



## Ronald G. Yatich

June 5, 1942 - January 22, 2017

Ronald G. Yatich, 74, passed away January 10, 2017, at the Grand Traverse Pavilions. An avid hang glider pilot and sailor, Ronald was the son of the late George and Dorothy (Boudinot) Yatich. He was born June 5, 1942, in Highland Park, MI. After graduating from Seaholm High School, Ronald earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees and began his teaching career. He would eventually retire from Camp Nokomos after 27 years as a teacher and counselor. During that time he pursued many interests, including climbing Mt. Rainier, becoming a "Looper" sailor, and his real passion hang gliding. He became a life-long active member of the U.S. Hang Gliding Association (USHGA). After completing half of his "Loop" by sailing from Traverse City through Chicago and down the Mississippi River to Florida in his sailboat, "The Sweetie", Ronald took a fateful flight over Florida. After 4.5 hours of flight and many miles across Florida, he attempted to land his hang glider. His landing became a crash in which he sustained a spinal cord injury among others. Months later in an interview now as a quadriplegic, Ronald reflected upon his life-changing injury. Ronald said that the lesson he learned from hang gliding is, "You are the pilot in charge of your life." Survivors include his sons, Darrell (Sherry) Yatich of Troy, Scott (Regina) Yatich of West Branch, his grandson Declan and his former wife Kathryn Kesti of Hope, MI. In addition to his parents, Ronald was preceded in death by his brother Arthur and several hang gliding pilot comrades, Harold Austin, Scot Maue, Mark Bolt, Todd Bears, Charlie Kirshner, Dick Dyer and Chris Rider. A Celebration of Life is

scheduled for Sunday, January 22, 2017 at 1:00 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Grand Traverse. A memorial service with the hang glider association will be held at Greenpoint near Frankfort on Memorial Day weekend. Memorial donations in Ronald's honor may be sent to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 6726 Center Rd., Traverse City, MI 49686 of which he was an active member or the University of Michigan Spinal Cord Injury Model Care System, Dept. of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, 325 E. Eisenhower Parkway, Suite 200, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. Condolences can be left online at [wolfeoneill.com](http://wolfeoneill.com) Arrangements were made by Wolfe-O'Neill Funeral Home, our family serving yours.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Ronald G. Yatich*

January 30, 2023 at 04:02 AM



“ *Ronald G. Yatich*

January 30, 2023 at 01:03 AM



“ *I know that Ron is in heaven and soaring among the clouds with his friends. He was always available when friends and his family needed him. I recall when he built a house for his son Scott and and wife. Regina and what a nice house it turned out to be. It was a very big project but he worked tirelessly along with Scott and others until the project was completed. When I lived in Wilmoington, DE, Ron built a fence around a house I lived in and did such a terrific job. I was there last year and drove past the house and the fence looks as nice now as it did 20 years ago. Thank you Ron for all your hard work and wonderful memories. May you rest in peace.*

**Sarah Rosiak** - January 26, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ *I have so many fond memories with Ron throughout the 80's and 90's. He was a special man. He made the world a better place! Rest In Peace Doug and Martha Ryckman*

**Doug Ryckman** - January 21, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ So sorry for your loss. I traveled several times with Ron over the years. He had a love for life and was always up for adventure. I also visited him often following his debilitating injury and his attitude never ceased to amaze me. He never complained and played the cards he was dealt admirably. Truly inspirational. He will be missed.

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Dwight Donaghue - January 17, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Scott, Kathryn and DJ and families: I am sorry about Ron's passing. He was an inspiration. Never complained, had such a positive attitude. I will hold onto all the wonderful memories and good times we all shared together. He is now flying high and far with Scot and the rest that were there to meet him. He is healthy and at peace. Love you all. Barb Maue

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January 15, 2017 at 12:00 AM