



Stephen Manning Barber

October 16, 1946 - May 10, 2026

Stephen Manning Barber, age 79, passed away peacefully on Sunday, May 10, 2026, at Trinity Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He was born on October 16, 1946, in Buffalo, New York, to the late Arthur Manning and Gertrude Naomi (Rutledge) Barber.

Stephen graduated from the State University of New York at Buffalo with a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and went on to build a career in business and health care management, as every great anthropologist does. During the military draft, when many he knew were being sent to war, he made the choice to enlist voluntarily in the United States Army and proudly served his country in South Korea.

Stephen enjoyed spending time with family and friends and was well known for his sarcastic sense of humor. He loved reading just about anything he could get his hands on and had a passion for writing, authoring several short stories. He was also an incredible letter writer. Despite never receiving formal culinary training, he was an incredibly talented chef. He enjoyed playing guitar, creating some of his family's favorite memories through music. Stephen loved fishing—except on the occasions when one of his daughters would toss a rock into the water—and golfing, believing any day on the golf course was a good day. He also found great joy in spending time with his dogs and his daughters' dogs and loved creating ridiculous posts featuring these “family

members.”

Stephen is survived by his wife, Mercedes K. Brousseau; his daughter, Aimee (Kirk) Vantine; son-in-law, Jeremy Miller; grandchildren Samantha, Ethan Manning, Madailein, Emma, and Lindsey; sister, Judith Sanick; and many beloved nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his daughter, Erin Kristen (Barber) Sykes; sister, Lynn “Bonnie” (Barber) Retik; brother-in-law, Dr. Alan Retik; and nephew, David Retik.

Family will receive friends on Wednesday, May 20th, 2026 at Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home in Saline. Gathering will begin at 10:00 A.M. and a Memorial Service will take place at 11:00 A.M. Stephen’s ashes will be laid to rest privately at Great Lakes National Cemetery, Holly with honors at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Humane Society of Huron Valley, 3100 Cherry Hill Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48105, from where several of Stephen’s beloved dogs found their forever homes.

Arrangements entrusted to Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home, Saline. Memories of Stephen and condolences for the family may be shared at www.rbfhsaline.com.

Cemetery Details

Great Lakes National Cemetery

4200 Belford Road
Holly, MI 48442
<http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/greatlakes.asp>

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 20. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home & Cremation Services
301 E Michigan Ave
Saline, MI 48176
(734) 429-9760
rbfhsaline@hotmail.com
<https://www.rbfhsaline.com>

Memorial Service

MAY 20. 11:00 AM (ET)

Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home & Cremation Services
301 E Michigan Ave
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Tribute Wall

JD

“ Steve was a good friend to me over our years together on the website of one of the writing groups where we met. He was funny, brilliant, understanding, supportive... all the things a good man is. RIP, my friend. Enjoy the golf, fishing, and catching up with old friends, family, and loved ones. And, if you find the time, write a line or two - just to keep a hand in, so to speak. I'll miss ya, ya ol' chihuey.

Jenny Dahl - May 14 at 09:47 PM

AH

“ Steve always tried to beat me at Golf and catch more fish; He always caught the small fish. We had a barrel of fun that I will never forget!

Arthur Harmala - May 14 at 04:35 PM

AH

I forgot to add this long lasting MEMORY!! Steve and I were fishing at my Lake and 40+ acres of property. For some reason our fishing lines got tangled and I jerked my pole and ended up with a Hook in my Thumb. I said we need to get to Saline Hospital ASAP. Steve got the boat to the dock and SAID I am going to keep fishing, See you later!!

Art Harmala - May 16 at 09:32 AM

SS

“ *Sending love and peace to Steve's family and friends. Steve was one of the good ones, an amazing writer, fantastic editor, an even better friend. He was my friend for more than 20 years and I'm going to miss him so much. ~Sara Spock*



Sara Spock - May 14 at 03:10 PM

LR

“ *May fond memories provide your family with peace and comfort during this difficult time. I shared many laughs with Steve on and off of the golf course. My heartfelt condolences to Mercedes, Aimee, Judith and extended family.*

Lance Rowe - May 14 at 03:07 PM