



## Hugh W. McHarry

June 12, 1950 - November 26, 2023

Hugh Wilson McHarry, age 73, passed away at his home on Sunday, November 26, after a valiant twelve year battle with an aggressive cancer. He was born June 12, 1950 to Dr. John and Esther (Dyer) McHarry of Havana, Illinois. He also lived in Buffalo Grove, Illinois when he worked in Chicago. Upon retiring, he moved back to Havana.

Hugh is survived by a brother, John D. McHarry of Wilmington, North Carolina. Also mourning his passing are many cousins in Illinois and Texas and numerous friends including his longtime childhood friend Rex Rosenberger and special friends Pam Thomas and her husband Pastor Donald Graham. He also is survived by his devoted companion Westie dog, Bentley James Underfoot who was with Hugh at his passing.

Upon graduating from high school at the age of 16, Hugh got a bachelor's degree from Illinois College in Jacksonville, Illinois, and a Masters in International Management from the American Graduate School of International Management in Phoenix, Arizona. He traveled the world in his chosen occupation of International Marketing. Hugh was a unique individual known for his exceptional frugality and also for his many talents. He had a gift for languages and was fluent in Japanese which he learned on a mission to Japan for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and where he grew in the testimony of his faith. He also spoke French fluently and was especially fond of France, which he visited often in his retirement years. He enjoyed French and Cajun cooking and often treated his friends to special meals.

Also being remembered for his love of music, Hugh sang with perfect pitch, played the oboe and guitar and was an accomplished pianist and organist. He especially enjoyed antique pump organs and pipe organs. He even talked his way into trying out a few pipe organs in European churches. In his youth, Hugh would hoist his World War Two army field pump organ into a pick-up truck, load up his friends, and go Christmas caroling around town.

With an amazing memory, Hugh was very knowledgeable in geography and world history. Also being a steady researcher of local and family history, Hugh was of the opinion that Havana's Rockwell Park was really an Indian Mound. He convinced archaeologists from Dickson Mounds State Museum to do further investigation. They proved Hugh correct in his assumption. Hugh later erected an informational monument in that area and later two other historical markers in town.

Hugh was known for his fortitude and not backing down from a challenge. He experienced a devastating house fire in 2020, escaping with just the clothes on his back and his dog, Bentley. He later rebuilt in the same location, a beach property owned by Hugh's grandparents.

Also appreciating politics, Hugh served on the County Board of Mason County and was a staunch member of the Republican party. He loved his hometown and often said, "They don't call us beautiful Havana, Illinois, Paris of the Midwest for nothin." "Can I get an Amen?"

He had a quick wit and delighted in devising clever nicknames for people and places. He had a great zest for life and lived it to the fullest. Hugh was one of a kind who will often be remembered, missed...and quoted!

Never wavering in his testimony of the Savior and the Church, Hugh was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Havana, where he served as Elders' Quorum President. He also was a beloved organist at the Central Christian Church in Havana. Funeral services will be held at 11:00 A.M., Friday, December 15, officiated by President Jeff Johnson of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Havana and held at Havana's Central Christian Church. Burial will be at the rural Quiver Presbyterian

Cemetery on Manito Road, Havana, near Hugh's parents.

Memorial donations may be made to Havana's Central Christian Church, to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – Humanitarian Fund, or to a charity of the donor's choice.

Hurley Funeral Home, Havana, is in charge of funeral arrangements.

# Cemetery Details

## Presbyterian Cemetery Topeka

Topeka, IL

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

DEC 15. 11:00 AM (CT)

Central Christian Church  
215 South Broadway  
Havana, IL 62644

# Tribute Wall

VB

“*Hugh was a childhood friend in Havana: fun and smart ! Always think of him when I think of Hava*”

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**Virginia Bower** - January 29, 2024 at 06:18 AM

RS

“*WOW. I can't believe that my new friend, whom I met a year and half ago passed away. We actually met online as he was interested and purchased an organ from our church.Hugh literally drove to Inkster, MI, stay a couple of days, disassemble the entire piped organ and traveled back to his home town. I truly admired his kindness, compassion, conversation and tenacity. RIP my friend*”

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**Rick Sykes** - December 29, 2023 at 10:50 AM

KC

“*Kris Claypool lit a candle in memory of Hugh McHarry*”



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**Kris Claypool** - December 17, 2023 at 09:36 PM

EH

“*Hugh is an amazing man and friend. His warm 1st visit and welcome to Havana 31 years ago I will never forget. He somehow arranged, as only Hugh could, that I preach a sermon, dressed as a Sintreklas, (Dutch Santa Claus) in the Dutch Reformed church a few years back. I loved playing my violin and during his Christmas Concerts at church and in nursing homes when we lived in Havana area. His sayings, smiles, community support, and kindnesses are wonderful memories and very appreciated. I am going to miss you Hugh. You are one of a kind! Heaven is a bit brighter, now that you are home. Love 'Pearl' AKA Berh Hansen*

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**ELIZABETH ( BETH) HANSEN** - December 15, 2023 at 03:58 PM

BB

“*Brenda Butler lit a candle in memory of Hugh McHarry*



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**Brenda Butler** - December 07, 2023 at 08:17 AM

SS

“*I already miss our visits over the phone. We didn't always agree. I'm glad I was able to call you my friend. On behalf of the rest of our GOP friends and family, Hugh, you will be greatly missed!*



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**Shawn Sievers** - December 06, 2023 at 07:53 AM

CH

“ *Condolences to the family.*



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**Chuck Hunter** - December 05, 2023 at 09:03 PM

SB

“ *Sandy Budyn lit a candle in memory of Hugh McHarry*



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**Sandy Budyn** - December 05, 2023 at 08:36 PM



“ *June Mahan lit a candle in memory of Hugh McHarry*



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**June Mahan** - December 05, 2023 at 08:00 PM

PS

“ *Patti Specketer lit a candle in memory of Hugh McHarry*



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**Patti Specketer** - December 05, 2023 at 02:52 PM

DS

“*Hugh was a good friend and fellow organist. Though we often disagreed, especially on political issues, it was never personal. He will be missed greatly.*”

**DENNIS A STECKLEY** - December 05, 2023 at 10:19 AM

DW

“*Dan Chris Wilson lit a candle in memory of Hugh McHarry*”



**Dan and Chris Wilson** - December 05, 2023 at 09:50 AM

NE

“*Nancy Elliott lit a candle in memory of Hugh McHarry*”



**Nancy Elliott** - December 04, 2023 at 08:31 PM

TG

“*Tim Griffin lit a candle in memory of Hugh McHarry*”



**Tim Griffin** - December 04, 2023 at 11:58 AM

HS

“*Hugh will be missed by so many! Although we are distant related he always called me "cuzzin" and I loved chatting with him. Will always remember his beautiful lilacs. Rest in peace cuzzin.*

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**Helen K Sarff** - December 04, 2023 at 11:05 AM