



Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden

AUG 21, 1936 - MAR 7, 2026



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N oel Stephen "Steve" Warden Obituary

Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden, 89 of Elyria, OH, passed away Saturday, March 7, 2026. He was born August 21, 1936, in Arlington, VA to Burdett Stryker Warden, Sr. and Elsie Jane Richter Warden and was raised in both Arlington and Washington, DC.

From a young age, Steve demonstrated a work ethic and entrepreneurial spirit that would define his life. As a boy, he delivered newspapers to senators, ambassadors, and other high-level government officials at the exclusive Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC. By age 10, he showed his resourcefulness and independence by collecting bottles and returning them to the corner store for change. Three dozen two-cent bottles covered trolley fare and a bleacher seat for outings with his neighborhood friends to the Washington Senators baseball games at Griffith Stadium.

Steve graduated from Washington-Lee High School in Arlington in 1954, where classmates from across the country broadened his view of the world. He went on to attend Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, TN, graduating cum laude, where he played collegiate baseball and was voted homecoming king. He met his future wife of 68 years, Elizabeth "Libby" Josephine Ballard, in his sophomore and her freshman year. The couple married on June 7, 1957, at The First Baptist Church of Asheville, NC.

After completing college, they moved to Arlington, where Steve worked for the Arlington Department of Parks and Recreation. He was also ordained as a minister at Westover Baptist Church in Arlington. Their first child, Mike, was born in Washington. Shortly after, they moved to North Carolina where Steve attended Wake Forest Seminary and served as a minister at Knott's Grove Baptist Church in Oxford. Their daughter, Teri, and son, Robert, were born in North Carolina. Steve left the ministry to follow his calling in education. After completing his teaching credentials in North Carolina, he moved his young family to Ohio where a thriving economy offered him the opportunity to build a secure future.



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Steve began his education career in 1964 at Brush Elementary School in Grafton, where he taught sixth grade. In 1965, he joined the Elyria City Schools where he taught English at both Jefferson and Eastern Heights Junior High Schools. He had a unique ability to connect with his students who came from all walks of life. He often went off script, incorporating popular culture into his lessons to make them memorable and relatable. Steve took an early retirement offer from the Elyria City Schools in 1994 but continued substitute teaching until 2019, ending a remarkable 55-year teaching career. He touched countless lives, and his legacy endures in the lessons he taught, the values he lived, and the joy he shared. In 2005, the Elyria Schools & Friends Alumni Association honored Steve with the Distinguished Staff award.

While teaching, Steve furthered his education and received a Master of Arts in Education from The College of Mount Saint Joseph in Cincinnati where he was an Adjunct Professor of Educational Psychology and Child Psychology from 1984-1990. He continued his

education at Frostburg State University in Maryland, American University in Washington, DC and Kent State University, where he embarked on a six-year Post Master's Program.

In the early years of his teaching career, while raising three young children, Steve supplemented his income by working part-time in the Elyria J.C. Penney men's department, where he took great pride in providing exceptional service and often earned top sales awards.

Although teaching was ultimately Steve's calling, his faith remained incredibly important to him. Libby and Steve were members of the Elyria First United Methodist Church for over fifty years.

Steve was a devoted fan of Cleveland sports, and always rooted for the Browns, Cavs, and Guardians (his favorite team). As a fervent fan, he truly believed the mantra "maybe next year."

Steve played on recreation and church softball and basketball teams. He especially enjoyed sharing these sports with his children, often joining them on the fields and courts. He also cherished playing rounds of golf with his son, Mike. His love of sports, teaching ability, and lifelong passion for play left its lasting mark on his family. Steve was known for his remarkable foul shooting ability, sinking one basket after another on the courts of Elyria's East Rec Center, where his students often played pickup basketball. He quickly earned their respect both on the court and in the classroom.



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Steve is survived by children, Stephen Michael "Mike" Warden (Debra) and Teri Warden Bickmore; grandchildren Lysa Warden (Chris Helm), Darcy Warden, Brian Bickmore, and Diana Bickmore; great-grandchildren Audryana, Austin, and Augustus Warden; and brother, Thomas Warden (Beate).

He was preceded in death by his wife of 68 years, Elizabeth "Libby" Josephine Warden; son, Robert Glenn "Bobby" Warden; parents, Burdett Sr. and Elsie Warden; brothers, Burdett Jr. and Richard "Dick" Warden; and sister, Nancy Habibi.

The family will receive friends Monday, March 16, 2026 from 10:30 am until the time of a 12:30 pm service at Dicken, Dovin & Reber Jones Funeral & Cremation Center, 323 Middle Avenue, Elyria. Burial will follow in Brookdale Cemetery and family and friends are invited to attend. Pastor Dan Reinke will officiate.

The family wishes to thank the staff at Story Point Memory Care of Independence Village, Avon Lake, Ohio, for the incredible care and companionship they provided Steve. Additionally, the family thanks Reserve Care Hospice (formerly Hospice of the Western Reserve) for the compassionate care of Steve over these past few months. A gift in memory may be made to Reserve Care, P. O. Box 72700, Cleveland, OH 44192.

To send flowers
to the family or plant a tree
in memory of Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden, please visit our floral store.

[Read More](#)



Tribute Wall

Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden

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AW

A Memorial Tree Was Planted For Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden posted:

A Memorial Tree was planted for Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ the staff at Dicken Funeral Home & Cremation Service Join in honoring their life - plant a memorial tree

April 22 at 8:55 AM

RN

Rest In Peace Dear Brother, Love Tommy, Beate, Patrick & Nathalie posted:

Country meadow fireside basket was purchased for the family of Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden by Rest in Peace Dear Brother, Love Tommy, Beate, Patrick & Nathalie. Send Flowers In loving memory of Noel Stephen Warden With a final swing of the bat, you have rounded the bases and made it safely Home. I hope that someday we will meet up again to play on your field of dreams. Rest in Peace Dear Brother, Love Tommy, Beate, Patrick & Nathalie

April 22 at 8:55 AM

JW

Joan Warden posted:

Purple radiance was purchased for the family of Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden by Joan Warden. Send Flowers With caring thoughts Joan Warden

April 22 at 8:55 AM

CS

Candace Stocker posted:

Rainbow of love was purchased for the family of Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden by Candace Stocker. Send Flowers Sent with love and remembrance. From your second family, the Ruhlens: Dave, Mike, Vicki, Bob, Candy, Terri. Candace Stocker

April 22 at 8:55 AM

RD

Richard Depue posted:

Designer's choice bouquet was purchased for the family of Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden by Richard DePue. Send Flowers In loving memory of Noel Stephen Warden Richard DePue

April 22 at 8:55 AM



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JD

Jim And Donna posted:

A Memorial tree was ordered in memory of Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden by Jim and Donna. Plant a TreeIn loving memory of Noel Stephen WardenJim and Donna

April 22 at 8:55 AM

GH

Gary, Ann And Brian Harris posted:

Designer's choice bouquet was purchased for the family of Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden by Gary, Ann and Brian Harris. Send FlowersIn remembrance of your father Noel Stephen "Steve" WardenGary, Ann and Brian Harris

April 22 at 8:55 AM

LL

Love, Kevin, Reesa, Ella And Liam Loos posted:

A Memorial tree was ordered in memory of Noel Stephen "Steve" Warden by Love, Kevin, Reesa, Ella and Liam Loos. Plant a TreeWishing you peace to bring comfort, courage to face the days ahead and loving memories to forever hold in your hearts.Love, Kevin, Reesa, Ella and Liam Loos

April 22 at 8:55 AM

SR

Sharon Ryan posted:

I remember Steve from Elyria High School. We were both substitutes and were often assigned to that school. He always had a smile and a positive outlook.

March 26 at 9:21 AM

SV

Sarida Volante posted:

Steve substituted many times for me at Elyria West and Elyria High. My lesson plans always looked better after Steve left and all my papers were graded. In addition to be an instinctive teacher and sub, he was a kind, generous, intelligent man. He told me once he continued to sub so he and his wife could travel more. I hope they had many exciting trips together. The world could use many more Steve Wardens. My deepest sympathy to his family.

March 22 at 6:18 AM



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Janet And Dan Hawes posted:

In loving memory of Uncle Steve and love to the family. Janet and Dan Hawes

March 14 at 7:13 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Noel by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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