



John "Gene" Craig

March 1, 1932 - November 9, 2022

John E. "Gene" Craig, 90, passed away on Wed. Nov. 9, 2022 at Advocate Condell Medical Center. He was born March 1, 1932 in Clinton, IL and had been a Libertyville resident since 1959. Gene was a US Navy veteran, retiring in 1979 as a Captain. He received his teaching degree from IL State University, followed by his master's degree from Roosevelt University in Chicago and his masters in guidance counseling at the University of Illinois. He was a former educator, principal and guidance counselor in Libertyville District 70 and was instrumental in establishing Youth and Family Counseling and the Special Education District of Lake County (SEDOL).

Gene was also a very active member, former Elder and Clerk of Session at the First Presbyterian Church in Libertyville and also active with the National Education Association.

Surviving are his children, Michael (Gayle) Craig and Carol Craig (Melissa Albach); 3 Grandchildren, Kevin Craig, Kathleen (Chris) Reining and Adam Craig; 4 Great Grandchildren, Adalie, Hayden, Emma and Caleb; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Lela Mae Craig, by his wife Helen in 2014, by his stepfather, William Leek, his brother Leroy and sisters, Maralee Armstrong and Ruby Craig.

A visitation will begin at 1:00 pm followed by a memorial service at 2:00 pm Saturday, Nov. 19, 2022 at the First Presbyterian Church 219 W. Maple Avenue, Libertyville, IL 60048. A luncheon will follow the service at the church. Memorial contributions can be made to the church in his memory. Arrangements are by the Burnett-Dane Funeral Home in Libertyville. Info: 847-362-3009 or please share a memory at www.burnettdane.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **19**. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church
219 W. Maple Ave.
Libertyville, IL 60048
<http://www.firstpreslibertyville.org>

Funeral Service

NOV **19**. 2:00 PM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church
219 W. Maple Ave.
Libertyville, IL 60048
<http://www.firstpreslibertyville.org>

Tribute Wall

EM

“ Emma sent a virtual gift in memory of John "Gene" Craig



emma - October 20, 2025 at 06:27 PM

EK

“ Mr. Craig taught our class at Copeland Manor Elementary School for 5th and 6th grades. He inspired everyone to do their best, and we all worked hard to meet his expectations. He was proud of his service in the Marines during the Korean War. He didn't talk about politics or his war experiences, but he displayed the posture and attitudes of a true Marine Vet. We honor him for his service and thank him for being such an inspiration for us.

One particular memory was his calm manner when informing us of the assassination of President Kennedy. He didn't say much about the incident since nobody knew yet what happened. We were dismissed early....

To his family we all want you to know how much we cared for him and have never forgotten him. We were blessed to have such a great teacher.

Emily Nyman Kaiser - November 19, 2022 at 10:53 AM

EK

I just read his obit, and he was in the Navy! Well, I was just a kid, but everything else rings true in my comments.

Emily N Kaiser - November 19, 2022 at 11:18 AM



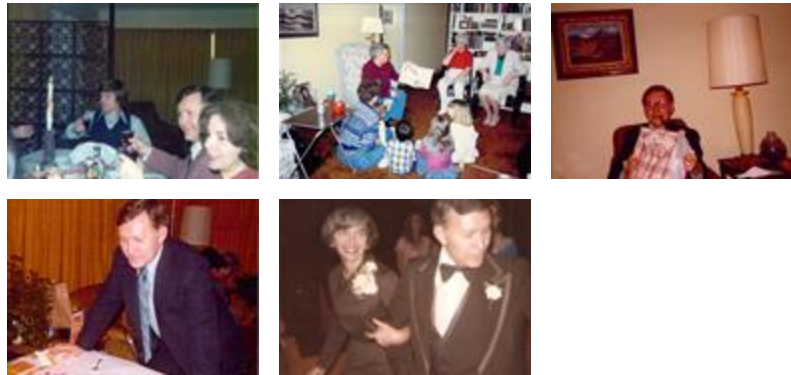
“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of John "Gene" Craig.*



November 18, 2022 at 10:08 PM



“ *7 files added to the album uncle gene*



Peggy Crandell Benzin - November 14, 2022 at 03:29 PM



“ *Kind, caring, loving, generous and gentle - very happy I was able to know him as my Uncle Gene.*

Peggy Crandell Benzin - November 14, 2022 at 03:25 PM



“ *Gene's contributions to District 70 (along with Helen's contributions) and to the NEA/IEA/LEA teachers' union were significant. He was a great human being. I remember both Gene and Helen with fondness and respect. My condolences for your loss.*

Jennifer Durot - November 14, 2022 at 03:25 PM

MS

“ Gene worked tirelessly for the LEA, the IEA, and the NEA. His car was always recognizable with its IEA license plate. At the church Gene was a founding member of the original folk choir. He served as an elder and clerk of session being an able counselor and confident to many pastors. He was a mentor and guide to elders on the session. As his successor as clerk Gene was a great supporter and guide to me during my tenure. Gene also was part of the original Stephen Ministries. Throughout the over 40 years I worked with Gene in District 70 and working with him at the church he maintained a calm presence and was always true to himself. In all that Gene was about it can be said of him “well done good and faithful servant “. Mike Savidis

mike savidiso - November 14, 2022 at 10:52 AM

AB

Mr. Craig was my 5th and 6th grade teacher. I had his wife in an earlier grade, and loved them both! He was my first male teacher. I wanted to work hard for him in his class. He was structured, kind, patient, positive and encouraged me to excel. He was very motivating!

I will never forget Monday, February 10, 1964. The Sunday the night before, i watched the Ed Sullivan show and saw the Beatles for the first time. I was one of those girls that went crazy over them, couldn't sleep all night from the excitement and I couldn't wait to get to school to talk to my girlfriends about them! Well, poor Mr. Craig tried to teach a normal day, but I still remember all the swooning girls he had to put up with. I think he did "give up" for a little while and let us try to get "the swooning" out of our systems. We told each other which Beatle we liked the best, etc. I will never forget that day.

God Bless the Craig family for your losses of Helen and Gene. I know Mr Craig inspired me to become a teacher and I did, and I know he inspired a lot more students than me.

Whenever i hear a Beatle song come on the radio now, i think of Mr. Craig, probably rolling his eyes on Feb 10, 1964 and putting up with a class of " head over heels, giddy, silly girls". God bless Mr. Craig. I will never forget him or Mrs. Craig and I know i was beyond blessed to have them as my teacher for 3 years at the elementary, foundational level of my life. I'm a better person, because i had Mr. and Mrs. Craig as my teachers.

Andrea (Tranter) Bedell - November 19, 2022 at 11:48 PM



Carol Craig - May 25, 2025 at 11:22 AM

MH

“*Gene and I worked together many years as active and retired teachers at the IEA and NEA meetings . I always enjoyed visiting with Gene and Helen. They were such delightful people.
Marge Houghland, Paris, Illinois*

Marge Houghland - November 14, 2022 at 12:28 AM

BG

“ Gene was the embodiment of kindness, generosity, and professionalism. I wonder if he knew how many of us held him in high regard.

Barbara Gosh - November 13, 2022 at 08:26 PM

CB

“ Gene was one of the first NEA-Retired members I met. He came to Iowa to talk about the Illinois mentoring program. He was a friend ever since. Gene was a fine example of what a retired union activist should be. Thank you for sharing him with all of us. Barbara Cunningham Iowa Retired

Cunningham Barbara - November 13, 2022 at 01:23 PM

JH

“ Anyone who had the privilege to know Gene Craig loved him. There are special people who when they pass from your life you know that you'll miss them until the end of your own. He was such a superior role model in all things for me. The generosity of his nature led him to mentor so many, to gently give advice and gracefully collaborate for successful actions and projects. My heart is so sad because I will deeply miss Gene. It was he and our friend John Jenson who first asked me to run for the NEA Retired Council. What a blessing he was for all of us. His memory will continue in our hearts.

Julie Rivera Horwin - November 13, 2022 at 10:14 AM

JS

Gene was a model for all of us! I got to know him when I was President of NEA Retired! He was a member of the NEA Retired Executive Council and also served as Secretary! He was most recently seen working the PAC booth on his own expense! I am glad I talked to him about 3 weeks ago on the phone! We all will miss him! 😊

Jim Sproul - November 13, 2022 at 12:24 PM

JJ

Gene was an inspiration to many of us in the IEA. My condolences to his family and many friends.

Janis Tsugawa Jasper - November 14, 2022 at 11:16 AM

BI

Gene was a class mate in good old CCHS class of 1950. Many good memories of the old times together and sharing living space in Clinton.

Bob Spaniol Decatur II

Bob Spaniol Decatur II. - November 20, 2022 at 09:24 AM

AJ

“ I have so very many special memories of Gene and the dedication he and Helen showed towards the students and public school educators and retirees. Gene was always willing to volunteer his time and share his positive attitude at our IEA Region Council meetings, at the Lake County Retired IEA Member lunch meetings, at the NEA Representative Assemblies, and at our nighttime election committee sessions. It was an honor to know him and to be his friend. I will miss him and will think of him with love and appreciation.

Amy Jackson - November 13, 2022 at 02:28 AM

CB

May we all thank God for allowing us to meet and be with Gene in our lifetime. He gave me hope, pleasure, and genuine caring about others with his gentle smile, and resounding calm disposition, each time I sat next to him at our IEA Retired teacher meetings. I remember from the day we met, as a newly retired teacher, when he was President of the organization, how he surrounded us with his concern, giving us confidence and welcoming us into our new life in retirement. It felt like entering a new family going forward, and followed then by years of his blessed and joyous conversations. I look up each night, and see his bright light looking over us all, knowing there was a reason for our meeting. Thank you for loving us all. You are in my heart forever!

Carol Ann Betlinski - November 18, 2022 at 08:56 PM