



# Stephen Hofheimer

1948 - 2020



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## Hofheimer, Stephen

Stephen A. Hofheimer, high school English teacher beloved by several generations of students in the Norwalk, CT community, died on December 21st of complications arising from treatment for leukemia. Hofheimer taught at Brien McMahon High School from 1970 until he retired in 2012, not missing a single day of work until his 29th year when he took time off to bury his father. Stephen was born in Columbus, Ohio on June 29, 1948.

He graduated from Miami University in Ohio in 1970, moved to Connecticut where he sought work as a high school teacher. From the several offers he received, he chose Brien McMahan and he never left. Hofheimer, or "Hoff" as he became known at McMahan, was well liked by students and colleagues. He served as advisor to the Honor Society and was on the Scholarship Committee. Students found his humor, quirks and enthusiasms entertaining and contagious and many dozens stayed in touch years after graduation. One former student remembered him like this in her long-running blog: "Mr. Hofheimer, who wore leather pants and saddle shoes, was the hippest thing we'd ever seen ... the guy who usually gets chosen as favorite teacher. We idolized him.... His excitement, his appreciation for the very taste of a word, settled somewhere inside of me and I fell in love with language." He eschewed semicolons; exclamation marks!!!, and overly sentimental writing, but he did like his Oxford comma. His linguistic idiosyncrasies and teacherly instincts endured until his final days, when he reminded nurses to say "lie down" instead of "lay down." "Dress-like-Hoff-Day" was held by junior staff at the school and a colleague reports that Hoff was voted favorite teacher in at least 30 of his 42 years at McMahan. Another student had an ad hoc band that played the talent show as "Neurotic Hoff and the Recalcitrants." She said, "In my day, his Psychology in Literature and his American Musical Theatre classes were must-take electives." Stephen's contribution to a student council fundraiser of teachers' recipes: "Tunaheimer.....Open one can of StarKist Tuna. Drain. Sprinkle liberally with vinegar. Eat." In addition to teaching, Stephen's great loves included musical theatre, J. D. Salinger, his family and friends (especially Sally Kidd, a fellow teacher and BFF for half a century), and collecting objects

that caught his extraordinary eye for art and design, an avocation that grew in importance after retirement, when teaching no longer afforded an outlet for his creative energy. With family and friends, he was warm and generous, truly the wittiest guy in the room and the kindest. He never missed an anniversary or birthday, always sending a clever card timed to arrive a day before or on the day. Survivors include two brothers, an ex-sister-in-law, two nieces, a nephew, a great nephew, a great niece and, of course, Ms. Kidd. Due to the pandemic, no memorial is planned. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the ASPCA, [The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research](#), or St. Jude's Hospital.

To Plant Memorial Trees in memory, please visit our [Sympathy Store](#).

Published in The Columbus Dispatch from Dec. 28 to Dec. 30, 2020.

## MEMORIAL EVENTS

No memorial events are currently scheduled. To offer your sympathy during this difficult time, you can now have memorial trees planted in a National Forest in memory of your loved one.

Funeral services provided by

Edmund W Dougiello Funeral Home

[36 S Pine Creek Rd](#)

[Fairfield, CT 06824](#)

[\(203\) 259-9466](#)