



Kenneth Clayton Byers

November 17, 1936 - April 3, 2014

Kenneth Clayton Byers, son of the late Charles A. and Ethel Marie (Walters) Byers, was born November 17, 1936 in Tidioute, Pennsylvania where he grew up and attended school.

In 1955, Ken enlisted in the United States Army and served his country faithfully until his retirement in 1983. He served as a Senior Drill Sergeant while serving at Fort Leonard Wood in the 1970s and before retiring, Ken attained the rank of First Sergeant. He served in Germany, Vietnam and Korea and earned several awards and commendations; some of which included: National Defense Service Medal, Drill Sergeant ID Badge, Meritorious Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal w/3 Bronze Service Stars, Army Service Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal (7th Award), Overseas Service Ribbon (2), Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation w/Palm, NCO Professional Development Ribbon (1), Expert Qualification Badge M16 and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. While serving in the military, Ken earned his GED. Prior to enlisting in the United States Army, Ken served his country in the United States Navy for 2 years. He was a member of the American Legion

Ken was united in marriage to Dolores Whartenburg and they were blessed with two children: Mark and Marty.

On November 12, 1991, Ken was united in marriage to Mary Louise Zastrow in St. Robert, Missouri. They shared over 22 years of marriage together.

After retiring from the Army, Ken was able to enjoy other activities that interested him. He continued his education by enrolling in a small engine repair course. Lawnmowers, boat motors, and chain saws were in operating order when he finished with them. He had a bountiful vegetable garden and shared the produce with family and friends. By teaching through example, Ken demonstrated the need to help others by cutting firewood for Grandma Gerri. He showed patience while assisting his children and grandchildren with learning the skills and etiquette involved in playing golf. His children remember the fishing trips to Canada and the grandchildren remember the many fishing trips to the fishing areas here in Missouri. Family gatherings were special to Ken's heart. He was thrilled when people came to visit and eager when someone wanted to sit and talk, play golf, go fishing, have a picnic lunch, grill burgers, and/or roast marshmallows. He attended family reunions in Pennsylvania even though the distance was long; love for family prevailed.

Ken had a quick wit and humorous one-liners. He was known for his red hat and whistled his way through various stores while shopping.

Ken passed away at 7:19 p.m. Thursday, April 3, 2014 in his home having attained the age of 77 years, 4 months and 16 days. He will be sadly missed, but fondly remembered by all those that knew and loved him.

Ken leaves to cherish his memory, his wife: Mary Byers of the home; two children: Mark Byers (Lauretta) of Kempner, TX and Marty MacMurray of Fortville, IN; five grandchildren: Casey, Joshua, and Ethan Byers and Christopher (Angel) and Cailin MacMurray; six great grandchildren; two brothers: William Byers of Texas and Carl Byers of Pennsylvania; two sisters:

Beverly Redick and Patricia McCandless both of Pennsylvania; numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

In addition to his parents, Ken was preceded in death by nine sisters and one brother.

Cemetery Details

Missouri Veterans Cemetery - Fort Leonard Wood

25350 Hwy H
Waynesville, MO 65583

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 2. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Memorial Chapels and Crematory of Waynesville/St. Robert
202 Historic 66 W.
Waynesville, MO 65583
(573) 774-6111
memorialchapels@embarqmail.com

Service

MAY 2. 12:00 PM (CT)

Memorial Chapels and Crematory of Waynesville/St. Robert
202 Historic 66 W.
Waynesville, MO 65583
(573) 774-6111
memorialchapels@embarqmail.com

Tribute Wall



“ *Memorial Chapels and Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Kenneth Clayton Byers*



Memorial Chapels and Crematory - May 09, 2014 at 09:23 AM

CB

“ *I wish I'd had more time with my grandpa. Even when he was here, I wish I'd realized how much of an impact he was having on me. I miss him every day.*

Casey Byers - November 13, 2025 at 12:09 PM



“ *Kenneth Clayton Byers*

January 28, 2023 at 06:53 AM



Beverly Stephens

“ *Beverly Stephens lit a candle in memory of Kenneth Clayton Byers*



Beverly Stephens - December 30, 2014 at 02:02 PM



Beverly
Stephens

“ *I positively loved this man growing up . I didnt know he passed .
Sorry to hear this .*

Beverly Stephens - December 30, 2014 at 02:01 PM

BR

“ *Bev Redick lit a candle in memory of Kenneth
Clayton Byers*



Bev Redick - May 04, 2014 at 01:35 AM

BR

“ Ken was my big brother, the 10th in line of a family of 15 kids born and raised on a small farm in the tiny town of Tidioute, Pa. Growing up he was always watching out for us younger kids, making peace, taking the blame for stuff other kids did, looking at the bright side of things. Working behind the scenes to make others look good. Always lending a helping hand to others when he thought they needed it. Dear Mary, I am so thankful for the summer two years ago when he visited, and then you came back with him. I had a wonderful time, and I hope you did too. I remember when he came home from one of his tours from Viet Nam. He was waiting out on the street when I came out from work. How he knew which door I was coming out, I don't know, but he did. Over two thousand people coming out of that bldg, and he was suddenly standing in front of me. Such utter joy and a relief to see him. Also a total surprise!!



He had a way of sneaking up on people. When he joined the navy he was on a sub. My other brother, Carl, was on an aircraft carrier. They both pulled into a port in Italy at the same time. Ken checked to see if Carl's ship happened to be in port too. It was. Ken tracked Carl down and hid when he saw him. When Carl and his buddies had passed him by, Ken suddenly snuck up on Carl and tackled him. Carl's buddies were ready to fight him until they realized who he was. Can you imagine, being halfway around the world and running into your brother unexpectedly?

Being from such a large family, Ken always said there were too many kids for us all to agree to anything at the same time, but one thing about it--we could fight among ourselves, but don't anyone else get in the fray, or they got put in their place rightout. We might have fought between ourselves, but it was nobody elses business.

We didn't have much materially growing up, but we sure had what counted. If anyone has ever heard Bill Cosby's Fat Albert tape. That reminds me a lot of our family. I wouldn't have chosen any other

family if I could. And I will miss him dearly.

Bev Byers Redick - May 01, 2014 at 06:15 PM

PC

“ *Pamela Cox lit a candle in memory of Kenneth Clayton Byers*



Pamela Cox - April 29, 2014 at 06:55 PM

MS

“ *MARLIN STEVENS sent a virtual gift in memory of Kenneth Clayton Byers*



MARLIN STEVENS - April 16, 2014 at 07:43 AM

SJ

“ *SARA JONES lit a candle in memory of Kenneth Clayton Byers*



SARA JONES - April 15, 2014 at 03:20 PM

LP

“ *Les And Mary Pero lit a candle in memory of
Kenneth Clayton Byers*



Les and Mary Pero - April 15, 2014 at 10:58 AM