Ke Akua Ho'omaika'i Oe Mr. Akana

Ralph was preceded in death of his father George and mother Eugenia. He is survived by his wife of 64 years Joan, son Randy (Bette), son Tim (Tracey), daughter Kim Sumner (Scott) and son Eric (Suzanne), grandchildren Nina, Cody (Olivia), Kai (Robyn), Kealia, Kolten (LaTosha), Nick (Ashley), Eric, Jacob and Joshua, great-grandson Mason, brother George (Nancy), nephew

Jason and grandnephew Kainoa.

Per his wishes, no services will be held. Memorial contributions can be made to Madrone Hospice, 255 Collier Circle, Yreka, CA 96097 or a charity of one's choice.

Tribute Wall

JK

“ *A finer man you will never find. Mr. Akana was a great teacher and a wonderful member of the community. He will be greatly missed. My condolences to the entire Akana family! God Bless, Jeff Kutzer*

Jeff Kutzer - March 14, 2018 at 05:04 PM

LC

“ *Such a kind sweet soft spoken man. I loved waiting on him on Thursday mornings at poor George's. My love and prayers to the family for your great loss.*

Lisa Casson - March 12, 2018 at 02:31 PM

 Julie Gaulden

“ *Julie Gaulden lit a candle in memory of Ralph E. Akana*



Julie Gaulden - March 08, 2018 at 08:47 PM

DS

“ *Darcy Drake Simpson lit a candle in memory of Ralph E. Akana*



Darcy Drake Simpson - March 07, 2018 at 06:47 PM

NW

“ When my Mom and Dad moved into their new house in ‘56, The Akana’s gave them the most beautiful carved “picture” of a bread fruit plant that Ralph had carved for them. It’s been handed down two generations as a very treasured item. He truly was a wonderful artist..... ❤️

Nancy Weed - March 06, 2018 at 10:32 PM

NW

“ Ralph was such a kind, soft spoken guy, with a keen sense of humor. Hard working and dedicated to his art, he will be sorely missed. My heart goes out to Joan, Randy, Tim, Kim and Eric. Love you guys

Nancy Weed - March 06, 2018 at 10:25 PM

LM

“ My thoughts and prayers are with you. You had an amazing husband and father. I will never forget him.
Laura Winje Medlin

laura winje medlin - March 06, 2018 at 01:07 PM

ES

“ My deepest condolences to the Akana family. He was an Awesome Art Teacher and a Friend to all of his students. R. I. P. Mr. Akana.

Evelyn Terwilliger Sadowski - March 06, 2018 at 12:29 PM

Linda Cabot

“ Joan, So sorry to read of your loss. My late husband and I met you and Ralph when we bought your mom's house in Fort Jones. From reading the messages on this site, the facebook site, and the obituary, he truly must have been a very special person. My thoughts are with you and your family. Linda Mathews Cabot

Linda Cabot - March 06, 2018 at 11:58 AM

RS

“ I loved Mr. Akana's art class. I cannot remember one single time he ever had a discouraging word for anyone. He was very supportive to all future artists, even if you did not have the talent. You will be greatly missed Mr. Akana. The world needs more people/ teachers like you!



Ross Skillen - March 06, 2018 at 06:52 AM

MB

I remember a lovely, gentle and compassionate man. We were blessed to have him at YHS.

Michele Benedict - March 06, 2018 at 01:59 PM

NI

Yreka High School will never be the same, everyone loved his art class! Truly a gentle and kind soul. Our prayers to his family.

Nancy Irvine - March 06, 2018 at 02:59 PM

JO

“ June Ochoa lit a candle in memory of Ralph E. Akana



June Ochoa - March 06, 2018 at 01:07 AM

MF

“ *Marsha Farley lit a candle in memory of Ralph E. Akana*



marsha farley - March 05, 2018 at 11:00 PM

HJ

“ *Oh I hope he knew that his class was a little haven for me! He was kind and calm, a wonderful teacher, and warm human being. I feel so lucky to have spent time with him. My deepest condolences and gratitude to Mr Akana's family. Thank you for sharing him with us. He was a gem!*

heather janssen - March 05, 2018 at 10:34 PM

YF

“ *Mr Akana was one of the best teachers ever! He believes in me and my artistic abilities, and I will never forget him! He was kind, funny and an incredible artist!' My heart , prayers and thoughts go out to His family!! This amazing man will be truly missed!!*

Yvonne Farwell - March 05, 2018 at 09:55 PM



“ *Mr. Akana was my favorite teacher of all of them & I had many good ones. We were all blessed to have known him. He was one of a kind. He will be missed. Patty Delsman Kelley - YUHS class of 1970*

Patty Delsman Kelley - March 05, 2018 at 06:24 PM

MT

What a wonderful teacher and kind man!

Melinda Wilson Tuma - March 05, 2018 at 10:53 PM

JA

Mr. Akana was a class act when I was in school

Jackie Avery - March 05, 2018 at 11:24 PM



Mr. Akana was one of the best teachers I've had through elementary, high school and college. A wonderful person who cared about his students. Everyone who came in contact with him is a better person for having known him. Both of my parents were students of his, and we all feel the same. RIP good sir. Don Joling YHS 1986

Don Joling - March 06, 2018 at 07:55 AM

ST

Condolences to the Akana family from Bud and Betty Taylor and myself. Mr Akana was an amazing human being as well as teacher. He will be truly missed by many.

Sarah Taillon - March 06, 2018 at 02:55 PM



Ralph Akana was the teacher we all aspired to be. I think that everyone who came in contact with him was better off for the experience. Sandra Knopf

Sandra Knopf - March 07, 2018 at 12:18 AM

NK

I graduated from Yreka High in 1973. He was easily one of my favorite teachers. Loved art class. He was such a kind, soft spoken, and talented soul. My condolences to all who were close to him.

Nancy Koder - March 07, 2018 at 11:10 PM