

GER Ron and First Lady Nancy Hicks Celebrate Eric Mulholland A Trip for Ric

Nancy and I left Fredericksburg early Friday morning, October 29, on a trip that we knew was coming, but did not want to take. We were headed to Bay City, Michigan, for the Memorial Service and Celebration of the Life for former Endorsed Candidate for Grand Exalted Ruler and dear friend, Eric King Mulholland, who died on October 24, nine months after being diagnosed with cancer. We arrived at the Saginaw, Michigan, airport around 4:15 pm and drove the twenty miles to our hotel, just across the river from downtown Bay City.



The family visitation was Friday night at the Penzien-Steele Funeral Home, where there was a steady flow of Elks, friends, and associates filing through the facility to pay final respects and offer condolences to Ric's wife, Barb, and other family members. The traditional Elks Memorial Ritual was conducted at 7:00 pm with approximately 200 people observing the Memorial Ceremony.

I served as Exalted Ruler for the Service and delivered the Eulogy, with Michigan Past State Presidents filling the other



PSPs participating in the Ritual Service

positions. Keith Waltke served as Esteemed Leading Knight, Keith Alverson as Esteemed Loyal Knight, Rod Bellman as Esteemed Lecturing Knight, and Jerry McCorkle as Inner Guard. Howard Diehl served as Esquire and Ed Geishert as Chaplain, with Tom Bianco tolling the Chimes of Memory, and Ric's son, Eric, delivering the Eleven O'Clock Toast. Other PSPs participating in the Service were: PGER Jim Varenhorst, Ron Zimmerman, George Sermon, Fred Dill, Bill Bailey,

and Chris Ferguson. As the Service concluded, all Elk Members in attendance came forward and honored Ric by placing a sprig of Clinging Ivy on the Altar as a symbol of our enduring Brotherly Love.



Altar after Memorial Ritual with Ric's photo and urn, Amaranth encircled with Ivy (representing Fidelity), flags and sprigs of Clinging Ivy.

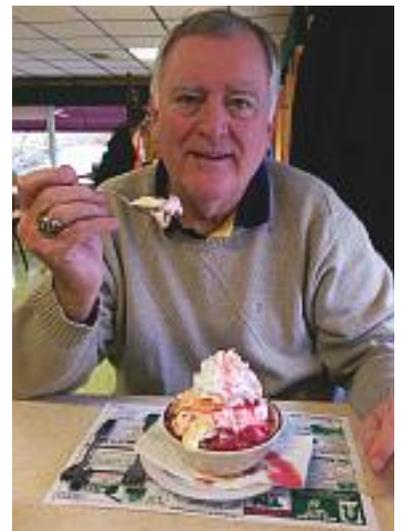
In addition to PGER and State Sponsor Jim Varenhorst, the Service was attended by PGER Jim Nichelson and Mary Carolyn and numerous Past and current State Presidents and Elks from throughout Area Four. Also attending were two former members of the Board of Grand Trustees who had served on the Board with Ric and me; Mike Clark came in from Texas and Jim Kile from Idaho.



The Turkey Roost, one of Ric's favorite places to eat.

mound of calories that we simply could not resist! Ric had introduced us to the Turkey Roost during one of our visits, and he would always let us know when he went

Nancy and I stayed close to the hotel Saturday morning, then went to one of Ric's favorite dining establishments, the Turkey Roost, for an early lunch. If you like turkey with all the trimmings, this is the place to be. But Ric and I particularly liked the strawberry shortcake, made with homemade biscuits and served with lots of strawberries, ice cream and whipped cream; a huge



"This one was for Ric"

there, usually with a photo of himself seated in front of the indulgent dessert. And, yes, I did!

A Celebration of Ric's Life was held Saturday afternoon at Trinity Episcopal Church, where Ric was an active member, having served on the Vestry and as its Senior Warden. The congregation filled the large sanctuary of the beautiful old church, where Ric's parents and grandparents were members, he was baptized, and where he and Barb were married. Ric had selected the readings and songs and made other arrangements for the Service before his death. The Rev Ann Grady led the Service; Ric's brother, Mark, and Ric's son, Eric, offered eulogies; and bagpipes played.

Rev Grady noted that the words grace, courage, integrity, and humor best described Ric, that he was a big guy with a big heart, and that he lived his life full of hope. It was an impressive Service, fitting to celebrate the life of a terrific person and great Elk. The weekend was filled with an outpouring of love and support that undoubtedly brought immense comfort to Barb and the family. A reception with coffee, tea and strawberry shortcake (from the Turkey Roost) followed the Service as old friends recalled the good times and a life well spent.

Ric loved Elkdom and all it represents. He lived our motto of Caring and Sharing every day, and he believed in the importance of our Elk Rituals. Ritual was special to Ric because he felt it holds meaning and purpose, and because he knew that it is what sets us apart and defines who we are as Elks.

Rest in Peace, my Brother. You will never be forgotten.



Some of the many photos on display at the Reception