



## David Michael Kelly

September 23, 1941 - August 24, 2020

David Michael (Moses) Kelly passed away at home on Monday, August 24th.

David was preceded in death by his wife, Pam, in 2013.

David was born in raised in Gahanna Ohio, to Mildred and Willis Kelly on September 23, 1941. After graduating from Gahanna High School, Dave entered the Air Force and was somehow selected for duty on an “isolated detachment” in Saudi Arabia during the years when the United States was not in Saudi Arabia (1961). During his military time, David developed his penchant for seasoning most meals with ketchup. After his oft recalled 13 months and 4 days in the desert, he finished out his military service at Dow Air Force Base in Maine. When his service time was up, he darkened the doorways at the Ohio State University to graduate with a BS in Agriculture. While working for Hunt-Wesson Foods, David developed his affinity for growing tomatoes, penning his treatise, “The Fieldman’s Handbook for Tomatoes.”

During his 36 years as the General Manager of the Ohio Potato Growers Association, David worked with Ohio farmers to further the State’s agricultural production and standing, serving as Chairman of National Potato Council Managers’ Advisory Committee Task Force, Chairman of Study on Potato Research Funding, President of OSU Horticulture Council, National Potato Council Governmental Relations Committee, the Ohio State University Horticulture Council, the Ohio Agricultural Energy Committee, Chairman of Study on Potato Research Funding, as well as countless other projects and years of research at OSU’s Wooster campus. A Two-Time Recipient of the President’s Award, National Potato Council, for Dedication and Service to the Potato Industry, December 1979 & January 1984 and a 1999 Ohio Vegetable and Potato Growers Distinguished Service Award, David’s work on behalf of Ohio Agriculture was well known. His years of agricultural work allowed him to wander all the country roads in Ohio with his research partner and mentor, Gene Wittmeyer, reviewing plants, consulting and taste testing for the best pies and buffet lunches Ohio had to offer – recommendations that he loved handing out to anyone who had been anywhere he had been.

Father to three children, David was an active participant in their lives, coaching a variety of

youth baseball and softball teams and being team photographer for years. Being a father was, by far, his greatest pride. Having had a father who was certainly no role model for raising children, David did pretty ok. David's fathering extended to neighborhood kids and grandkids – especially if it involved science projects about plants or identifying bugs. There were countless film canisters over the years with sample critters for identification in the kitchen.

In his spare time, David was very active in the community, serving as Post Commander and later Adjutant of the American Legion Post 239 (including the Weasel Piss Lounge), Worthington Youth Boosters - as Coach, Board Member and President, Team photographer for ONU Wrestling Program and School Photographer for Starling Middle School. David also had a photography business, photographing OSU football for newspapers, weddings and countless other local sporting events. David spent years photographing for Bob Miller's basketball program at Thomas Worthington High School. After retirement, David began his second career at the Worthington Hardware, a profession that allowed him to indulge in two of his better skills – sharpening things and collecting flashlights (a collection that covered the globe). Adored by the local canine residents, the hardware was a frequent stop for the never ending supply of milk bones he kept in his pocket. His retirement also included taking leisurely walks through the back ¼ acre, surveying the grass, hand trimming the Rose of Sharon, charting the movements of the bird population (with special attention to the hawk) and plotting the demise of the local squirrel and chipmunk populations. Even in his retirement, David continued to consult for a variety of farms and agricultural organizations throughout Ohio and Maine.

While able to successfully grow any vegetable, he archly refused to eat most of them and would never shy away from espousing the character flaws of mushrooms, asparagus or eggplant. There was not a potato dish that he would refuse, having once dined on a \$10,000 breakfast of home fries when his (now) departed wife accidentally cooked up a research plot harvest.

There will be a loss felt in sales of rubber bands, Ziploc bags and plastic containers, as we've unearthed a collection that should hold us well into the next decade.

David is survived by his children, Megan, Ryan (Leslie) and Darin (Cerah), five grandchildren, his brother John, sisters Karen, Marilyn & Ann, nieces, a nephew and an ever-burgeoning population of squirrels and chipmunks.

David will be laid to rest by the American Legion Post 239 Color Guard on Saturday, September 26th at Resurrection Catholic Cemetery (oh, the irony) and a memorial service will follow at the American Legion Post 239 in Worthington, Ohio for friends and family.

In lieu of flowers, we ask that donations be made to The Gene and Gladys Wittmeyer Knox Vegetable Scholarship Endowment #647689 at The Ohio State University Foundation, PO Box 710811, Columbus, OH 43271. He would also like you to go plant

some flowers and put up a bird feeder in your yard.

<https://www.giveto.osu.edu>

The Gene Wittmeyer and Gladys Wittmeyer Knox Vegetable Scholarship Endowment #64  
7689

# Comments

---



“ Todd Michael is following this tribute.

**Todd Michael** - September 14, 2020 at 09:29 AM

---



“ 1 file added to the album local canine residents



**Wendy M King** - September 10, 2020 at 09:19 PM

---



“ 1 file added to the album local canine residents



**Wendy M King** - September 10, 2020 at 09:17 PM



“ Dave Kelly was my golden's best friend. If he saw us walking, (I live on E. Clearview) he would stop and provide a milk bone. My dog, Cally Bay, knew his car. After WH was replaced, we still had to stop and often go into Bubbles on the first floor. Cally never stopped believing that Dave would reappear. I'm so sorry for your loss.

**Wendy** - September 10, 2020 at 09:26 PM

---



“ I did not know Mr. Kelly or his family, but upon reading his obituary in the Columbus Dispatch, I just had to take a moment to acknowledge what a moving tribute it was. I feel as if I know him, and how deeply your loss must be felt. Clearly, there are an abundance of happy memories of the man, which I hope will bring his family some comfort.

Warm regards,  
Crystal Strader

**Crystal Strader** - September 05, 2020 at 01:30 PM

---



“ We are so very sorry for your loss. Every time we would phone him, he would answer the phone with a funny comment - we loved his sense of humor! A sudden loss like this is just so hard - our hearts go out to all of you. We know he is resting in the arms of our Lord. May God's peace be with all of you. Visiting Angels of Westerville

**Visiting Angels of Westerville** - August 30, 2020 at 09:53 PM

---



“ Carolyn And Gary Roush lit a candle in memory of David Michael Kelly



**Carolyn and Gary Roush** - August 30, 2020 at 12:14 PM

---



“ John Forsythe lit a candle in memory of David Michael Kelly



**John Forsythe** - August 26, 2020 at 02:24 PM