

APOL'S SERVICE

A SPECIAL EDITION ABOUT
THE LIFE OF JAY APOL



Beppe

Dear Family,

The man I loved and shared a Christ-centered marriage for thirty-one years has been called home by the Lord. I thank the Lord for the privilege of sharing part of my life with Jay.

Jay left me with memories and a special family. Memories such as marriages, births, family gatherings, travel, volunteering - but the real special memories: quiet times, devotions, special gifts, candy, flowers, laughter, tears, hugs, kisses - and secrets - these were from Jay.

I miss all of this but I know the Lord will always be with me—We prayed for our family every day and the earnest prayer was for each member of the family to accept Christ as their Savior. I continue to pray—Favorite verse Jeremiah 29:11 (look it up).

Thank you for your prayers,
Love, Mom, Grandma, Beppe

Some things you may or may not know about Jay:

- Born: Wednesday, October 20, 1920
- Parents: John and Mary (Polderman) Apol
- Brothers: He was the 4th of 6 sons—John, Marvin, Alfred, Jay, Harold and Isaac
- His first home was in the school house next to the church. His family lived in that house while they were building the house at 439 68th St.
- Jay's early jobs included working on farms and he even tried a factory job, but he did not like that at all. He graduated from the nursing department at Pine Rest when he was 23. He was in the same nursing class as his brother, Marvin.
- Jay also worked as Gaines Township Building Inspector to help pay for Christian education for the kids.
- Jay married Julia De Young on July 7, 1942.
- Jay and Julia had 8 children—3 boys and 5 girls. Mary, Donald, Barbara, Helene, Luanne, Michael, June and Glenn.
- Some of his hobbies included photography, canoeing and camping. He also loved to listen to Boston Pops on Sunday afternoon.
- Julia died in April 22, 1969.
- The first time Jay and Grace met was after Grace and Gladys went to Dutch classes in Grand Rapids. Grace and Gladys were on the way home when Gladys said they had to stop at the steakhouse on Burton/Breton where Jay and his friend Al were having coffee (Gladys knew Al). Anyway, Grace spent most of the time talking with Al and Gladys chatted with Jay.
- The next time Jay and Grace met was at a restaurant on Plainfield called Fingers. Once again Grace was out with Gladys and they "just happened" to run into Jay and Al again. This time Grace and Jay spent more time talking to each other. He even drove her home.
- Jay married Gracine Louise VanderVeen Kaminga on May 7, 1976 at First Cutlerville CRC. The reception was at Greenridge Country Club. For their honeymoon they drove to Salt Lake City, UT where they took a plane to Sunnyside, Washington. They visited Harold and Lou. They also drove down to New Mexico to visit Uncle Marv and Grace was able to drive a Jeep!
- When Jay and Grace were first married they lived in her house on Edgewood near Calvin College. They rented out 105 68th Street to student nurses who were training at Pine Rest. Jay and Grace built the house on 76th Street/Harmony Cove and moved in Dec. 1977.
- Jay lived in the house on 76th Street up until he was moved to Byron Manor in March 2007.
- Jay died on July 14, 2007 at Crystal Manor in Cutlerville, MI.

How many family members share the name Jay?

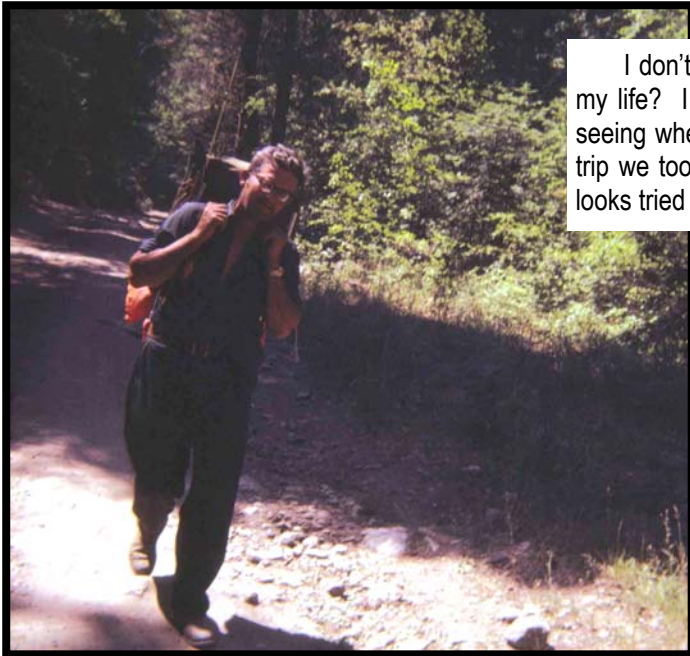
Son: Donald Jay Apol

Grandchildren: Rodney Jay Meyer, Jason J. Apol, Robert Jay Dykstra, Randall Jay Nagel, Jayne Renae (Apol) Tibbets, Nicholas Jay Negen, Aaron Jay Fryling

Great-Grandchildren: Alexander Jay Apol, Michael Jay Apol, Isaac Jay Brinks, Keagan Jay Gulker, Benjamin Jay Meyer, Natalie Jay Tibbets

Jay has 38 grandchildren and 50 great-grandchildren (28 boys—22 girls).

Luann (Apol) Negen



I don't know what to say. How do I put into words fifty plus years of his impact on my life? I didn't know what picture to pick. But I picked this one, one I remembered seeing when I was going thru pictures for the funeral. It reminded me of the backpack trip we took into the Bitterroot mountain range. This is Dad at the end of the trail. He looks tired but he has a smile on his face. We had done it!

When thinking about what to write my mind kept going back to this picture and I think that it shows me a bit of who Dad was. A man that worked hard all his life and was probably more tired than us kids ever knew. A man who took care of his family all along the trail, and helped many others on that trail. A man who enjoyed nature and passed that on to me.



A man who new the Creator and passed it on to me. A man who loved life and had a great smile, even when life was hard, the road a little rocky.

But as I write this I wonder how did he pass these things on. I don't remember any big talks about one thing or another. (ok I do remember the sex talk). I don't remember any "lessons" or such. (ok he did teach me not to smoke) Then I remember what Uncle Ike said at the funeral - Dad just lived it the best he knew how! That's my challenge, to live my life the best I know how... following Dad's trail – God's way.

Aunt Lutz

Mary (Apol) Nagel

Dad. It's hard to know where to start after having Dad in my life for 64 years. I thank God for my Dad and for the influence he had in my life. Dad lived a life dedicated to God and it showed by the way he lived. He lived a life of service. He was always ready and willing to serve others. He also lived a life of service in his work at Pine Rest. The patients were like family to him. I remember some Sunday mornings when David Montgomery would come running over to our house before church, all excited because he wanted "to go to havanna (heaven)." Dad would reassure him he was going to heaven (havanna) and send him back to Pine Rest. I think Eddie Van Schooneveld was like a son to him and there were many others.

I thank Dad for giving me a love of God's great creation. He loved being out in the "outdoors" and now we all do too. We would go camping every summer, canoeing, fishing on the pier at Holland State Park, trips to the woods (even in the winter) and sledding.

In the last few months of his life, we visited him at Byron Meadows and we would ask him about some of his memories. One of the humorous ones he told us about was when he was 2 years old. His parents were in the process of building a new home at 439—68th St. The summer before they moved, they lived in the school house next to the church. One Sunday, Dad ran out of the school house without a stitch of clothes on just as church was getting out.

There are lots of good memories and I thank God for them and for giving me the Dad He did!

Mary

Jason Apol

Chased by a guinea hen at the duck pond, Grandpa was there.
Slammed my finger in the green tractor door, Grandpa was there.
Canoeing the Thornapple river, Grandpa was there.
Grandpa is awfully happy with this new lady. I get a Grandmom!
Showing me the basement of the new house for Grandma by the big pond. Grandpa was there.
Grandma is all right. I like her.
Picked her a big flower from dad's garden. Grandpa must have had something to do with it.
Grandma can't ski very well, but Grandpa was there.
Riding the green three wheeler, Grandpa was there.
Showing me how to run the riding mower, Grandpa was there.
Pulling the red sled behind the boat in the pond. Grandpa was there.
How many hotdog roasts in the woods?

Grandpa was there.

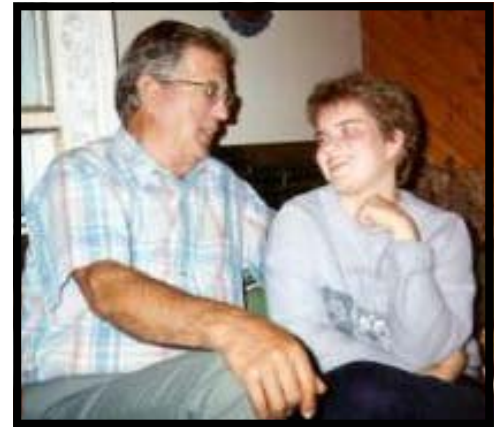
Saywer State Park. Grandpa was there.
As a grumpy teenager, Grandpa was there.
Helping Grandpa run conduit and wire to Dad's new barn (I can do that!), Grandpa was there.
Asked for a loan to buy a car, Grandpa was there. (DENIED!)
I met a beautiful lady and married her. Grandpa was there.
Interlochen State Park. Grandpa was there.
My firstborn son. 4 generation picture. Grandpa was there.
My new house in the country for my wife and kids. Grandpa was there.
Talking about Abraham by the barn. Grandpa was there.
Thank you Grandpa. You made a difference.



Photo submitted by Mary Apol

Helene (Apol) Dykstra

"DAD", not being around dad for the past 39 years, my memories are from my childhood. Camping trips are probably number one on the list. And from those memories, now as a parent, I appreciate what that annual week in our lives taught me. Dedication to family; it wasn't an expensive vacation, I remember camping in the old army tent, and graduating to the



tent trailer. Finding the perfect cardboard box to pack my clothes in and then finding my corner to put it in. We usually found a new campground every year. I remember the freedom we had to explore the rivers and lakes. The appreciation for the "beauty of the earth", was taught us and that we should leave it better than we found it. I remember picking up trash after packing up, with a stick with a nail on the end of it.

The other special days in the Fall to see the color and the canoe trips! And even a wiener roast on a frozen lake! Who needs Disney Land :-). He did live what he believed. Family first. Sunday worship a part of life. Usually two jobs to pay for Christian Education. My prayer is that I can live his quiet example of loving God, family, work and life in general. See you soon Dad,
Love, Helene

Kari (Apol) Brinks

My memories of Grandpa are not the physical ones but the emotional ones. It was not who Grandpa was but what He did.

I remember one day skating on the pond. It had already been cleaned off and I was excited to skate while the adults visited. As I skated out the ice began to make a cracking sound. I thought that it would be a watery end for me. Grandpa was there on the hill watching and before I could even voice my concern, he already had the words to explain the sounds. I was reassured and kept on skating.

He was there.

I also remember Grandpa in the love that his boys share of the ground and animals. Grandpa always had animals of various beauty and exoticness. I remember going over there and Grandpa coming out from the cages or in the gardens with a peace and quietness about him. I see that in the Uncles today. I think that it had something to do with the theory that a farmer has to depend on God for a crop. We do our best but the sun and rain come from God.

Grandpa was a quiet and thoughtful man. I don't remember a lot of conversations with Grandpa but those that I do remember are beautiful.

Grandpa gave his kids a Christian example and by far, that is what I now understand to be the best that he could have ever given. I thank God that he lived his life for Christ and that trickled down to the example my dad gave us.

I hope that my kids will say the same about me someday.

Kari

Randy Nagel

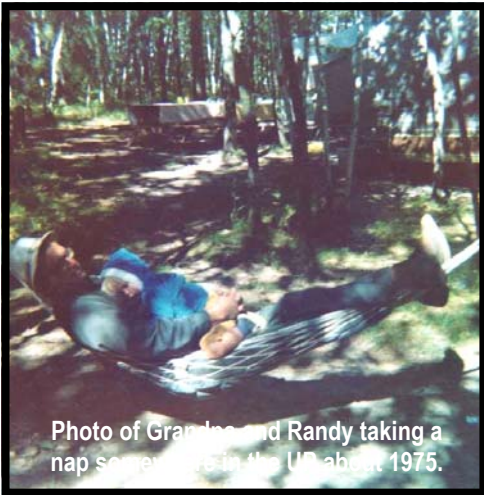


Photo of Grandpa and Randy taking a nap somewhere in the UP about 1975.

Annie (Dykstra) Mennelaar

A fond memory I have of Grandpa is playing UNO and Skip-bo whenever they came to visit. He taught me to whistle on one of those visits and I always loved walking outside with him and talking about trees and birds. I remember the camping and canoeing trips too (when he lost his glasses and waved at Jaynie and I as we were flipped over and drowning...) What I appreciate the most about Grandpa was his evident love for the Lord and portraying that in his love for his family. --Annie

Denise (Meyer) Gulker

A couple of years ago I was visiting G-pa and G-ma with the boys and had a time of venting frustration over some things that occurred with our searching for a new pastor for our church. I really wanted to hear what they had to say about some things and the short of the story is summed up by a phrase G-pa used as a catch all and it really impacted me in such a way I share it with many people - G-pa said "The goal of the church (Christians) is to spread the gospel -- not to feather our own beds." WOW - then to hear Uncle Ike's message at G-pa's funeral took it even further - this is our kingdom work -- What a challenge to us all!! -Denise

Mae (Dykstra) Meyers

I don't have as many memories of Grandpa as most of you since we did not have the awesome opportunity to grow up in the area, but I do carry along one memory that has impacted me greatly as his grandchild and as I raise my own kids looking to the future of my own grandchildren. One of the times we came to visit, Grandpa & Grandma had given up their bedroom so Sara could sleep in their bed and not deal with the stairs. Grandpa & Grandma were camped out in the bedroom downstairs next to the bathroom. I was getting ready for bed and was passing the bedroom door when I heard names being said out loud. I stopped to listen (like the good child I was;) and realized that Grandpa was saying each of the grandchild's name. After he said a name, Grandma would say a prayer just for them.

I am so thankful for the legacy of faith that Grandpa held up in this family. This family is huge and God has obviously blessed it beyond measure. I am thankful for grandparents who came to our Lord's feet with their grandchild's name on their lips. Not as a mass prayer for their grandchildren, but each child, each name. I pray that as a parent I can continue that legacy of faith.

I may not have been blessed by a Grandpa down the road to go fishing with, take a walk with or sit around a cup of coffee and soak up his wisdom, but I was blessed with a Grandpa who hit his knees with my name on his lips. In the end I believe that says it all about a man who has accomplished so much. A strong man who stood tall, but was at his strongest when he was on his knees.

Mae Meyers



Jeremiah Apol

Remembering my Grandpa Jay Apol

Jay Apol was a man that I loved, He was a godly man who did what God had for him to do and then he was taken to His real home. I miss my grandpa, He helped me with the same words that he helped my dad with most notably the saying “ just live today and let tomorrow take care of its self”. That is the most memorable bit of advice that I remember and to be sure it has been very helpful.

Of Grandpa I remember him helping me and teaching me, I do remember him losing his cool with me. Never angry, but frustrated with something that I had done or not done. If I was working there and he was able he was always ready to take me, or us depending on who was there, out for a cheeseburger and fries. Very distinctly do I remember his appetite diminishing over the years going from a hole meal to just a half order of fries at the “Wagon Wheel” or some other greasy spoon restaurant. This is some thing that I was privileged to experience as one of the grand kids that lived near, I wish that all of my cousins were able to have this memory of working with Grandpa. This may be just my short sightedness because Grandpa Jay was never afraid to show his love and approval for us all. He spoke with deep fondness for the way we grandchildren were growing into such dissimilar and precious people. I mean not to embellish Grandpa’s memory, He was not perfect, as the we all know, his eye sight was terrible and I hear he had a temper (but only for bureaucracy and stupid people). It would be foolish for us to think of our grandpa as anything less than human and sinful and that leads me to the most memorable and cherished memory I have of Grandpa Jay, HE loved Jesus for what Jesus Had done for him. Grandpa knew his sin and that he was in terrible need of a savior from that body of his, especially at the end. Grandma will tell you and I can attest to the humbling experience that Grandpa was going through as he died. That is the point, isn’t it? God is bringing us all to a point where we so long for heaven, and his presence and perfection, a point where we really see this world for what it is and how indeed we have only one hope and that in Jesus Christ. That is what I remember about my Grandpa he needed Jesus like I do and Jay was a faithful believer in Christ as his Savior. Since I heard about the opportunity to write about Grandpa this kept coming to mind, Hebrews 13. Grandpa loved others, entertained strangers, remembered those in prison (lost his glasses in one if I remember right) honored marriage and did not love money. Grandpa Jay said with confidence “ the Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?” Verse 7&8 is for us all who remain here in this earth, “ Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the out come of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today and forever”. When I am tempted to fear and doubt I not only have the Bible’s testimony, I also have my Grandfather’s testimony, one that I seen lived and did not die with grandpa, for it is my dad’s and my and all of us who believe in the blood of Christ that covers our sin as it did Grandpa. Verse 15 Grandpa faithfully offered a sacrifice of praise for all he had from God. Now it is our turn to work for the kingdom of God to come just as our Grandpa did. I miss him, there is so much that I would like to ask him and I will. Grandpa Jay Apol is alive even today because of Jesus Christ and so shall I be with both of them again.

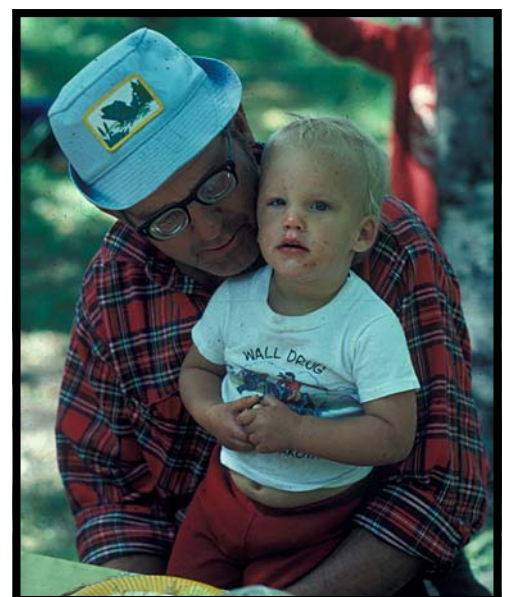
“ May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepard of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing His will, and may he work is us what is pleasing to Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.”

I fail to feel anything is adequate to close such a letter, I have many memories as do you, so I will leave you with yours and I with mine and when we see each other again soon we will talk of the days past and the memories, laughter and joy the encouragement the wise council that this man gave to each of us.

Yours Sincerely, Jeremiah Michael Apol.

Shane Negen

I remember going camping with Grandpa and Grandma when they used to have the big long motorhome. I'm not sure why mom couldn't be there but I remember Nick and myself camping with them for one of the big Apol camping trips we used to have. I don't remember much more than that about the camping trip; but traveling with Grandpa and Grandma in that motorhome will always stick in my mind; I remember having stacks of fun! – Shane



Jayne (Apol) Gibbets

Remembering my Grandpa Jay Apol

I was looking at some old pictures my Mom had gotten out the other day of Grandpa. You know the sort, faded and tattered, the timeframe illustrated by the plaid sportcoats on the men, and big hair on the ladies. I was really struck by how handsome he was, and how much I wish I could have known him better. The resemblance of Grandpa to my Dad was very definite in Grandpa's younger pictures. (I guess that means I'm calling my Dad handsome too, eh?) ;)

As far as memories go, I wish I could say I have tons of them- But I really don't have specific ones of Grandpa. But I do have one big regret. I always loved fishing as a kid, and going with Grandpa was always fun. As I got older, and my incredibly *old-fashioned* parents wouldn't let me date until I turned 16, I would sometimes bemoan my troubles to Grandpa and Grandma. Not that they sympathized with me, but it made me feel better. Actually, I think they even laughed about it. After Grandpa couldn't drive anymore, I remember telling him that after I turned 16 and got my license, he would be my first date, and I would take him fishing. But I guess something happened to my head when I turned 16. Maybe a little too much homework, maybe I got a little boy-crazy, . . . maybe a little selfishness? A lot of selfishness? I never did take Grandpa fishing.

I've been digging in my mind for weeks to come up with something (a much deeper dig than some of you might expect!), and mostly what I remember is the fun get-togethers we had as a big extended family. None of my friends growing up had a family quite the size of ours. And we always had such fun times; having weenie roasts in the woods or in the upstairs of the barn, going ice-skating on the pond, or fishing contests on the 4th of July (which Kari and I won together one year, the best part of my summer!). My childhood is highlighted by happy memories of all the canoe trips and especially the reunion campouts. Of course, I spent most of my time with Kari and Annie, but how amazing to think that the Apol family all started with Grandpa.

I was reminded of one more thing recently when Joleen mentioned a picture she had of Grandpa and I. At my wedding rehearsal, my Dad had the flu (He said he did anyway- He was probably just nervous!) So, when it came time to practice my walking down the aisle and being given away, Grandpa stood in for my Dad, standing tall and proud. I never thought much about it, since I was so wrapped up in "Jayne and Ryan" that I didn't see much further than us, but it was an honor to have Grandpa give me away!

I guess the most amazing part of it all, is that I grew up always knowing that God loved me and that He sent His son to give *me* eternal life. Our little Natalie Jaye is the 129th Apol, and I'd like to believe that she is the 129th person that will be brought up knowing this same truth- thanks in part to Grandpa. A large part! His was not the preachy, sermon-filled, in-your-face type of religion, but instead it was the most effective kind: the quiet, respectful, "this is our way of life" type. Grandpa achieved the ultimate goal: he taught his family to love God.

I love you, Grandpa, and I miss you already. But I *do* know I'll see you again!
Love, Jayne



Greg Nagel



"Remembering the Past"
Thanksgiving 2003—Photo by Greg

When I was thinking what to write about my memories of Grandpa, I thought I would try and go back as far as I could. Some of my earliest memories are of visiting him while he was still working at Pine Rest. I loved to walk through the shop and see all the cool tools grandpa got to work with (and all the interesting people!). I also remember the small greenhouse they had out back, and no matter what the weather was outside, it always felt like summer there. He had a small office up front of the shop and I remember walking through it and feeling proud that this was my Grandpa's office. Its been pretty cool to hear the stories from others of all the lives that Grandpa had touched while he worked at Pine Rest.

I also remember when I was very young, we would have get-togethers at 105 when he was still living there. Occasionally, he would pop his false teeth half way out of his mouth and move them up and down making a clicking sound. I don't know if he was trying to scare me, but he did! He had fun doing it, and I remember all the aunts and uncles laughing at my reaction to it too!

Greg