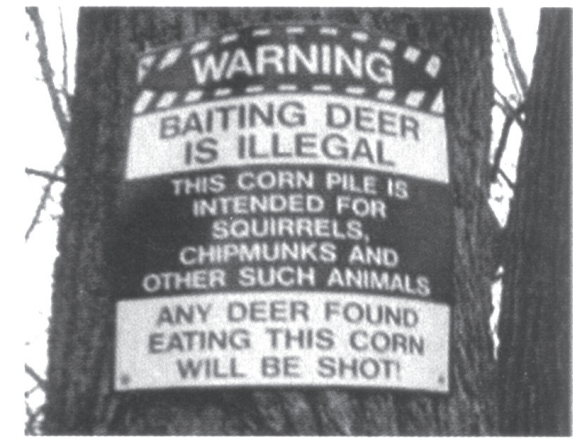


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## KENNETH "COACH" ERNY

3/6/1956 - 6/4/2023



Fruitport - Ken "Coach" Erny, age 67, entered Glory peacefully around 4:30 a.m. on Sunday, June 4, 2023 at home in Fruitport after a three-year battle with ALS. He was born on March 6, 1956, to Harry and Betty (Greenlee) Erny in Mount Holly, New Jersey.

What the world may wish to know:  
The Burlington, New Jersey native graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Social Science Comprehensive from Cedarville College in Ohio, and a Master of Arts in Teaching and School Administration from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, MI. He married his college sweetheart, Lori (Neal) on June 23, 1979. Ken began his impact within the Fruitport community by coaching soccer and teaching at Fruitport Faith Christian. After the school's closing and a stint as an educator with Calvary Schools, Erny was hired by Fruitport Community Schools in Community Education. He was selected to serve as the inaugural boys' varsity soccer coach and held that position from 1990-2008, also serving as the school's athletic director from 1996 until he was diagnosed with ALS in 2020.

Ken, known by many simply as "Coach," poured his heart and soul into countless student-athletes. He understood that athletics must be educational and made it a priority to teach long-lasting life lessons while seeking competitive success. Among his other accolades and accomplishments, Ken helped launch the "No More Sidelines" program at Fruitport High School in 2006, the Student Athlete Leadership Team (S.A.L.T) in 2009 (to mentor young leaders and share wisdom from his tireless reading and lifelong learning), and the Fruitport Athletic Hall of Fame in 2013. Ken was truly a "Hall of Famer" in his own right. He was inducted into the Michigan High School Soccer Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2015, received the Gene Young Distinguished Service Award from the Muskegon Area Sports Hall of Fame in 2022, and later that year was inducted into his hometown Fruitport Hall of Fame.

Ken's servant leadership in the workplace and at home was exemplary, and he valued character and integrity above any accomplishments. His natural humor and witty one-liners regularly brought joy to others. He often cited the famous "Don't Give Up" speech from the late Jim Valvano, and truly sought to laugh, cry, and think each day. He would often pour into those that he noticed were struggling by walking alongside them. His top priorities were faith, family, and Fruitport, and he deeply understood that his life was not his own but that of his loving Creator.

Ken is survived by his wife Lori; 4 children: Mindy (Nicole) Acre, Steve (Jacqui) Erny, Jon (Breckley) Erny, Jess (Ethan) Parcher; 9 grandchildren: Cing, Charles, Isabelle, Paul, Rosalie, David, Piper, Skye, William; sister Terry Simpson, and brother Gary (Sharon) Erny. The family would like to offer their unending gratitude to the countless people who walked alongside them throughout Ken's ALS journey, caring for him and loving him so well through his final days on this Earth.

He was preceded in death by his parents Harry and Betty Erny, sister Linda Erny, and brothers-in-law David Neal and John Simpson.

What Ken would want the world to know:  
1) Always give your best, because life is too short to just go through the motions.  
2) Always treat people really, really well, because everyone you will ever meet has infinite worth.  
3) Always demonstrate unconditional gratitude, because no matter what kind of day you've had, no matter how good or bad your performance was, or how bad your diagnosis is, there is always something to be thankful for.

In quoting one of his favorite music artists Matthew West, "this life ain't always wonderful, but what a wonderful life it's been."

The visitation was held at Fruitport High

School on June 13. The memorial service took place on June 14 at All Shores Wesleyan Church.

In lieu of flowers, donations via check may be written out to Fruitport High School to be given towards the Ken Erny Student-Athlete Leadership Scholarship, which will be awarded each year in Ken's name to Fruitport High School seniors.

Arrangements handled by The Lee Chapel of Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services, 6291 Harvey St, Norton Shores, MI 49444. Sign the guestbook online at [www.sytsemafh.com](http://www.sytsemafh.com)

## GEORGE H. BERRY

10/4/1936 - 8/6/2023



Norton Shores - George Henry Berry, age 86, of Norton Shores, Michigan, passed away on August 6, 2023 in the presence of family. George was born October 4, 1936 in Detroit, Michigan to Emory and Elizabeth (Terwin) Berry. George married Bonnie Lee Faketty on June 22,

1963 in Muskegon Heights, Michigan. George was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

George proudly served his country in the United States Army in Germany in 1955 and was honorably discharged in 1957. He earned degrees in English and Social Studies from Western Michigan University, where he also met Bonnie. The couple began their teaching careers in Ypsilanti, Michigan, also receiving master's degrees in Education from Eastern Michigan University. Soon after, they settled within the Fruitport school district, where George taught 8th grade English for 30 years. For much of his career, George was the teachers' union chief negotiator and grievance chair. He also served as an elected member of the board of Muskegon Catholic Central High School, representing Sacred Heart Parish.

George deeply enjoyed poetry, writing, storytelling, and discussion. He is survived by his wife, Bonnie, of 60 years; children, Craig Berry & Mary Beth (Beauchamp) of Dallas, Texas and Jeanette (Berry) & Brian Tait of Goodrich, Michigan; grandchildren, Lauren (Berry) & Travis Fielder, Kyle & Carly (Turner) Berry, Megan Levy, Ryan Berry, and Rachel Levy; great-grandchild, Franklin Fielder; nephews and nieces, Robert Wingett, Karen (Wingett) & Brian Avdek, Sandra (Wingett) Davis, Patrick & Michelle (Muskovin) Wingett, and Bradley & Cynthia (Shedd) Wingett. George's father, mother, father & mother-in-law, and sisters & brothers-in law precede him in death.

George was laid to rest at St. Mary's Cemetery in Muskegon on Saturday, October 21, 2023 followed by a Memorial Service in his honor at The Lee Chapel of Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donating to the Muskegon Rescue Mission, 400 W. Laketon Ave., <https://muskegonmission.org> or Every Woman's Place, 1221 W. Laketon Ave., <https://everywomansplace.org>.

## Kayaker Missing Since Friday July 14, 2023

Possibly Dale Venema, originally from Coopersville/Fruitport Area

A missing kayaker was reported last Friday afternoon, and the search is still ongoing. A local resident observed the kayaker, who is thought to be 74-year-old Dale Albert Venema from Ontonagon, paddling on Lake Superior near the Firesteel area in Ontonagon. The resident observed the upside down kayak, and reported the incident.

There was a boat sent from the Coast Guard and troopers were sent from the Wakefield post. There is also currently help from the Ontonagon County Sheriff's Department, Michigan DNR, and the U.S. Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as several residents from the Village of Ontonagon.

As of October 16th Dale's body still has not been found.