

Memorial Resolution for Mark Alan Crouch

Mark Alan Crouch, 74, passed away on March 8, 2025, at Golden Years Homestead in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He was born to Kenneth and Dallisrose (Carver) Crouch on July 7, 1950, in Sedalia, Missouri. The family moved to Osawatomie, Kansas, the following year.

While in high school, Mark played the trumpet in the school band. He also played the keyboards in a garage band called The Lost Cause, a name that foreshadowed the wicked sense of humor he would exhibit as an adult. The band performed in area bars behind chicken wire, which shielded the performers from the beer bottles occasionally hurled by "appreciative" audience members.

As a youth, Mark also was an active member in DeMolay, the international youth leadership organization that strives to shape young men into leaders of character. The group was a great fit because Mark was his own character with great character. Local Masonic Lodge members, who sponsored DeMolay, were impressed enough to name him "Outstanding DeMolay of the Year" in 1968.

Mark graduated from Osawatomie High School with the class of 1968. He went on to study economics at Kansas State Teacher College, now known as Emporia State University, and graduated in 1972 with a bachelor's degree.

Mark was hired in the shipping and receiving department at Jacobson Manufacturing in Olathe, Kansas. While there, he received an inside view of the sometimes contentious relationship between unions and management.

The experience inspired him to enroll in the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa, where he earned a master's degree in labor studies, a topic that would become Mark's passion for the rest of his life.

Following graduation, Mark moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana, and began teaching labor studies for Indiana University Division of Labor Studies at the Indiana-Purdue University Fort Wayne campus as an associate professor. His lessons focused on worker representation, union history and organizing; contract negotiating and grievance processes; health and safety requirements in the workplace; and other labor-related topics. Mark was generous with his time and knowledge in hopes of equipping students with the ability to advocate for themselves, based on common sense and existing federal and state laws. For IPFW General Studies students who included Labor Studies portfolios, he was a collaborative partner, focusing on their collective students' needs.

People he worked with remember him hanging out near the General Studies office chatting with a Diet Coke with no sugar, no caffeine, that they affectionately called, "colored water in a Coke can".

Mark didn't confine his activities to the classroom. He was a founding member of the Workers' Project and served on many committees in the Fort Wayne community including the Fort Wayne Police Merit Board Commission. He submitted labor-related columns to the local newspapers and was a frequent media contributor. He drove thousands of miles across Indiana and neighboring states to share labor studies information with hundreds of workers. He enjoyed interacting with working people.

Mark's legacy is seen in numerous workplaces, where union leaders work to afford their members respect and fairness while ensuring workers' health and safety are protected. However, Mark would be the first one to say the battle to protect workers' rights continues.

In his free time, Mark enjoyed attending concerts, art expositions and visiting museums. He also liked to go to antique shops and collect union memorabilia from past eras.

Mark is preceded in death by his parents and sister-in-law, Patricia Crouch. He is survived by his brother Keith Crouch of Paola, Kansas; niece Amy Belcher of Spring Hill, Kansas; and nephew Paul Crouch of Olathe, Kansas.

Mark's family would like to thank the many people help care for and support Mark including Golden Years workers, as well as, Brian Headings, Karen Bartrom, and Tom Lewandowski.

Divine Mercy Funeral Home 3500 Lake Ave., Fort Wayne, is handling the services. Visitation will be Friday, March 21, 4PM to 7PM. The funeral service will be Saturday, March 22 at 11am with viewing one hour prior. Mark will be laid to rest Fort Wayne.

The family suggests memorial contributions be made to Workers' Project to establish the Mark Crouch Workers' Education Fund c/o Divine Mercy Funeral Home, 3500 Lake Ave., Fort Wayne, IN, 46805.