



Kenneth Charles Depoe

December 27, 1928 - May 14, 2025

Kenneth C. Depoe passed away peacefully on May 14 at the age of 96, leaving a legacy of a life richly lived in service and kindness.

He will be greatly missed by his wife of 64 years, the late E. Yvonne Depoe (nee Brubaker) who passed away on Friday, May 23, 2025, son Craig, daughter-in-law Mary Elizabeth, grandchildren Nathaniel and Charlotte, and numerous family and friends. His parents and brothers, Merril and Richard, preceded him in death.

Ken was born in Lancaster on December 27, 1928, to Merril B. and Margaret (nee Grimes) Depoe. It was growing up on South Queen Street near the County Park where Ken developed his love of the outdoors and nature. He would dig up night crawlers in the park to sell to local merchants and worked at the local florist, cultivating his passion for growing things. Always active, Ken started playing basketball at the Lancaster YMCA church league and then for the Boys Club in the City-County League at age twelve. He graduated from McCaskey High School in 1946 and Millersville State College in 1950 with a B.S. in Education. While at Millersville, Ken played basketball, was captain in his senior year, and was the leading scorer in his last two years. After graduation, Ken went on to play for the semi-professional basketball team, the "Lancaster Rockets" for one season.

Ken began his teaching career at East Donegal High School (Maytown) in 1950. He joined the Donegal Union School District in 1954, serving as the head of the Industrial/Graphic Arts Department until his retirement in 1990.

From 1972-1990, Ken held the position of Assistant Athletic Director and attended all the athletic functions. He could often be seen manning the scoreboard, moving bleachers, or sweeping floors. He coached basketball from 1950-1958, bringing his team to the 1955 Regional Championships. In 1955, he was awarded Coach of the Year. Ken also coached junior high wrestling from 1961 to 1971, with an undefeated season in 1964. As a Mount Joy Athletic Association member, Ken coached baseball for several youth age groups. He was inducted into the Donegal HS Athletic Hall of Fame in 2019. In an article reflecting on his 40-year teaching career and what he hoped to achieve, Ken said, "To educate, to stress opportunity and to make a difference." Ken most certainly fulfilled these ideals. In 1977, he was honored with an Outstanding Contributions to Education, Youth, and Community Involvement award. He was among the top 10 finalists for the Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year Award.

Teaching was Ken's business, whether in or out of the classroom. He thoroughly enjoyed mentoring young people as a Boy Scout Merit Badge counselor and, perhaps his favorite, as an instructor of fly-tying classes. Under Ken's guidance, the students in his fly-tying club at Donegal HS worked to improve the streams so they would understand and appreciate having a place to catch trout with their fly-tie creations.

Fishing and Nature Conservation were Ken's passions. He founded the Donegal Fish and Conservation Association in 1965 and the Donegal Chapter of Trout Unlimited in 1968. During this time, he was instrumental in establishing Lancaster County's first "Fly Fishing Only" stream.

Ken expanded the effort over the years, enlisting anglers' and Donegal students to help make stream improvements. Proceeds from this group's annual sports show were used to purchase food for the trout he raised at the DFCA-PFBC Cooperative Nursery. Ken was a well-known fly tyer in the fly-fishing community. He invited legendary fly fishermen such as the late Lefty Kreh, Poul Jorgensen, and Charles Meck to speak at the yearly event. As for his dedication to the Donegal Creek Watershed and creating a fly-fishing

venue, without fail, Ken would go to the fish nursery every day to feed and nurture the fingerlings to maturity for over 50 years. Each Spring, he would stock the trout in local streams for the enjoyment of all anglers. In April 2023, a bridge over Donegal Creek on Anderson Ferry Road was dedicated as the Kenneth C. Depoe DFCA Bridge.

Ken also served as Urban Director of the Lancaster County Conservation District. Over the years, he received numerous honors and awards for his work in conservation. He remarked he was most proud of being invited to membership in the Harrisburg Fly Fishers "Order of the Hat" for "recognition of the high principles and ideals he represented in issues of conversation, stream enhancement, and Sportsmanship, saving and preserving our National Resources and defending the cause of Conservation." In 2001, Ken was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his founding of The Donegal Chapter of Trout Unlimited and a lifetime dedicated to preserving cold-water resources.

A member of St. Marks United Methodist Church, Ken served on the administrative board and as a chief steward for many years.

Ken was known, loved, and respected by many. And if you knew Ken, you knew Yvonne. They were married for 64 years and were inseparable.

Together, they built a life filled with love and deep commitment to their family and friends. Whether they were sitting on their front porch waving at neighbors passing by, cheering on the Hershey Bears, camping at Fisherman's Paradise, or playing with their grandchildren at the beach, you could be guaranteed a warm smile and a wonderful fishing tale.

Truly, Ken's favorite people were his grandchildren. He was a quiet, gentle, and consistent influence in their lives, guiding and teaching them by example. He was devoted entirely to nurturing them, as he had with so many others before.

Ken will be dearly missed but so lovingly remembered for a life richly lived in humility, kindness, and service to others.

A Memorial Service Celebrating Ken and Yvonne's Life will be held at St. Marks United Methodist Church, 27 East Main Street, Mount Joy, PA, on Thursday, May 29, 2025, at 11 AM. Ken's family will receive guests immediately following the service. Ken and Yvonne were interred in the Henry Eberle Cemetery, Mount Joy. Memorial contributions to The Donegal Fish And Conservation, PO Box 71, Mount Joy, PA 17552, would be deeply appreciated.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

MAY 29. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Marks United Methodist Church
37 East Main Street
Mount Joy, PA 17552

Visitation

MAY 29. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Marks United Methodist Church
37 East Main Street
Mount Joy, PA 17552

Tribute Wall



“ *Sheetz Funeral Home, Inc created a Tribute Video in memory of Kenneth Charles Depoe*



Sheetz Funeral Home, Inc - May 28, 2025 at 08:32 PM

BH

One of the Great ones. Best school and life teacher I ever had the privilege of meeting. May God bless you and give you strength in your time of need. Thank You. Barry Hawkins

Barry Hawkins - May 29, 2025 at 08:05 PM

MD

I am sad to see of my grandfather's father's passing. I am also sad to know the fact he had a whole other family! His son died this past November and his daughter died of cancer in February 2023! I hope they all make amends in heaven! I have many fond memories of my grandfather and Craig when I was younger!

melissa depoe - May 30, 2025 at 11:34 AM

RA

“ *This was my great grandfather and even though I didnt get to spend much time with him, the memories I do have are great, you will be surely missed.*

Rachael - May 29, 2025 at 10:00 AM

TA

“ My name is Tom Asplin. I taught with Ken at Donegal high 1974- until he retired. What a great mentor and friend. Helped me through my rookie years and had a great influence on my teaching career . Thanks Ken Tom Asplin

tom asplin - May 29, 2025 at 01:26 AM

JS

“ Words cannot express the respect I had for Ken. A teacher, mentor, expert fly-tyer, fishing coach and especially friend. He taught me so much about conservation and about respect for others. He guided my three sons to be humble while learning his masterful ways of fly tying and fishing. Ken was the perpetual teacher while also being a dedicated friend and person who, if he believed in you, was your best advocate.
I will always remember Ken with fond memories of fishing on hallowed streams, Penns Creek, Yellow Breeches, Letort Run as well as Montana, Wyoming and on Cape Cod. I feel very blessed to have been able to call Ken my friend.
Godspeed brother of the fly... Ken.

Jonathan R. Sheetz Donna M. Sheetz - May 26, 2025 at 10:16 PM

VH

“ In 1978, I was cheering during halftime show. I went to turn sideways and accidentally hit coach E. Funk in the abdomen!! lol... Mr Depoe almost buckled over laughing at the incident along with many others while I was horrified!! I'll never forget that moment!! 😂
😂
What a great guy and teacher!! 💜

Vickie Hecker - May 26, 2025 at 07:58 PM

KB

“ I remember going with Mr and Mrs Depoe and Craig to Boiling Springs when I was in high school. Mrs Depoe, Craig and I went to the community pool while Mr. Depoe went fishing in the Yellow Beeches. Goid times.

Kathy (Clark) Bankert - May 25, 2025 at 09:21 PM

DE

“ Mr. "Ken" Depoe was both a teacher and friend of mine. After graduating from Donegal HS in 1980 I earned my BS degree from West Chester University. In 1985 I was hired as a Donegal HS Health and Physical Education teacher and teaching alongside of Ken. Also in the capacity of Athletic Trainer I recall many times spending time with Ken as he prepared and shutdown athletic fields. In 1991, in addition to my health and PE classes, I began teaching the Donegal Experiential Education Program (DEEP). Part of the DEEP curriculum I authored was trout feeding and stocking. For many years, probably at least 20 I and my students encountered Ken, whether it be feeding the trout weekly at Ezra Engle's/DFCA trout nursery or actually stocking the fish in nearby Donegal Creek. I think of all the hundreds of Donegal HS students who encountered Ken's gentle smile, expert water and trout analysis or his willingness to offer a lending hand.

Ken also knew my grandfather, Victor L. Brooks who owned and operated a barber shop in Florin along Main Street, was a Florin Fire Company Fire Policeman and a PGC Deputy Game Warden. My grandfather passed in 1967 when I was only five, but overtime Ken would fill me in on stories of him, and I was grateful, because I had very few memories.

I'll miss my friend and his wife Yvonne, but know they are happy in Heaven. If there's a fly fishing stream there I'm sure Ken will be fishing it, and encouraging other Angels to do the same. God be with you Ken and Yvonne.

David Eichler - May 25, 2025 at 07:28 PM

JW

“ *Mr Depoe was best known to the Class of '86 as DADDY D. What a great teacher, not just in Graphic Arts, but in Social skills.*

He pulled me aside many times and asked when I was going to get my act together. The only teacher who saw potential in me and encouraged me to grow up and focus.

We made buttons we should not have, took pictures and developed them of things we should not have ... made flyers that would get any student kicked out of school, Daddy D didn't laugh, but didn't condemn, he just shook his head in disapproval and that was enough.

I'm glad to see his son Craig, Little Dipper, carry on the Depoe name and I am sure, his legacy.

James Michael Waltz - May 25, 2025 at 04:58 PM

JW

“ *A remarkable educator and exceptional individual. May he and his wife rest in peace and may his family and friends find solace in knowing he was deeply respected by so many. Jackie Wealand DHS Class of 1983*

Jackie Wealand - May 24, 2025 at 10:33 PM

SH

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Sheetz Funeral Home - May 24, 2025 at 01:03 PM

CB

He was a great teacher at Donegal High School. You were greatly appreciated for your support and time with us. Your class was amazing. Had lots of fun. Rest in peace 🙏🙏 Christine Splain 1981 graduate

Christine Barr - May 24, 2025 at 09:55 PM

DW

He was a remarkable teacher We all loved & respected. My sincere condolences to the family. May they both RIP together. Denise Welsh DHS 1983

Denise Welsh-Barndt - May 25, 2025 at 07:42 AM

FC

Ken and my father were good friends and were members of the original Florin Anglers Club that had a clubhouse where what was across from Donegal plantations. (At that time the plantation was abandoned). Lots of fun memories out at that place. They stocked fish, played cards and drank beer. The picnics were amazing with corn cooked/boiled in the husk, chicken cooked over a massive grill, and the wives and girlfriends organized games for us kids. Those days are very dear to my heart. Ken was my dad's basketball coach at East Donegal H.S. (Maytown). My dad lost his father at the early age of 15, and Ken was a stand in and mentored him during that difficult time in his life. This being, I am sure there will be more wonderful memories shared, of which this is but one... I will always be thankful for him and Yvonne. Two good folks. We will all miss you. With Love and appreciation, Fawn Cornwell

Fawn Cornwell - May 25, 2025 at 06:21 PM



Ken was an amazing man! I had him in graphic arts for three years and enjoyed and remember so much that he taught me!

My Dad had the pleasure of being a friend and enjoyed fishing with him. He still has a piece of wood with fishing flies on it that he made for my Dad.

His wife was a very sweet lady with lots of class. I did not have the honor to have her as a teacher but I heard many stories from others who did, and she was know as an amazing teacher as well.

Wishing Craig and family my sincere condolences and prayers.

Stacey Wilson-Crider 1990

Stacey Crider - May 26, 2025 at 11:28 PM