



Kenneth H. Feneley

December 10, 1936 - December 26, 2023

Kenneth Howard Feneley, of Clare, Michigan, passed on peacefully December 26th, 2023, at Midland Hospital's Compassionate Care Suite surrounded and supported by his daughters.

His wonderful life on earth began December 10, 1936, when he was born at home in Engadine, Michigan (Millecoquins Lake), to Douglass and Emma (Krause) Feneley. Youth and childhood found him playing baseball, working at the family lumber mill, and the Krause family farm, fishing, and hanging around with his 2 younger brothers, older sister, and friends. He joined the school band, choosing the trombone where he found his love, passion, and direction that led to his fabulous career.

Ken graduated from Engadine High School in 1954 then attended Northern Michigan University for 2 years and transferred to Central Michigan University where he obtained his Bachelor of Music Education degree in 1958. His first teaching position was in Mackinaw City where he met the vivacious Judith Strong McCarthy, and they married on April 30, 1960. After teaching for one year in his hometown of Engadine, he returned to CMU as a graduate assistant to Norman C. Dietz, Director of Bands, and completed his Master of Arts degree in 1961, and then taught one year in Gladwin.

From 1962-67, Ken led wonderful young bands at Mt. Pleasant Junior High School. In 1967, he was recruited by Lloyd Conley to take on the role of High School Band Director in Clare, where he had a distinguished 26-year career. Ken's bands consistently achieved Superior ratings at both the District and

State levels and were honored to perform at the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association's annual Midwestern Conference in 1973 and 1975. In 1974, he was voted by the MSBOA membership to be its Teacher of the Year, a prestigious honor.

Statewide, Ken was well-known and respected as an exemplary musician, teacher, and adjudicator. Over the years, he mentored dozens of CMU student teachers who went on to have successful careers of their own. His humor and humanity endeared him to his students, colleagues, friends, and everyone he encountered. Post-retirement he traveled throughout Northern Michigan working as a school service representative for the Marshall Music Company and, in this capacity, he continued to touch the lives of teachers and students. He was "instrumental" in the formation of the Gateway Community Band, which he directed for several years. Most recently, he could be found performing as a member of the trombone section.

Throughout his life, Ken maintained close relationships with neighbors, band parents, former students and student teachers, as well as his entire family. He was truly loved by all, and cherished the visits, letters, and emails that he received. He certainly has left the world a better place and will be missed by all.

Ken is survived by his daughters, Margaret (Mark) VanHoose of Lake Ann, Betsy Feneley (Mark Malany) of Barton City, Jennifer Feneley of Ypsilanti, and his beloved canine companion, Cassie. His grandchildren are Sydney (Chris) Sawyer, Emily Parrish, and Dan Parrish, and his great grandchildren are Andersen and Isabella Sawyer. He is also remembered by his in-laws Theresa Feneley, Ginny McCarthy, and Kenneth St. Charles, as well as several nieces, nephews, and cousins. He was preceded in death by his wife, Judy Feneley, along with his parents, Doug and Emma Feneley, and sisters and brothers, Joanne and brother-in-law Ted Kisabeth, Patrick Feneley, Ross Feneley, and Peggy St. Charles, as well as in-laws Gary and Constance McCarthy, Forest McCarthy, and David McCarthy.

Visitation will be Friday, June 14, 2024, at the Stephenson-Wyman Funeral

Home from 2-4 pm and 6-8 pm. His Celebration of Life will be held at the Clare United Methodist Church on Saturday, June 15, 2024, at 1 pm.

In lieu of flowers, his family requests that you consider a donation to the Clare Public School's Band Program.

Cemetery Details

Lakeside Cemetery

1043 W. Central Ave.
Mackinaw City, MI 49701

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 14. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Stephenson - Wyman Funeral Home (Clare)
1005 North McEwan St.
Clare, MI 48617
(989) 386-7451
wymanhf@chartermi.net
<https://www.stephenson-wyman.com/>

Visitation

JUN 14. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Stephenson - Wyman Funeral Home (Clare)
1005 North McEwan St.
Clare, MI 48617
(989) 386-7451
wymanhf@chartermi.net
<https://www.stephenson-wyman.com/>

Service

JUN **15**. 1:00 PM (ET)

Clare United Methodist Church
105 E. Seventh Street
Clare, MI 48617

Tribute Wall

KC

“ So sorry for the loss of your father. He was my band director from 5th to 12th grade. I thought I would just share a couple of things, that happened during band class that I remember, that are unrelated to band, but more about him as a father.

On a typical day in band class, I remember your father dropping his baton and rushing out of class, because he had gotten a call that Jennifer had been playing with scissors and may have been hurt from them, she was pretty young then. He also passed out art work in band class, that one of his daughters had made for every band member.

I remember him having a tear come to his eye, while passing them out. He was so very proud of his daughter's. You were all so very young in those years around 1971 to 74. Thinking of you all and my thoughts and prayers are with you.

Kathy Cotton - June 24, 2024 at 11:08 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Kenneth H. Feneley.



June 12, 2024 at 04:11 PM

MM

“ Marshall Music planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kenneth H. Feneley.

Marshall Music - June 12, 2024 at 04:11 PM



“ Once my husband and I went to Roz's for breakfast and Ken was there, eating with someone. We went over to their table to chat for some time, and then went to our own table to eat. We did not see Ken leave, but when we finished breakfast, we were told that he had paid for our breakfast on his way out.

Joanna White - January 15, 2024 at 04:45 PM



“ Ken was a friend and mentor of mine like he was to so many others. I was one of many lucky students who got to student teach under him and Lloyd Conley. What a fantastic experience. And I was even luckier to have been hired as the Assistant Band Director at Clare when Lloyd decided to retire. It was a great time in my life. Lloyd and Ken had built one of the premier band programs in the state at the time in my not so unbiased opinion. I loved teaching at Clare with Ken and with all the great students who were so cooperative and who worked so hard with us.

So many great memories... Words are not enough.

It is impossible to measure the impact he had on so many lives, but it was immense. RIP my friend. You lived a great life!

Kirk Hewlett - January 12, 2024 at 01:56 PM



“ Saddened to read of his passing. Sending my deepest sympathies to the Feneley family.

Madaleine Paul - January 12, 2024 at 11:02 AM

MV

Oh Dear Madaleine!! Thank you for reaching out!! I find it touching that you were there in the ER with him/us back on December 9th & then got him up to ICU.... Special too, that I'm sure he worked with some of the bands you were in back at Carter MS. Take care!! Mrs. VH

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - January 12, 2024 at 02:29 PM

DG

“ I was deeply saddened to hear of Ken's passing. Condolences, to all of the Feneley family. He was a highly valued colleague of mine that helped a number of the bands that I directed to earn superior ratings. Also, he is my bff. In addition, he was my fun fishing partner. I'll always remember the day we were fishing out of AuGrey, where he caught a 31 inch walleye that earned him a Michigan Master Angler award. I was with him at the Michigan Outdoor dinner where Ken was presented with that award. He and I also took a class from Bob Barris on how to overhaul a bassoon to become like a puchner bassoon, and repair other woodwind instruments. That is where his repairing instruments started. I relished his numerous off color jokes, emails, pics, stories, and car rides to district 9 MSBOA meetings. Plus I will always remember when he asked me to direct the Gateway Band rehearsals and concert when he became ill for awhile. Ken my bud, my eyes teared up while writing these memoirs. You will always be missed by me and many others.

Darrell Grosz - Jan. 9 at 11:30 am

Darrell Grosz - January 09, 2024 at 11:41 AM

MF

Thank you Darrell - he treasured your friendship & companionship (especially out in the boat). Take care!

Margaret Feneley-VanHoose - February 02, 2024 at 09:05 PM

BL

“ Ken was a true friend and mentor to many. After retirement he came down to CMU frequently and performed with the trombone choir on many concerts. One of his most gracious contributions for many years was to come down to the music building, pick up a trombone student's broken horn, take it home and fix it, bring it back, and then didn't charge the student for the repair. He was a frequent guest speaker at trombone days, and often spoke with our undergraduates when he was around. He served as Professor of Trombone for me for a semester when I went on sabbatical in spring 2000. He also wrote and conducted an arrangement for my 2019 CD recording with River Raisin Ragtime Revue; plus, a whole bunch of very fun and musical arrangements for trombone quartet and trombone choir that we performed during the past 15 years. I will miss the breakfast chats over the years, and I will miss my friend Ken.

Bob Lindahl - January 08, 2024 at 03:15 PM

JR

“ I will always remember Kenneth Feneley as a great teacher and he knew how to get the best out of a student. I believe we always had the best halftime routines for home games. He was in the Community band too. I remember being in the park with my Mom waiting for the band to start and I saw him walk in and I greeted him and told him I wasn't sure I'd see him there since his wife had passed away so recently. He replied, "Where else would I be? She would have wanted me here." That's the kind of man he was. He will be truly missed.

Julie (Dillon) Rande - January 08, 2024 at 01:43 PM

ML

“ I remember when I first made the Symphonic band my sophomore year. I switched from the B- flat clarinet to the short E- flat clarinet, when we played the original score of the Nurcracker Suite. At class and practice times we couldn't get it right! Mr. Fenely said if we can't, you will sit there the whole concert and play nothing! OMG! We practiced and made “the cut”! It was beautiful! Thank you Mr. Fenely, you were/are one of the best teachers I've ever had!

Michelle Dillon Lankheet - January 08, 2024 at 12:43 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Kenneth H. Feneley.



January 08, 2024 at 12:34 PM

DA

“ Dillons, Mickie, Julie, John, Jackie, Amy planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kenneth H. Feneley.

Dillons, Mickie, Julie, John, Jackie, Amy - January 08, 2024 at 12:34 PM

PC

“ *My deepest condolences to the Feneley Family.*

As a student in District 9 of the Gardner, Kjellberg and Christie era I first met "Mr. Feneley" during Festival Season when he hosted S&E and Band Festival (I think)! As a Music Major at CMU I accompanied him to Blue Lake where he spent time as an instrument repair tech. From his organized festivals to resurrecting a bassoon that had been dropped in the sand, one could say I learned priceless, timeless and necessary information from him throughout my music education. It is through Matt Bishop I have been able to keep tabs on Ken later in my life. I finally met Margaret this past Summer. I had been waiting to meet her since 1993! Ken's time on earth touched so many people. I'm certain he is rejoicing in his legacy and playing beautiful music in heaven.

Paula Chissus - January 06, 2024 at 12:13 PM

TB

“ *I had the privilege to not only have Ken as a director in the Symphonic Band and Jazz Band but to actually get to know him. He shared great stories and was able to get the best out of me in music as I know he did for many. I will miss his funny wit and his love for music. All of my siblings were part of his band. There is a wonderful song called "The Leader of the Band" that will always remind me of him. He will be missed*

Ted Benic - January 06, 2024 at 07:15 AM

SJ

“ *In memory's embrace, a maestro's song,
Ken Feneley's baton, now still and gone.
A conductor of notes, a guiding hand,
In music's realm, he helped us understand.*

*Through melodies that soared, and harmonies deep,
His legacy echoes, our hearts in weep.
A symphony of memories, each note a tear,
For a band director cherished, and held dear.*

*In the crescendo of life, his influence played,
A conductor's spirit, in hearts, forever laid.
As instruments mourn in a silent chord,
Ken Feneley's melody, eternally adored.*

Samuel E Joseph - January 05, 2024 at 12:39 PM

PC

Lovely poem.

Paula Chissus - January 06, 2024 at 12:36 PM

JR

This is a beautiful tribute to a wonderful man.

Julie Rande - January 08, 2024 at 01:33 PM

RN

Well said Sam.

Ruth Ann Northon - January 09, 2024 at 02:54 PM

JD

“ *Sorry to learn of Ken's passing. He was indeed a special person
and an important role model to me. RIP, Ken.*

John Dietz - January 04, 2024 at 05:31 PM

KD

“ I got to know Ken rather late in my career through several events that we judged together. Through our mutual involvement in instrument repair, we became good friends. Ken was always very quick to share any new techniques he had discovered and we enjoyed frequent "philosophical" discussions. I came to respect and appreciate Ken's many fine qualities over the years and my life was enriched by his friendship. My sincere condolences to his family. Rest in peace, my friend.

Ken Duquaine - January 04, 2024 at 04:57 PM

MB

“ What a great human! I met Ken when I was at CMU, studying to be a band director. His influence on my teaching career was immense. Through phone calls, random visits at his home, and being the last stop of the day of his Marshall Music run when I was teaching in Au Gres, many hours he invested in my musical and teaching pursuits.

He certainly will be missed, but his legacy lives on.



Matt Bishop - January 04, 2024 at 06:00 AM

JB

“ Ken was a dedicated teacher, a fine educator and a fine man. His colleagues in the profession honored him and respected him tremendously. He will certainly be missed!

Jim Barry - January 02, 2024 at 08:36 PM

MV

Thank you Mr. Barry....

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - January 15, 2024 at 08:50 PM

VB

“ Ken was a great teacher, colleague, and "bone" buddy! I learned a great deal from him. His passion for music and for teaching was a tremendous influence on me and my career. Though he will be missed, his influence will live on, and be felt for generations! Thank you Ken!

Vince Browand - January 02, 2024 at 07:29 PM



“ Ken came out to Lakewood on more than one occasion when I was director of bands there. He always had so much wisdom to share and was more than willing to mentor young directors. He made a major impact on me and I am eternally grateful.

Sincerely,

Jane Detweiler-Sutcliffe, MSBOA Emeritus, Wyoming Public Schools

Jane Detweiler - January 02, 2024 at 05:57 PM

MV

Thank you Jane - your words mean alot...

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - January 15, 2024 at 08:51 PM

SS

“ I was in the high school band under Mr. Feneley and have enjoyed a lifetime of music participation and appreciation thanks to him.

He is also the reason I learned how to type! He told me he needed a secretary for the band. I didn't know how to type. I learned on my parents' old Remington at home, from Mom's old secretarial handbook. Mr. Feneley held the position 'til I was ready. Hah!

I also remember him during marching season, carrying around a sponge bottle of white shoe polish for our tennis shoes, as needed.

You are beloved forever and always, Mr. Feneley.

Sharon Snapp-Kolas - January 02, 2024 at 03:07 PM

MV

Thank you Sharon!!!

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - January 15, 2024 at 08:51 PM

RV

“ Our review of the many wonderful observations found in Ken's tributes left us realizing we could add little to those many expressions describing Ken and his life's contributions. So, while his passing leaves an unfillable void in our hearts...as well as those of his family and friends...with thoughtful reflection we recognize how privileged and blessed we were for 50 years of his friendship. Our deepest condolences to Margaret, Betsy, Jennifer, and the rest of his family. Ron and Peg Verch

Ron Verch - January 02, 2024 at 11:26 AM

MV

Thank you Mr. & Mrs. Verch - he do valued your friendship!

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - January 15, 2024 at 08:52 PM

MV

Thank you Mr. & Mrs. Verch - he so valued your friendship!!

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - January 15, 2024 at 08:54 PM

RP

“ *Had Mr. Feneley in Jr. high. What a great man! Loved him as my band teacher. Was in band Jr. high, High school and collage Best teacher I ever had. Have thought of him alot over the years.*

Ron Phipps - January 01, 2024 at 08:16 PM

MV

“ *6 files added to the tribute wall*



Margaret Feneley VanHoose - January 01, 2024 at 06:12 AM

LS

“ *Band was one of the very best parts of high school, for me. And it was because of this great man. Thank you for teaching us love of music, of hard work, of working together for a greater goal, and to set the bar high—and then clear it. Rest in peace, Mr. Feneley. You have made the world better.*

Lisa Snapp - December 31, 2023 at 03:37 PM

MV

Thank you Lisa!

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - January 15, 2024 at 08:54 PM

CL

“ *I was so sorry to learn of Ken's passing. He was my junior high percussion teacher, and band director. We were also neighbors when he and Judy lived on Brown Street, and I lived on North Drive with my parents. I also played in the CMACB with him for several years. Sometimes we'd walk into rehearsals together, and talk about the good old days. I admired Ken for his talent, good humor, and humanity. I credit him with helping me understand and love music. He will be forever in my heart. Please accept my condolences. May his memory be a blessing to you. Claudia Traines Lang*

Claudia Lang - December 31, 2023 at 01:39 PM

RC

“ *Our thoughts and prayers go out to the Feneley family. Ken was a kind, thoughtful, dedicated person that I came to know and respect as a teacher, mentor and most of all a great friend. Thank you for all of the wonderful memories, we will miss you. Ron and Shari Christie*

Ron and Shari Christie - December 31, 2023 at 12:02 PM

“ Sending my love and thoughts to Ken's family.

Like so many others, Ken introduced me to music as a sixth grader at Clare Middle School. I had the pleasure of being in his bands during his last years at Clare. All this time after "Tingle, Plock, Jingle, Boom," music is still at the center of my life — a refuge and creative outlet. So I owe Ken more than I could ever express; he introduced me to the love of my life.

As a student, my admiration of Ken was laced with a dash of fear — he held his classes to a high standard, was lovingly firm, and had little tolerance for the antics we'd pull with other teachers. (One day, after I'd left my music book behind in the band room one time too many, he took it out in the school yard with a lighter and threatened to start it on fire.) He was also so generous; he gave me a long leash as a young musician, allowing me to march in parades with the high school band when I was in middle school, and hang out in the band room during lunch time and listen to music or practice.

His kindness, humor and passion showed up in a different way after I wasn't a student — we'd talk about our music projects and joke about politics. He was an unfailingly curious, warm, and good-humored — and sometimes a little salty too! But the sincerity with which he lived, his passion for music and teaching, and his heart-on-sleeve love for Judy and his children made a deep and lasting impression on me. I'm proud to say he was a friend. I will never forget him.

I hope that he's at peace, that he's reunited with Judy and that he has plenty of time to play his horn.



RC

“ My deepest sympathy to the Feneley family.

I had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Feneley as my teacher, mentor and inspiration while in Clare Bands for 6 years. He was demanding of his bands and its members. He led by challenging us and striving for excellence. He taught us to be better musicians through personal responsibility, dedication to the group task and the consistent effort to pursue success. Through this, he taught us to be better humans by striving together for the goal.

After I graduating from high school, I realized Ken wasn't just teaching us about sharps and flats, rhythm and meter, dissonance and harmony. He was striving to teach us about life, reaping the benefits of hard work and coordinating with others for success of the group. I am so happy to have had the privilege of calling Ken my friend for the last 43 years. Although I left Michigan 40 years ago I tried to keep touch with him when I returned home to Clare and I am especially grateful for the texts and emails we shared during the depths of the pandemic. I am a better man for having known Ken and will cherish the memories and the life lessons learned.

Fair winds and following seas my friend. May our path cross again in another world and time so we can make music and share another laugh.

Roger Cole - December 30, 2023 at 09:08 PM

CS

“ Having had Ken Feneley for my high school band teacher, I'm not alone when I say that he gave me a lifetime appreciation for music that I would not have had otherwise. He taught that the success of the group depends on the focus of each individual. All of the details that he insisted on and expected of each player, went into the makings of a top band. These were also life lessons if we paid attention. Whether your family, occupation, business or other pursuits, setting a high goal and working to reach it brings great results and satisfaction. Ken has been quoted as saying ".....set the bar high and when you get close, raise it." Having worked with him when the Gateway Community Band started in 2005, he on several occasions mentioned to me that over his teaching career, he wished he had more often told his bands how good they were. And also, how much he appreciated what they all accomplished together. Rest in peace my friend. Your influence will be cherished for decades.

Chuck Stuckert - December 30, 2023 at 07:16 PM

EF

“ Elizabeth F. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kenneth H. Feneley.

Elizabeth F. - December 30, 2023 at 06:08 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Kenneth H. Feneley.



December 30, 2023 at 03:18 PM

TF

“ *The Hadley Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kenneth H. Feneley.*

The Hadley Family - December 30, 2023 at 03:18 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Kenneth H. Feneley.*



December 30, 2023 at 02:43 PM

DR

“ *Some Memories Never Leave Your Bones
Like Salt In The Sea; They Become Part Of You
And You Carry Them.
—Richard Turf*

*Mr. Feneley was, without question, the most influential human in my life. O, how you will be missed, Sir.
Denise “Rich” Richards*

Denise Richards - December 30, 2023 at 02:37 PM

MV

Thank you Denise - you had a special place in my dad's heart!

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - January 15, 2024 at 09:07 PM

ML

“ *What a positive impact Ken had on so many lives - mine included. There will be a void in this world without him but the legacy he leaves will certainly live forever. He was a great teacher and friend.*

Mary Lee - December 30, 2023 at 01:34 PM

LL

“ *Ken was my teacher for two years, but he was my friend for 53 years. No words can express the depth of a lifelong friendship; the memories, the light moments shared, the serious moments shared, the appreciation for the family that he and Judy shared with me. A life well lived that touched so many souls. My life has been very much enriched by Ken's presence. Lay down the baton. Put the trombone back in the case. One last hug. Be at rest my friend.*

Lin Longstreth

Lin Longstreth - December 30, 2023 at 11:04 AM

BF

Wow, Lin, your words. You've always be eloquent and have know exactly what to say. Thank you!

Betsy Feneley - December 30, 2023 at 01:50 PM

LS

“ *I am so very sorry for your loss. I will miss this lovely man. He was such an inspiration to me when we moved back to Engadine. He brought such joy and positivity into this world.*

Linda (Nicholls) Spalding - December 30, 2023 at 10:01 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Kenneth H. Feneley.*



December 30, 2023 at 12:02 AM



“ *My deepest condolences to your family. Mr. Feneley was deeply loved as a teacher and mentor. He was never afraid to push his students to be better, more creative and encouraged them to step out of their comfort zone to try something new. He certainly made my high school years more tolerable and was a joy to be around. If every school could only have a teacher like him, the world would definitely be a much better place. With deepest sympathy, Daphne Johnson.*

Daphne M. Johnson - December 29, 2023 at 11:01 PM



Daphne - were you Daphne Brown? Thank you for your beautiful words. They really mean so much to our family. Be well. ~~Betsy

Betsy Feneley - December 30, 2023 at 09:38 AM

BF

“ *My sisters and I decided that this verse, by Ralph Waldo Emerson, is most apropos in its embodiment of our dad's life and career:*

What is Success?

To laugh often, and much;

To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children;

To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure betrayal of false friends;

To appreciate the beauty;

To find the best in others;

To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition;

To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived.

This is to have succeeded!

Betsy Feneley - December 29, 2023 at 09:47 PM

TH

Perfect choice! Ken was a true success ... friend and role model to so many. Lucky to be included in that group. Thankful for lessons learned and happy memories.

Tammy

Tammy Holder - January 08, 2024 at 09:11 AM

SR

Love this! What a special person your father was. He touched so very many people over the years. He will surely be missed by all, but mostly by his family.

Stacey Randall - January 11, 2024 at 06:36 AM

JL

“ Ken had retired from public education by the time I came to Clare, but he was a wonderful example of how to stay active and relevant. My strongest memory of Ken is how he was always a fierce advocate for the Clare Music Program, its teachers and most importantly, its students. I loved having him in the Gateway Chorus where he was always an active and supportive friend. He really lived his love of music.

Joan Long—Mt Pleasant

Joan Long - December 29, 2023 at 08:51 PM

JB

“ We first met Ken at the "Sunday Morning Breakfast Club" at the Doherty--Ken, Jim, Bob, Ron and one other gentleman often sat at a table near where we sat. A copy of The St. Ignace News was usually on their table and we connected with that, having a cottage in the area and spending all our summers there. It generally initiated a conversation with the gang. From there, it was the Gateway Community Band, a favorite of ours and eventually a 'training' opportunity for our Future Leader Dogs for the Blind. Ken never flinched when we asked if we could bring a puppy along. One of the pups attended shortly after we got him so he was VERY young. He commented on the crash of the cymbals with a sharp "bark" which can be heard on the CD. We all had a good laugh over that one. It was always our pleasure to run into Ken when he was out walking his dog and to be able to help him 'harness' some of that Toby energy with a special leash. He surely impacted many lives and his legacy will live on. To his family and friends we send our sincerest sympathy.

Sam and Judy Brankel

Judy Brankel - December 29, 2023 at 08:35 PM

MT

“ *Very sorry to hear of the passing of Ken. Ken was a mentor to many young band directors including myself. I first met him as a student at CMU and he was one of the directors you went to with your questions. He was always helpful and professional when talking with and encouraging new directors. All my best to the family at this difficult time.*

Matt Taton - Mt. Pleasant

Matt Taton - December 29, 2023 at 07:37 PM

BB

“ *Bob Bergey lit a candle in memory of Kenneth H. Feneley*



Bob Bergey - December 29, 2023 at 05:57 PM

LG

“ *I'm so very sorry to hear this! I've been lucky enough to have had more than a few great teachers in my life, but Mr. Feneley was one of the best! I started my musical education with private piano lessons from Mrs. Murphy, then on to beginning band (flute) with Mr. Conley, then Symphonic Band and Jazz Band (piano) in high school with Mr. Feneley. Toward the end of high school, he even let me switch from flute to percussion. I loved it all! In addition to the musical education, he instilled in me a sense of responsibility for doing my part, confidence, belonging, and striving for excellence. What a legacy. I'll never forget the lessons he taught! Well done Mr. Feneley. Rest in peace!*

Linda Graham - December 29, 2023 at 02:53 PM

MV

Linda - is this Linda Gorbett?? Thank you for your wonderful words and remembrances - you nailed it with what we all are feeling!! Sincerely, Margaret Feneley VanHoose

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - December 29, 2023 at 07:09 PM

LG

Hi Margaret, yes this is Linda Gorbett. I'm so sorry for your family's loss! He was, and remains, just the best!! Thinking of you all!!

Linda Graham - December 30, 2023 at 05:13 PM

MG

“*Sad to hear of yet another mentor from our growing up in Clare, Mr. Feneley. Much will be said about him. Many of us had Lloyd in our earlier musical training and then Ken throughout our advanced years as we improved on our instrument of choice. Mr. Feneley was THE primary force behind my brother Jim's interest in taking up bass guitar in the late 70's. With Ken's guidance Jim improved exponentially in his skills throughout his JazzBand years by teaching a hard work effort and broadening his future musical endeavors as a bass player. Jim was oh so proud to receive a Jazz award in 1980, all under the watchful eye of Mr. Feneley. Even up until Jim passed of cancer in 2018, he would occasionally take out the same bass that Mr. Feneley had found for him back in 1977 and play for his enjoyment. Music got him through his hard times there is no doubt. And there is no denying those gifts that Ken gave Jim nearly 40 years ago. RIP Mr. Feneley*

Mark Green

Mark Green - December 29, 2023 at 11:32 AM

MV

Mark - thank you so much for your beautiful words and tribute about my father - he loved Jim!! As well as me - what a special friend!! Sincerely, Margaret Feneley VanHoose

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - December 29, 2023 at 07:03 PM

JB

“ *Janice Buckley lit a candle in memory of Kenneth H. Feneley*



Janice Buckley - December 29, 2023 at 10:57 AM

JW

“ *Ken was a terrific music educator, a really effective mentor to so many and a wonderful person!*

Jack Williamson - December 29, 2023 at 10:32 AM

MV

Thank you so much Mr. Williamson for your words - they mean so much!! Sincerely, Margaret Feneley VanHoose

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - December 29, 2023 at 06:56 PM

BF

Thank you so much, Mr. Williamson! He took great pride in the fact that my sisters and I were Chippewas and were able to perform under your baton.

Betsy Feneley - December 29, 2023 at 09:42 PM

BP

“ *Mr. Feneley was my ultimate mentor. He encouraged me to join the Clare High School Jazz Band when I was still in 8th grade. He would meet with me after school to practice/"fine tune" my percussion techniques, as well as during the summers all throughout my high school years. He let me take the CHS drum kit home during the summers (as well as the triplets I played in marching band) to "practice." In symphonic band, he attached me to the tympani set... Because of him, I to-this-day, have a love for music, performing and through his teachings/coachings I have been blessed with a talent allowing me to play with numerous musical groups all over the country. I will miss him so much.....*

Becky Pudvay - December 29, 2023 at 10:21 AM

MV

Becky - my father loved your visits when you were back in Clare - thank you for always remembering him!! He loved you!! Sincerely, Margaret Feneley VanHoose

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - December 29, 2023 at 07:06 PM

BP

Thank you. I loved him back, so very much.

Becky Pudvay - December 29, 2023 at 10:31 PM

BP

“ *Becky Pudvay lit a candle in memory of Kenneth H. Feneley*



Becky Pudvay - December 29, 2023 at 10:16 AM

SH

“ I first met Ken as a junior high band student, when he was my conductor for two summers at BLFAC. In later years we got to play together in the Saginaw Eddy Band, and I often ran into him in the CMU Music Building. A kind, beautiful soul, a consummate musician, and an all-around excellent person. You were loved, Ken, and you'll be missed.

*Scott Harding
St. Johns*

Scott Harding - December 29, 2023 at 09:31 AM

MV

Thank you Scott!! Your words hit home!! Sincerely, Margaret Feneley VanHoose

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - December 29, 2023 at 07:12 PM

BF

Thank you, Scott! He loved you and your mom, as well. Way to go, band! Betsy Feneley

Betsy Feneley - December 29, 2023 at 09:34 PM

JN

“ Ken was a true professional in life and legacy. His contribution to our profession is immeasurable, as is his kind heart and concern for quality in what we do. Rest in peace, Ken - you have done your part.

*Jon Nichols
Grand Rapids*

Jon P Nichols - December 28, 2023 at 09:38 PM

BF

Thank you, Mr. Nichols! My dad always respected you and your studio, and was so proud that I was able to study with you - if only for a couple of semesters. Your profound words touch me so.

Betsy Feneley - December 29, 2023 at 09:39 PM

JB

Margaret, Betsy, and Jennifer, on behalf of the entire Beery family, so sorry to hear of Dad's passing and it certainly hit my dad hard. He and Ken had a long and unique friendship, one my dad cherished. He will miss their frequent visits and conversations. Maryanne plans to bring them down on Saturday. Your Emerson verse is an appropriate and accurate tribute! We had a lengthy conversation as a family about Ken, your mom, and the three of you. Our thoughts are with you all during this difficult time.

*John C. Beery
Midland*

john c beery - January 03, 2024 at 09:05 AM

MV

Thank you John & Beery family!! There are so many connections with you all through the Vachows, Interlochen, CMU, Traverse City, Michael, Maryanne, etc.... Hope to see everyone in June....stay well...

Margaret Feneley VanHoose - January 15, 2024 at 09:33 PM

DH

I was never a student of Mr. Feneley, but the one word I can describe him with is passion! Everything he did, everyone he knew, he was passionate about. Years after I was out of school, we would run into each other and he was truly interested in all I was doing; a true educator. I will miss his wit, and his letters to the editor. Music in heaven is even better now that he is their conducting.

Doug Haggart - June 12, 2024 at 08:08 AM