



## Kenneth E. Knudsen

May 22, 1924 - April 12, 2015

Kenneth E. Knudsen, 90, of Traverse City passed away at Munson Hospice House on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 12, 2015, surrounded by his loving family, as they prayed the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

Ken was born on Thursday, May 22, 1924, to the late Arthur and Mildred (Poertner) Knudsen in Leelanau County. He married Jeanie Kishefsky on Thursday, April 10, 1947, at St. Francis Catholic Church, Traverse City, in a ceremony conducted by The Rev. Fr. Joseph Kohler. On Friday, with their children, they celebrated 68 blessed years of marriage filled with beautiful love recognized by many.

Ken was first and for-most a man of God and of courage. He put God first, then his wife and family, then his country. Ken was proud of his service to our country, having served with the U. S. Navy, stationed in the Pacific during WW II. He lived a humble life of many quiet acts of kindness and generous giving without fanfare. He was an active member of St. Francis Catholic Church, where he served over thirty years, as one of Father Kohler's first Lectors after Vatican II. He also oversaw the maintenance of the grounds and facilities. Ken was an important part of the first Catholic Athletic Association and later, St. Francis Boosters Club and once served as its president. Besides driving the school busses to athletic events, he also helped maintain them along with helping to purchase a bus for GTACS. Ken served as the basketball coach for the 8th grade boys team at St. Francis and led them to a city championship. The opposing coaches witnessed him as a true gentlemen who taught athletes both Christian values and how to have fun. Ken was the captain of the Leland HS, MHSAA Class D State Championship in 1942 leading his team to an 18-13 win over Whitehall HS. Ken and wife Jeanie were among the original founders of the Grand Traverse Pavilions Endowment Fund (Clara McManus & Friends) and were inducted into the GTACS Hall of Fame in 2009.

Ken began his career, in a partnership with his brother, as a distributor for Adams Seiferts Potato Chips for over 19 years. Ken received a vision and with courage and faith in God, he and Jeanie ventured into their own waste management company, called Ken's Pickup Service from 1968 until retiring in 1996. With Ken's ethics and knowledge, he served on

the Grand Traverse County Solid Waste Council. Ken also drove school bus for TCAPS for over 20 years. He was a life member of the VFW as well as the Elks. Ken was extremely devoted to his family - as they were to him. Humility, Courage, Patience, Perseverance: Four virtues he wore with extreme love as a husband, a father, and as a friend.

Ken is survived by his wife of 68 years, Jeanie; his children, Teresa S. (Gerard) Casper of Traverse City; Diane M. (Robert) Wolcheck of Chatham, NJ; Kathryn A. (Lawrence) Mousseau, Kenneth J. Knudsen and David G. (Jane) Knudsen, all of Traverse City, Barbara J. (Thomas) Kudwa of Traverse City and Ludington; Michael J. (Tammy) Knudsen of Traverse City; 21 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great grandchild. Ken's surviving siblings are Hank (Boots) Knudsen of Grand Haven, James (Judy) Knudsen of Traverse City and a sister-in-law, Pat Knudsen of Livonia. In addition to his parents, Ken was preceded in death by a daughter, Susan M. Knudsen, a son, Brian J. Knudsen; his brothers, Junior and Lynwood Knudsen and a sister, Kathleen Haeussler.

Visitation for Ken will take place from 2 p.m.-4 p.m. and 6 p.m.-9 p.m. Tuesday, April 14 at St. Francis Catholic Church, with the Rosary followed by scripture service at 7:30 p.m. The Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11 a.m. Wednesday, April 15 at St. Francis with visitation at the church one hour prior to the Mass. Burial will be in Grand Traverse Memorial Gardens.

Memorial contributions can be directed to Mass Intentions, Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools, or Munson Hospice House.

Please share your memories of Ken with this family by way of his online guest book at [www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com](http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com).

# Cemetery

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# Events

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**Grand Traverse Memorial Gardens**  
3575 Veterans Drive  
Traverse City, MI, 49684

**APR 14 Visitation** 02:00PM - 04:00PM  
St. Francis Catholic Church  
1025 S. Union, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**APR 14 Visitation** 06:00PM - 09:00PM  
St. Francis Catholic Church  
1025 S. Union, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**APR 14 Rosary** 07:30PM  
St. Francis Catholic Church  
1025 S. Union, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**APR 15 Visitation** 10:00AM - 11:00AM  
St. Francis Catholic Church  
1025 S. Union, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**APR 15 Funeral Mass** 11:00AM  
St. Francis Catholic Church  
1025 S. Union, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

# Comments

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“ As a former student of the GTAC schools I will simply say that Ken Knudsen was an archetype for a pillar of the community. I have not lived in Traverse City for almost 28 years yet when I heard of his passing felt obligated to convey my condolences. Grant unto him eternal rest o Lord and let perpetual light shine upon him.

Regards,  
Charles Bobier

Charles Bobier - April 26, 2015 at 10:53 PM

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“ I was so sorry to read about Mr Knudsen's death. I hadn't known him and his wife long, but found them to both be loving, sweet, honoring, humble and generous people. Mrs. Knudsen, I am so sorry for your loss and will be praying for you as you embark onto a path without your sweet partner.  
Anne (Rhoads) Smith, RN (I went to nursing school with your daughter, Diane).

Anne Smith - April 22, 2015 at 04:26 PM

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“ Your family and mine have grown through the years. Oh what can I say but have experienced the best of life. I remember Kathy, Kenneth, David and all the rest going to St Francis School. it is a very good memory. You all are blessed. God Bless Your Family Your are in my Prayers. Luv yu all.

Mary Schopieray - April 21, 2015 at 05:27 PM

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“ Sending our sincere condolences to Kathryn and all the Knudsen family from all of us at Holy Rosary parish on the loss of your dear Ken. In reading his obituary, we learn what a remarkable man he was. It is no wonder that he and Jeanie raised a truly wonderful family, and that he was able to accomplish so much in his life. But most important was his demonstration of deep faith which was an inspiration to all who knew him. May Ken now rest in peace in the presence of our loving Lord. All of you are in our thoughts and prayers at this sacred time.

Blessings,  
Judy (Weber) and Glenn LaCross

Judy LaCross - April 16, 2015 at 08:53 PM



“ I was a neighbor of Ken, Jeannie, and all the kids back when I was growing up near Chum's Corners in Traverse City. Every memory was a pleasant one, and I wish to send my love, prayers, and well wishes to Jeannie, Teresa, Diane, Kathy, Kenny, David, Barb, Brian, Mike. (Did I remember all the names correctly??) I now live in Clemson, South Carolina, but pleasant memories growing up always include this wonderful family. My sympathies to you, Jeannie, and all the family.  
Betty A. (Pike) Mealy

**Betty A. (Pike) Mealy** - April 15, 2015 at 03:59 PM

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“ I was a classmate of Barb's all through school. Mr. And Mrs. KNUDSEN were always together at school and church functions as far back as my earliest memories take me. If I could publish my own dictionary under the phrase "Class Act" there would be a picture of this couple. God Bless your family and may God hold you in the palm of his hand at this difficult time and always. Cindy Robertson

**Cindy Robertson** - April 15, 2015 at 07:27 AM

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“ Bill and I have many happy memories of Ken and his Jeannie. He was a man who demonstrated throughout his entire life the true meanings of faith, family, friends and community. What a beautiful legacy he has left. Bill and Susie Janis

**Susie Kildee Janis** - April 14, 2015 at 12:58 PM

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“ my name is terry bross and ken was a great inspiration to me he was my bus driver and friend we shared birthdays together mine was may 22 1970 he was one of the people that inspired me to join the navy and the first time we ment I found out he also drove our route for trash pick up so I would go out and meet him and told him when I grew up I wanted to be a garbage man and he quickly corrected me and said he was a garbaligist which I don't know if it was a true thing at the time because I was seven or eight but from then on I told every one I wanted to be a garboligist it wasn't till later on when I found out he had been in the navy then I wanted to join and did 20 years and always had held him in high regards' he will be missed by all who came in contact with him

**Terry Bross** - April 14, 2015 at 10:09 AM

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“ Aunt Jeannie and all the family... sorry we can't make it to say this in person but you are in our prayers and we are sending many hugs to you. So many memories of us visiting you! Uncle Ken was greeted by mom and dad - I can see all their smiles!  
Love to you all!!  
Karen Poertner Reinhardt



**Karen Reinhardt** - April 14, 2015 at 09:33 AM

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“ Grandma Knudsen and the rest of the Knudsen family,  
I write to share my deepest condolences with you. My middle school and high school athletic career would not have been complete without you all, and namely Grandpa Knudsen, cheering on every game. Though he was not my Grandpa, I felt as though he was my own grandparent sitting in the stands. Ken was a phenomenal person, a kind man, a generous man, and someone you could always trust. His sense of humor was unmatched, especially when we could help poke fun at some of his grandkids (my friends), and was always there for a hug.

I wish you all the best comfort in knowing he is now in a better place and will await you all with open arms when you meet him again. Keep praying for him and with him. He will always be with us all.

Love,  
Liz Conrad

**Liz Conrad** - April 14, 2015 at 09:09 AM

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“ Jeanie and extended family, my deepest sympathy goes out to each and all. I always enjoyed conversations with you, your wonderful smiles, your faith and kind words and positive attitudes and willingness to help in any manner you could. I know you were one of my parents favorites. Sorry I can not be with you to celebrate Ken's life but I send my condolences to all the family.

In Prayers and Love,  
Cousin Madeleine (Darga) Garvin  
Of Sarasota, FL

**Madeleine Garvin** - April 14, 2015 at 07:36 AM

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“ Jeanie, so sorry to hear about Ken. My family has many great memories of you both and the times the two families got together. Remember when Ken sold potato chips. Again my thoughts are with you and your large family. Darlene Robertson Rokos.

**Darlene Rokos** - April 13, 2015 at 02:19 PM

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“ My heart goes out to you Jeanie, and your family. I have many good memories of the old days, and may the peace of the Lord be with you.

Ralph Kozak

**Ralph Kozak** - April 13, 2015 at 08:23 AM

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“ Mrs. Knudsen, Dave, Barb,  
I am so sorry to hear of your husbands/Dad passing. Know that The Hubbell's are all praying and thinking of you all.

Eileen Hubbell Olson

**Eileen** - April 13, 2015 at 07:44 AM



“ Our deepest condolences to the Knudsen family. Darwin Knudsen and Maria. Our prayers are with you.

**farwin & Maria Knudsen** - April 14, 2015 at 08:30 PM