

Gerald Devore Cummins

February 9, 1930 - March 8, 2019

Gerald Devore Cummins, 89, of Arnolds Park, formerly of Sanborn passed away on Friday, March 8, 2019 at St. Luke Lutheran Home in Spencer. Private family services and internment will be held at a later date in the Lakeview Gardens Cemetery in Spirit Lake.

Gerald Devore Cummins was born at Wolsey, SD on February 9, 1930. He attended public schools at Kimball, SD, participating and excelling in several sports, especially basketball, graduating in 1948.

Gerald pursued a career he loved in education, studying at Northern State Teachers College in Aberdeen, SD and Wayne State College at Wayne, NE. His first day as a teacher was in a one room school in Brule County, SD. He later earned a bachelor's degree in Education from Dakota Wesleyan University at Mitchell, SD in 1956 and a master's degree in School Administration from the University of South Dakota at Vermillion, SD in 1959.

In 1951, he was drafted into the military service during the Korean Conflict. Following basic training at Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri, he was assigned to the 508 Regimental Combat Team as an airborne paratrooper from Ft. Benning, GA. Gerald Cummins and Grace Dey were united in marriage at St. Margaret's Catholic Church in Kimball, SD in 1956. The Cummins were blessed with three children, two sons Greg and Wayne Skip and a daughter they named Judith.

While serving in education as a coach and teacher, the family made their home in South Dakota, living at White River and Delmont. They later moved to Sanborn, IA where he served 30 years as the Sanborn Public School Administrator. During that time, he was instrumental in the reorganization of the Hartley-Melvin-Sanborn School District.

Involved in community life, he served on the original board of directors during the development efforts and construction of the Sanborn Golf Course and Country Club. He was known as "Mr. C" by his students, school personnel, and the local and surrounding community. He was a member of the American Legion, St. Joseph Catholic Church and the Bedell Family YMCA.

Gerald retired in 1995 and he and Grace built their retirement home near one of his favorite golf courses, Emerald Hills, in Arnolds Park. Later in ill health, he was admitted to St. Luke Lutheran Home at Spencer, IA.

Gerald's family includes his wife of 62 years, Grace; son Skip of Las Vegas; daughter Judi (Mike) Luhrs of Okoboji and only grandchild, Michael Luhrs of Okoboji and Ames, IA.

He was preceded in death by their first-born son, Greg, in 2008, his parents, Virgil and Maybelle Cummins, three brothers and three sisters, and in-law, Ivan and Daisy Dey.

Gerald's body is bequeathed to science for medical education and Alzheimer's research. His life was education which will continue even after his death.

Gifts in Gerald's memory can be made to Arnolds Park First Responders, 156 Okoboji Grove Road, Arnolds Park, IA 51331 or Alzheimer's Disease Research, 200 First St. SW, Rochester, MN 55905.

Cemetery Details

Lake View Gardens Cemetery

Spirit Lake, IA

Tribute Wall



“ *Robinson Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Robinson Funeral Home - March 21, 2019 at 12:02 PM

SL

“ *Mr. C represented the best as an educator, and a friend. He had many accomplishments but he will be long remembered for his kindness to all. I was an honor and privilege to know and work with him.*

Stephen Litts - April 26, 2019 at 11:20 AM

KI

“ *We are so sorry to hear of Gerald's passing. We will keep you and your family in our thoughts and prayers.
Peace and Grace,
Kirk and Tina Neustrom*

kirkneustrom - March 20, 2019 at 08:10 PM

BE

“ Grace and family-

So sorry for your loss

It would be hard to overstate the positive impact that Mr. Cummins had on the students and faculty of Sanborn Community School, and on me personally. He was a great friend and mentor to my father, Harry Ellett, and a respected leader and role model to us all.

Bob Ellett

Bob Ellett - March 19, 2019 at 06:40 AM

CK

“ Grace and family-

Sorry for your loss. Mr. Cummins was always a joy to visit. Many memories from finding the gingerbread man hiding in his office from when I was in Kindergarten to receiving my first set of Jr. golf clubs from him! Dad (Rich Vanden Hoek) had great respect for him and I know they had many years together teaching and also many stories from SD! Thoughts and prayers with you all!

Crissa (Vanden Hoek) Krikke

Crissa Krikke - March 18, 2019 at 09:51 PM

JF

“ Jay And Mary Weaver And Family lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins



Jay and Mary Weaver and family - March 16, 2019 at 01:07 PM

DS

“ *Darcy Scheerhoorn lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Darcy Scheerhoorn - March 16, 2019 at 10:17 AM

JF

“ *It was with a heavy heart that I read of Mr. Cummins passing. He gave me my first job in the classroom in Delmont. His guidance and compassion toward all his staff was immeasurable. The pressure of being a first year teacher and having the superintendent's oldest child in my first grade class was mitigated by his kind encouragement. Praying for God's comfort to the family. May your faith be stronger than your sorrow.*

Judith Fauth

Judith Fauth - March 15, 2019 at 07:31 PM

EG

“ *Gerald and Grace lived next to my family in Delmont. Mr. Cummins taught both my husband and I and we have fond memories of his teaching skills. He left a mark on us for sure. I remember him as Mr. Cummins because that is how we were taught to respect our teachers. We were the family that had cows, chickens, ducks, geese etc. Greg and Skip would show up often when it was time to do chores to keep us company and ask many, many questions. A great family. Rest In Peace and our sympathy to all.*

Ella Mae Bogenhagen Goehring

Ella Mae Goehring - March 15, 2019 at 09:12 AM

AS

“ *Mr. Cummins was my high school superintendent in Delmont. His gentle demeanor made him the exceptional administrator that he was! I was in his math class and not once do I remember him being anything but encouraging to his students. His rubber ball that he carried in his suit-jacket pocket came in handy when he needed to relieve some stress. Mr. C, Rest In Peace!
Peace and comfort to his family!
Arlene Plihal Stoebner, class of '66.*

Arlene Plihal Stoebner - March 13, 2019 at 09:01 PM

MA

“ *Rest In Peace, Uncle Gerald. Love you very much. Sending love to the whole family.*

MarinaWernsmann - March 13, 2019 at 08:52 PM

DW

“ *I just heard about Uncle Gerald. My thoughts and prayers for Grace and the family.*



Dawn Wernsmann - March 13, 2019 at 08:29 PM

KB

“ *Kim Brouwer lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Kim Brouwer - March 12, 2019 at 09:38 PM

KB

“ Grace you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. It is so difficult to lose someone you love but may all those beautiful memories help you through these difficult days

Kim Brouwer - March 12, 2019 at 09:38 PM

NH

“ Natalie Hinn lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins



Natalie Hinn - March 11, 2019 at 10:59 PM

JS

Always loved Mr. C....he was kind, fair & always had time to listen!!! Thinking of the Cummins family with love & prayers....he & Grace were a striking couple!!! 💕

Jane (Beyer) Stannard - March 13, 2019 at 07:14 PM



“ It's funny I was just talking about Mr. C the other day with a former teacher at the middle school in Sanborn. He was my principal during junior high right before he retired in 1995. He was such a sweet man, a wonderful principal, and will be remembered for his kindness. Your family will be in my thoughts and prayers in the difficult days ahead. RIP Mr. Cummins.....okey! 😊

Nick & Sara Dolphin

Sara Dolphin - March 11, 2019 at 06:42 PM

MK

“ *Light a candle in loving memory of Gerald and bless his family, grant them strength and peace.*
Randy & Mary Kafer



Mary Kafer - March 11, 2019 at 06:23 PM

CP

“ *Cyndy & Jim Powers lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Cyndy & Jim Powers - March 11, 2019 at 04:11 PM

ML

“ *My condolences to the Cummins family. Mr. Cummins was such a wonderful person and role model. He always had a positive attitude along with some humor. May God bring peace to the Cummins family. Maureen Jenness Lee (1978)*

Maureen Jenness Lee - March 11, 2019 at 03:20 PM

VW

“ *Our sympathy goes out to the Cummins Family .Gerald was a great man .May He Rest In Peace. Mike and Vicki Willison*



Vicki Willison - March 10, 2019 at 08:27 PM

JJ

“ Mr. Cummins gave me my first teaching job in 1972, and I had three very good years with wonderful children in my classroom and an all-around positive experience with him as Superintendent. I left when enrollment no longer required a combined 3/4 grade. He encouraged me to stay and he'd find a way to work me into the elementary faculty, and I often wonder what would have happened if I'd stayed! He was a great guy amped I learned a lot from him and by his example!

Judy Jensen - March 10, 2019 at 12:32 PM

CM

Mr C was so happy . And he was so helpful when a student needed his advice and what to do! He always handled the problems and walked to the class room with the student. I never heard a bad thing ever!! The kids all loved him and respected him! Me C , You will be missed but love ❤️ will never be forgotten!

Charlotte Mercer - March 10, 2019 at 04:47 PM

LB

“ Out condolences to the Cummins family. All high schools should have used his methods for leading faculty and students to be outstanding people. He was without a doubt the best!

Lonnie Brandt - March 10, 2019 at 11:56 AM

JW

“ My memories of school, Mr. Cummins and the group of outstanding teachers Sanborn Public School had are some of my fondest memories. I cannot imagine growing up anywhere else. May you feel the comfort of God holding you close at this time. God bless, Joy (Borden) Vander Werff

Joy Vander Werff - March 10, 2019 at 12:49 AM

JF

“ *Very sorry to hear of Mr Cummins passing.*

jeff frohwein - March 10, 2019 at 12:04 AM

Dusten Lamfers

“ *He was a great principle of the school in sanborn me and my mom both had him I would get in trouble just to sit in his office to get pop and candy*



Dusten Lamfers - March 09, 2019 at 09:10 PM

Tammy Wolff

“ *Tammy Wolff lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Tammy Wolff - March 09, 2019 at 08:52 PM

MO

“ *Mr. Cummins was so kind and a sensitive role model. As Superintendent, he approached me in the lunch line and complimented me on losing a fair amount of weight, in order to be a cheerleader. It was a big deal to be complimented in front of my peers, by someone so highly regarded. He understood the angst of youth and was the ultimate professional. I'll always remember his genuine nature.*

Mary Beth Oostenbrug - March 09, 2019 at 04:41 PM

EG

Mr. Cummins was the high school superintendent in Delmont when several of my siblings and I were fortunate enough to be part of his WIDCAT gang! I was a student in a math class that he taught, and even as a teen, his great patience, kindness, and consideration for all of us was felt and was sincere. That's just was who he was! The house that he and his family resided in while in Delmont was the "superintendent' s house", and that home still stands...great memories! My sympathy to Mr. C' s family!

*Eileen Plihal Gall
Class of 1966*

Eileen Plihal Gall - March 13, 2019 at 10:47 PM

DP

“*Mr. C. was such a very special person. Always there for advice, support, and most of all a touch of humor and a laugh. I know he was instrumental in helping me find my job in Aurelia, one that I have enjoyed my whole career. My sympathy to you, Grace and family. Remember the many wonderful memories of a truly great man.*

Deb Peterson - March 09, 2019 at 04:27 PM

KF

We are so very thankful for the role Mr C played in our children's lives. He made us feel so welcome when we moved to Sanborn. He made our children and each student and staff member feel important as he called everyone by name and cared deeply about them personally. He led by example and had a true servant heart. He inspired everyone not only to be lifelong learners, but to be better people. May God be with you and your family, Grace, as you mourn his death and celebrate his eternal life. Ken and Linda Funke

Ken and Linda Funke - March 09, 2019 at 04:40 PM

WC

The world lost a great man who influenced so many people through the years. So many fond memories, not only in school but also growing up in the neighborhood. Prayers of peace, strength and comfort to Skip, Judi and Mrs. Cummins. Wanda (Ruisch) Coleman

Wanda (Ruisch) Coleman - March 10, 2019 at 11:46 AM

KM

“ *My thoughts and prayers go out to the family. Mr C had a special heart and loved all the kids at Sanborn. He will always hold a special place in my heart.*

Kassai Manwarren - March 09, 2019 at 04:11 PM

JS

“ *Mr. C was a great guy and wonderful Superintendent. I loved the way he greeted all the kids and usually by name, (or a nickname that always fit that kid.) Sanborn was blessed to have him for so many years. My Sympathy and prayers to the Cummins family.*

Jean Snyder - March 09, 2019 at 04:09 PM



Mr C was a gentleman! Such an amazing man. He cared about kids. Educators. People. Such respect for this wonderful man! Oh, and he was dashingly good looking too! He and Grace were that beautiful couple that everyone looked up to! Blessings to his family as they remember his legacy!

Denise Steffen - March 09, 2019 at 04:40 PM

LN

“ *What a great man! I loved working with him and enjoyed his wonderful way of leading our school and our people! My sympathy to you all!! Thanks for everything Mr. C!!*
Lavila Nelson

Lavila Nelson - March 09, 2019 at 03:23 PM

TH

“ He was not only a great man, but a great example of how we should live. I think we all benefited from the team that he built to educate us, as well as, the culture of competition and passion that he installed in all of us. Rest in peace Mr. Cummins, and thank you.

Terry Heyn - March 09, 2019 at 03:09 PM

RJ

“ Regina Johnson lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins



Regina Johnson - March 09, 2019 at 02:56 PM

RJ

One of the most inspirational men I ever knew! Sorry for the family's loss! 🙏🙏

Regina Johnson - March 09, 2019 at 03:06 PM

KW

“ Grace and Family,

My sympathy to all of you! Although I am so sad to hear this news, my heart does rejoice today with Mr. C. as he is now in his heavenly home where he is completely healed. It has been a long journey for this great man and his family. I send my love to all of you during this difficult time. I light a golden candle for a soul of gold.



Kimberly Warnke

Kimberly Warnke - March 09, 2019 at 01:33 PM

DP

“ *Darlene Powers lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Darlene Powers - March 09, 2019 at 12:24 PM

AW

“ *Grace- Thinking of you and sending our love and prayers!!*



Abby Walleck

Abby Walleck - March 08, 2019 at 10:32 PM

NH

“ *Grace... as your former hairdresser, friend, we shared so much! My heart goes out to you... Judy & family hugs to to all. Natalie Hinn*



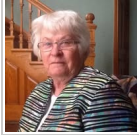
Natalie Hinn - March 08, 2019 at 09:17 PM

RN

“ *We are so sorry to read of your fathers passing Judi and Skip.. many prayers for you all during this very difficult time. 🙏🙏*



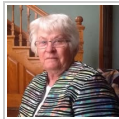
Rhonda And David Nelson - March 08, 2019 at 07:10 PM



“ *Marlene Schmidt lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Marlene Schmidt - March 08, 2019 at 06:31 PM



My prayers are with you Grace, Judi, Mike, & Michael. Now Gerald may Rest In Peace.

Marlene Schmidt - March 08, 2019 at 06:41 PM



“ *Ken Farmer lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Ken Farmer - March 08, 2019 at 02:45 PM



“ *Gary & Teresa Place lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Gary & Teresa Place - March 08, 2019 at 02:21 PM

LT

“ *Lori & Jeff Towne lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Lori & Jeff Towne - March 08, 2019 at 02:10 PM

DS

“ *Donna & VerDon Schmidt lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Donna & VerDon Schmidt - March 08, 2019 at 01:51 PM

DS

“ *Dean And Sue Schoning lit a candle in memory of Gerald Devore Cummins*



Dean and Sue Schoning - March 08, 2019 at 01:46 PM

JL

“ *Grace, hugs & prayers to you & your family!! We loved having Gerald for a neighbor & friend. What a great guy!! Jean & Marv Logan*

Jean Logan - March 08, 2019 at 01:14 PM