



## Mr. Alvin John Polanchek

October 20, 1939 - September 14, 2024

Mr. Alvin Polanchek of High River, Alberta passed away peacefully surrounded by his family at the Rockyview Hospital in Calgary on September 14, 2024, one month shy of his 85th birthday. He is survived by his loving wife Geri, son Mike (Debbie Hotchen), daughter Lori Zanewich (Allan), grandkids Landon (Kim), Makenna, Brinnley and Hadynn Zanewich, sister Arlene Anders, brothers Robert and Arnie (Jan), as well as numerous extended family members and friends. Al was predeceased by his parents and his brother Jack.

Al was a true character, well known for his sense of humor, quick wit, and knack for telling it like it is. He loved nicknames, and many of us are still referred to by the ones he gave us. He was knowledgeable about everything, and was always the go-to if you had a question or needed something fixed. He always had the right answer and the right tool. He always talked tough, but was a teddy bear at heart; he was generous to a fault and no one ever left without a full tank of gas.

He spent countless hours as a proud parent at school events, dance recitals and the hockey rink, and as a proud grandfather spent many more hours in those same places years later. He never missed a family event or holiday dinner and was at the high school graduation of all 4 of his grandkids and knew their future goals.

As a longtime teacher, Al spent many years teaching at Senator Riley High School in High River before his retirement. He was well known and loved in those hallways, and had a fondness for other student's lunches and samples in the home ec room. "Keep your eyes on the copy" is a phrase many of us will always remember.

Al loved to travel, and was fortunate to see much of the world with Geri, visiting all of the continents except Antarctica. A very memorable 50th anniversary trip was taken with the entire family. He loved the outdoors and was an avid fisherman, a love he shared with all of us. So many memories of fishing in Montana, BC, Alaska and the Kananaskis, always with a fly of course-no worms allowed! He loved to play poker and will be dearly missed at his weekly poker group. Al enjoyed a good cigar, a Corona sunbrew, naps in his recliner

and watching the stock market. He also enjoyed a good surf and turf dinner (no green beans) and homemade apple pie.

His tenacity, feistiness and wit served him well throughout his life. Even in his final days he was a model of strong will and sheer determination. Big Al touched the lives of many, and will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by all who knew him.

A Celebration of Al's Life will be held on Sunday, October 20th from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Heritage Inn Banquet Room A in High River.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to the charity of the donor's choice.

Caring for the family is Lyle Reeves Funerals of High River (Craig Snodgrass)  
403.652.4242.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life Reception

OCT **20**. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (MT)

Heritage Inn, High River  
1104 11 Ave. SE  
High River, AB (CA)

# Tribute Wall

KW

“ *Mr. Polanchek was my Typing 10 teacher back in 1986. I always appreciated his dry sense of humour and tough love approach. I'm still grateful for the skills he taught me - I use them every day! Sorry for the loss to his family.*



Kim Wheeler - November 24, 2025 at 10:27 PM



“ *Louise Harrison lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



Louise Harrison - October 19, 2024 at 08:42 PM

AD

“ *Geri, our condolences to you and your family. Elenora and Art.*

art deyholos - October 12, 2024 at 03:27 PM

N(

“ *I am so very sorry for your loss. H was absolutely my favourite teacher! Always joking around. He acted tough but, then he would crack a huge smile. I've thought about him through the years. I'm so happy he had such a fulfilling and beautiful life with his family! Much love to all you all.*



Nicole Mclean (Janz) - October 04, 2024 at 01:40 PM

PA

“ *Geri,Lori, Mike and families  
Sending love and Prayers.  
Thinking of everyone at this difficult time* ❤️❤️❤️❤️

Pam Anders - October 04, 2024 at 11:17 AM

SO

“ Shawn Ottewell lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Shawn Ottewell - October 03, 2024 at 05:31 PM

TB

“ Terri Bass lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Terri Bass - October 02, 2024 at 01:37 PM

MM

“ Thinking of you ❤️

Michelle McAra - September 29, 2024 at 03:35 PM

KB

“ Kevin Bews lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Kevin Bews - September 28, 2024 at 09:02 PM

RF

“ Geri and family, I am sorry for your loss. I will fondly remember bantering with Al over the years.



Rhonda Frondall - September 28, 2024 at 08:07 PM

US

“ Udo & Maria Stey lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Udo & Maria Stey - September 28, 2024 at 03:54 PM

GC

“ Gerry And Glenda Cutforth lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Gerry and Glenda Cutforth - September 28, 2024 at 12:54 AM

CC

“ My deepest condolences Geri and family, Cathy



Cathy Couey - September 27, 2024 at 12:44 PM

WS

“ Wade Schultz lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Wade Schultz - September 26, 2024 at 10:33 PM

RM

“ Ronna MacCara lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Ronna MacCara - September 26, 2024 at 03:14 PM

RW

“ *Ron Weston lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



Ron Weston - September 26, 2024 at 02:20 PM

CN

“ *Cyril And Bev Norrie lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



Cyril and Bev Norrie - September 26, 2024 at 09:58 AM

MP

“ *Mark Phillips lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



Mark Phillips - September 25, 2024 at 01:11 PM

KG

“ *Ken Gillanders lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



Ken Gillanders - September 23, 2024 at 07:48 PM

BP

“ *Bonnie Perras lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



Bonnie Perras - September 23, 2024 at 06:51 PM

ES

“ Eunice Schmuland lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Eunice Schmuland - September 23, 2024 at 10:51 AM

ES

Thinking of you all at this difficult time!

Eunice Schmuland - September 23, 2024 at 10:52 AM

LB

“ Louise Barlow lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Louise Barlow - September 23, 2024 at 02:09 AM

SV

“ Sherry Visosky lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Sherry Visosky - September 22, 2024 at 07:56 PM

TW

“ We remember fondly Al and Jeri a and send sincere Sympathy to the family, May God be with you in your sorrow, Terry and Mary West

Tery West - September 22, 2024 at 04:55 PM

AP

“ Condolences to Gerri, Mike, and Lori. I have fond memories as a kid hanging out with Lori at their house. The big picture of the Disney character “Big Al” on the wall. He coached hockey with my dad for Mike and my brother, Lori and I were rink rats together. And yes I still remember in his big booming voice calling me Alisooner. My thoughts are with you during this difficult time.

Alison Palmer - September 22, 2024 at 03:38 PM

BR

“ Condolences to you Mike and the Polanchek family

Brendan - September 22, 2024 at 09:59 AM

JG

“ Jason Geres lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Jason Geres - September 21, 2024 at 05:10 PM

ME

“ Gerri, Lori, Mike (and families), I am sorry to hear about Mike (Mr. Polanchek to me!) passing on. He was something that is special today... memorable. I am smiling thinking of him trying to teach me 'computers 10' (I tried to convince him they were a fad that would pass). My thoughts are with you ❤️

Mark Ewanishin - September 21, 2024 at 05:00 PM

ME

Apologies... I was thinking of Mike and our time at U of A. I of course meant to type Al.

Mark Ewanishin - September 21, 2024 at 05:01 PM

MW

“ Murray And Kendra Wegener lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Murray and Kendra Wegener - September 21, 2024 at 02:05 PM

AZ

“ Ann Holmes Zirk lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Ann Holmes Zirk - September 21, 2024 at 12:46 PM

MW

“ *Mary-Ellen Wilderman-Hay lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



**Mary-Ellen Wilderman-Hay** - September 20, 2024 at 06:03 PM

GH

“ *Gerald Harris lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



**Gerald Harris** - September 20, 2024 at 10:11 AM

SL

“ *Shannon And Steve Laycraft lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



**Shannon and Steve Laycraft** - September 20, 2024 at 01:01 AM

PH

“ *To Gerri and Family, my thoughts are with you. Al was a great colleague. Always a gentleman and very professional in his demeanour, he could use his dry humour to convey a world of meaning with very few soft-spoken words. He was one of the people who made Senator Riley High School a great place to be.*

**Penny Hajdu** - September 19, 2024 at 10:36 PM

TB

“ *Terri Niven Bass lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



**Terri Niven Bass** - September 19, 2024 at 01:56 PM

JT

“ Jeff And Tomomi lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Jeff and Tomomi - September 19, 2024 at 01:46 PM

SB

“ I loved Mr. Polencheck and every class he taught was fun and I always felt happy leaving them. We were fortunate enough to have him as a friend for coffee after school over the years and I just loved all the stories he would tell. God speed.

Shandra Nielsen Brown - September 19, 2024 at 12:30 PM

RP

“ Robert Polanchek lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Robert Polanchek - September 19, 2024 at 11:31 AM

AA

“ Arlene Anders lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Arlene Anders - September 19, 2024 at 11:30 AM

TW

“ Tracey Wilson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Tracey Wilson - September 18, 2024 at 11:28 PM

BG

“ Buck Groeneveld lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Buck Groeneveld - September 18, 2024 at 11:27 PM

MS

“ Lori and family, I am sending lots of love your way! Mr. Polanchek was a character, loved to give me the gears and always accepted my “cheekiness” in stride. He will be missed.

Love, Myrna Shoults

Myrna Shoults - September 18, 2024 at 11:05 PM

SM

“ Condolences to the family. He will be missed by many.  
Sylvia Moore

Sylvia Moore - September 18, 2024 at 10:41 PM

DI

“ Diane lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



diane - September 18, 2024 at 10:14 PM

DI

“ BIG AL was my second Dad, and I spent many years at their home. Junior and Seniour High meant hours spent with Mr Polanchek, and I learned alot. God Bless and God Speed Big Al, always a lesson learned 🙏❤️

diane - September 18, 2024 at 10:13 PM

AR

“ *Andrea Rousseau lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



Andrea Rousseau - September 18, 2024 at 09:24 PM

HN

“ *We send sincere condolences to Al's family in his passing. His sense of humour and ability to see beyond issues to what really mattered will be missed by those who knew him. He leaves behind such great memories for his family to reflect on.*

Harvie and Judy Nielsen - September 18, 2024 at 09:23 PM



“ *Darlene Beutler lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek*



Darlene Beutler - September 18, 2024 at 08:28 PM

TB

“ *Awe my most sincere condolences to you all 💜 Mr.P was one of my most favorite teachers in highschool. I only had to do typing/accounting class once a week because I was usually ahead, so he'd send me for a 'coffee' - that was code for 'take a spare and get outta here'! Looks like he had a life well lived - take good care 💜*

Tammy Beach - September 18, 2024 at 07:59 PM

NS

*So sorry to hear of Mr Polanchek's passing. My condolences to all of his family and friends. Big Al was one of my favourite teachers at Senator Riley. I fondly remember many of his sayings like "keep your eyes on the copy" and "quiiiiiet" and my personal favourite "Leemrijse, I'm going to give you a one way ticket from here to Gladys Ridge" lol He is a fondly remembered character. One of the best!*  
Natalie Leemrijse

Natalie Setoguchi - September 20, 2024 at 09:48 AM

DI

“ Diane lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



diane - September 18, 2024 at 07:48 PM

DI

Big AL was a big part of our lives at Senator Riley. May he rest in peace ❤️🙏

diane - September 18, 2024 at 07:49 PM

KC

“ Geri, my condolences to you and your family.  
Kathy Cuthbertson



Kathy Cuthbertson - September 18, 2024 at 07:44 PM

JB

“ RIP Mr. Polanchek. You will be missed. You are all in my prayers. One memory that I have is “Baker Eyes On Your Paper”. I still hear his voice telling me that. You were one of my favorite teachers. You made typing class fun.



Janice Danyluk (nee Baker) - September 18, 2024 at 07:09 PM

SF

“ Dear Geri, Mike, and Lori. My sincere sympathy to you and your families. Hold on tight to the wonderful memories you have of him.

Sharon Forbes - September 18, 2024 at 06:45 PM



“ Joyce Barton lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Joyce Barton - September 18, 2024 at 02:22 PM

LC

“ Lynda Cowling lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



lynda Cowling - September 18, 2024 at 11:32 AM

JA

“ Julie Allan lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Julie Allan - September 18, 2024 at 10:26 AM

JC

“ Jeff Callahan lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Jeff Callahan - September 18, 2024 at 10:17 AM

SW

“ Mike, Lori & families. My deepest sympathies to you and yours at this time.



Sherry Whitford - September 18, 2024 at 09:35 AM

KB

“ Kelly Baskin lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alvin John Polanchek



Kelly Baskin - September 18, 2024 at 07:43 AM

GM

“ Condolences Geri to you and the family.

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**Gerrie Morrison** - September 17, 2024 at 09:38 PM

CA

“ Mike and families - So sorry to hear of the loss of your dad. I have many fond memories of your dad giving me heck down the halls of Senator Riley. I either got the "Anderson, no running in the halls" or Anderson, your late again". Still makes me laugh to this day. Dad's are very special, may you find comfort in the coming days knowing he had such a full and vibrant life. Thinking of you all at this difficult time.

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**Connie Anderson** - September 17, 2024 at 05:28 PM

LZ

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Lori Zanewich** - September 17, 2024 at 03:55 PM