



## Dr. Rudenz "Rudy" Douthat

May 10, 1929 - April 24, 2026

Dr. Rudenz Thomas Douthat passed away in the loving care of his family at his home in Tellico Village in Loudon, Tennessee on Friday, April 24, 2026. He was 96 years and 11 months old!

Rudy was born on May 10, 1929 in Huntington, West Virginia, to Lyell Vernon Douthat and Inez "Pauline" Dunfee Douthat. The oldest of three brothers, Rudy graduated from Huntington High, and attended Marshall University in Huntington. He transferred to the University of Michigan, where he received his undergraduate degree in 1950 and developed a lifetime loyalty to the Michigan Wolverines. Rudy entered medical school at West Virginia University in Morgantown, and later received a scholarship to complete his medical training at Washington University in St. Louis. Following his residency in Family Practice, Rudy served two years as a Captain in the U.S. Army, practicing as a physician at the 5th Army Headquarters in Chicago, Illinois.

In 1958, Rudy and his young family moved to Saline where he joined Dr. Harold Miller in Family Practice. In 1959, he served as the first Chief of Staff for the new Saline Hospital on Russell Street. Rudy opened his own Saline office in 1960, and continued in private practice - delivering hundreds of Saline babies, performing minor surgeries, setting fractures, suturing lacerations (even his daughter's face), and making house calls – the kind of doctor you would want to have. He remained in family practice until 1965

when he became one of the first doctors to work full time in the Emergency Room at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor, MI. This was a novel concept, only three hospitals in the country had implemented such an arrangement for their ER's. Rudy was among the first doctors to establish the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) in 1968 and consequently the specialty of Emergency Medicine. He remained active in the ACEP organization even beyond his retirement. During this time, Rudy was also the U of M Hockey Team doctor, a thrill for a U of M alumnus.

Rudy moved to Beaumont, Texas in 1975, where he worked in the Emergency Departments of several hospitals in the Beaumont area. He assisted in establishing the Life Flight helicopter service for Baptist Hospital. Rudy met his wife Jan in Pinewood, near Beaumont, TX. They were married in November 1979, and celebrated their 46th wedding anniversary last November. Rudy could often be seen making house calls in their Pinewood neighborhood. Over the next many years, he practiced Emergency Medicine in both Texas and in the Carson/Tahoe area of Nevada. He and Jan enjoyed their home in Glenbrook, NV, and welcomed many guests to experience the beauty of Lake Tahoe with them. He also served as a cruise ship doctor, and volunteered at a medical clinic in San Pedro, Belize. Rudy made time for volunteering as a Docent at Thunderbird Lodge in Lake Tahoe and at Lake Tahoe Animal Care.

Rudy and Jan owned several race horses, and loved going to watch them run. Rudy enjoyed golfing, playing tennis, hiking, horseback riding, sailing, and skiing. He worked so hard, but he played even harder – leading to many bumps, bruises and occasional broken bones. His antics made his friends utter “Rudy, Rudy, Rudy,” and shake their heads. At age 90, Rudy went on a tandem skydive with his grandson.

It was easy to get caught up in Rudy's orbit. He made people feel a part of the

action. Family and friends will miss... Rudy's patriotic spirit and his Uncle Sam costume, his jokes, rhymes, limericks, and funny stories, his love of pets – friends have even named their dogs Rudy and Rudenz, watching him jump over the tennis net after a match, spontaneous conversations about anything at all, his ability to make people laugh, and his contagious smile. He was blessed to have many continuing friendships in West Virginia, Michigan, Texas, Nevada, and more recently in Tennessee. He loved his profession, his family, his friends, his many pets, and his U of M Wolverines.

Rudy is survived by his wife Jan, his brother Wylie Douthat of Huntington, WV, his children David (Faye) Douthat of Saline, MI, Jim (Margo) Douthat of Tecumseh, MI, Debbie (Steve) Kelly of Saline, MI, and Randy Douthat of Cypress, CA, his grandchildren Danielle (Brenden) Douglas, Russell (Maria) Douthat, Claire (Brad) Barnich, Hannah (Derick) Rauch, Sam Kelly and George (Heather) Kelly, his seven great grandchildren Andrew, Daniel, Ginny, Wesley, Anna, Maisie, and Conan, several nieces and nephews, his two golden retrievers Buddy and Rocky, and rescued cat Cleo.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his brother David Douthat and sister-in-law Mary Louise Douthat of Vienna, Virginia, sister-in-law Polly Douthat of Huntington, West Virginia, nephew Steve Douthat of Fairfax, Virginia and great grandson Riley Douthat of Ypsilanti, MI.

A Celebration of Life gathering will be held at Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home in Saline, MI on Sunday, June 14, 2026 from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm. There will be an opportunity to share stories and memories with the family and friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you consider a donation to Amedisys Hospice, 130 Willowcreek Blvd, Sweetwater, TN 37874, or to the charity or alumni association of your choice, "in memory of Rudy." Also, please consider

how Doc Douthat made you feel special or connected with you in some way, and try to pay that forward in your own life – a kind remark, a reassurance, a moving story, a sincere laugh, a fun adventure – that you can share with someone you know, or someone you have yet to meet. And be sure to think of him on Ground Hog Day – his favorite holiday.

Local arrangements entrusted to Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home.

Memories of Dr. Douthat and condolences for the family may be shared at [www.rbfhsaline.com](http://www.rbfhsaline.com).

# Upcoming Events

## Celebration of Life Gathering

JUN 14. 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home & Cremation Services

301 E Michigan Ave

Saline, MI 48176

(734) 429-9760

[rbfhsaline@hotmail.com](mailto:rbfhsaline@hotmail.com)

<https://www.rbfhsaline.com>

# Tribute Wall

JG

“ I worked with Dr Douthat at Baptist Hospital in Beaumont. He was always one of my favorite ER docs, always smiling and laughing. On a trip to Tahoe my husband and I even went to his house to visit but unfortunately he was not home. RIP, you were much loved.

*Joanie Grado*

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**Joanie Grado** - May 11 at 11:13 AM

JF

“ I worked in the lab at Baptist Hospital in Beaumont and went to the ER fairly often to draw blood. I always thought Dr. Douthat was the nicest doctor working there!

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**Judy Fisher** - May 10 at 02:15 PM

ML

“ I always loved Dr. Douthat. My mother worked in his office so I saw him often. He was always so kind. He was at St. Joseph hospital and sat and talked with my brother and me when my stepfather had a heart attack. When I had pneumonia as a child and was so sick, he was the one who got me through. Thank you Dr. Douthat for all you did for me, my family and our community.

*Maureen Brail Lenzion*

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**Maureeb Brail Lenzion** - May 08 at 08:14 AM

DM

“ I remember when Rudy first slapped me. Yep, he was there at my birth! Being a friend of Randy Douthat, I got to enjoy meeting Rudy several times, even in Beaumont and in Tahoe. Good times. His laugh and sense of humor engulfed you.

-Dan Martin, California

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**Daniel Martin** - May 06 at 05:54 PM

SM

“ Sidsel Massa lit a candle in memory of Dr. Rudenz "Rudy" Douthat



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**sidsel massa** - May 01 at 11:02 AM

GF

“ I remember Dr. Douthat when I played HS football for Saline H.S. in 1962. A great physician and good man. Also remember our Italian American coaches, Mike Rotunno and Clem Corona and their lovely wives. It was a good time to be alive in Saline MI. We had a very good football team, pretty cheerleaders, and great teachers. It wasn't perfect but as close as you can get when you're 18. Gayle Finkbeiner Belgrade, Maine

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**Gayle Finkbeiner** - April 26 at 12:21 PM

JC

“ Janet Corona lit a candle in memory of Dr. Rudenz "Rudy" Douthat



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**Janet Corona** - April 26 at 07:15 AM



*Dr Douthat you were the best ER doctor, so kind and compassionate*

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**Dorrell Dixon** - May 12 at 11:22 AM