



## Stephen Allen Koeln

December 24, 1945 - January 9, 2019

Stephen (Steve) Allan Koeln, 73, of Perryville, Missouri, died on Wednesday, January 9, 2019 from colon cancer at Saint Francis Hospital, Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

Steve leaves mother, Katherine Koeln, his brother and sister-in-law, Greg and Linda Koeln, their children, Justin and Sally Koeln, Steve's uncle and aunt, Bill and Doris Koeln, and many wonderful cousins and friends.

He was preceded in death by his father, Harold E. Koeln, who died in 2004.

Steve grew up in Rock Hill, MO and graduated from Webster Groves High School. He received his bachelor and master degrees from University of Central Missouri. After graduating with his bachelor degree in 1968, he taught metal work at Lindbergh High School in St. Louis County, Missouri. In the summer of 1969 he was drafted into the US Army and assigned to the Artillery. He attained the rank of Sargent E-5 and spent 10 months in Vietnam. When he returned stateside, he continued to teach high school metal work at Lindbergh.

In 1980 he started his own welding business, Forge Master, making ornamental iron rails, fences, lighting, and furniture. In 1994 he decided to return to teaching and began his 25+ years of teaching Industrial Technology

at Perryville Middle School, in Perryville, Missouri.

He loved students and was always very patient with them. His students were very special to him, as were his colleagues at school and many of the parents of his students. In addition to teaching various Industrial Technology courses for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders, he also served as the faculty advisor for the Computer and Video Clubs for many years. Each summer he participated in Summer Scape for the students. Despite the heat, Summer Scape was a very special time for Steve and his students. He often said that these years in Perryville and teaching at the Middle School have been the best years of his life. Steve, when asked why he moved to Perryville, he would reply that he selected Perryville because he wanted to be a part of a community and he sure found one and was a big part of it.

One of Steve's other passions was restoring theater pipe organs. His home in Perryville was literally built around his pipe organ. Steve was an active member of the St. Louis Theater Organ Society.

Steve's family will be inviting all those that knew and loved Steve to a celebration of his life. They are planning this for sometime in the future in Perryville, MO.

# Tribute Wall



“ *I just learned of Steve's passing. Send love and prayers to the family. My deepest condolences.*  
*Paula (Cunningham) Borden*

---

**Paula Borden** - October 13, 2019 at 07:58 PM



“ *I just learned of Steve's passing when I saw his name listed in the WGHS Alumni Relations News. It's been a while since Steve and I were introduced by Dick Wobbe in 1961. Many years of fond memories. In the years since our lives have gone in many directions yet I always had the great memories of growing up with Steve and his family. My Mother always said she never felt old until she realized the names she saw in the obits were her friends not the parents of her friends. Every day I become more aware of what she meant. I will miss Steve we had some great times together. My deepest sympathy to Mrs. Koeln, Greg and the family.*

*Terry Libich*

---

**Terry Libich** - June 01, 2019 at 01:34 PM



“ *Mr Kolehn was my children's teacher and he was such a kind hearted fellow who I also got the pleasure to talk to every parent meeting. I I could talk to him forever my kids use to say please come on mom!!! He touched mine and my children's hearts and lives. Such a wonderful human being.*

---

**Amy** - January 17, 2019 at 08:30 PM

SB

“ I was with Steve in Vietnam. I was the Battery Medic. I slept in same bunker for a month. I helped him with firing missions when they were short a man.

I visited him in 2016. He played the organ for me. Did he ever finish his organ restoration? I was hoping to visit him again.

I just happened to come across his name on Facebook tonight. It was the interview.

I am in shock and saddened. I thought of him often.

Sherman Bayless

989-743-4553

shermangene@hotmail.com

Facebook: Sherman Gene Bayless

---

**Sherman Bayless** - January 15, 2019 at 12:09 AM

AS

“ Steve was a member of Southeast Missouri Modelers Association. Steve and Greg attended many meetings here in Cape. Steve, Greg and I would meet at Firehouse Subs before meetings. I enjoyed learning about the organs he worked on. We the club were going to get him flying this summer.

Please let us know about memorial.

So sorry for your loss.

---

**Arnold Simmons** - January 11, 2019 at 10:28 AM

BS

“ I worked with Steve for several years at PCMS and he was always my lunch duty buddy and so kind and pleasant to talk to. He attended and recorded every single concert my choirs were performing and was always willing to help out where needed. He even escorted children with me on a field trip to Six Flags on his day off to support our program and be a helping hand. He was a wonderful teacher, kind and positive role model to students, always went the extra mile, and had a true love for what he did. I am better for having known him. So deeply sad for his loss and praying for his family.

---

**Becca Sides** - January 10, 2019 at 10:40 PM

VH

“ I will always treasure my years working with Steve. Although I was his "boss", I never felt I had his wisdom. His patience was immense. He was a teacher for all the right reasons...the true picture and example of "teacher". Mr. Koeln was there for the students especially the "needy" ones. His class offered him the chance to pass on good character and some basic skills both of his trade and life. I respected him as a teacher, veteran, and friend. Steve, I and so many others will miss you but always be grateful for knowing you and having you in our lives.

---

**Vella Haertling** - January 10, 2019 at 06:30 PM

LV

“ I was so blessed to have worked with Mr. Steve Koeln at Perry County Middle School for over 20 years. Mr. Koeln had a heart of gold and nerves of steel! I once asked him how he kept his patience and SANITY hour after hour with a room full of middle school students that all had access to electric saws, drills, hammers and the like. With a kind, humble smile he replied, "It's all part of a day's work, and it's NEVER boring!" That's our Mr. Koeln! He will be greatly missed.

---

**Lisa Vinton** - January 10, 2019 at 03:47 PM

NC

“ I had shop class with him long time ago back n 2003 or 2004 anyhow he was a great teacher. He will b missed by many students and teachers and former students it was a shock to hear of his passing. My prayers r with his family n friends.

---

**Nicole clewis** - January 09, 2019 at 11:42 PM

MP

“ I knew Mr. Koeln through school. Although I was his "boss", I still referred to him as Mr. He deserved the respect. He was a kind, good man. I will forever be grateful for our friendship and will treasure it always. Not many heroes left in the world, but he will always be one of mine.



---

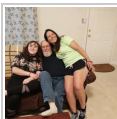
**Mark Phillips** - January 09, 2019 at 11:34 PM

JN

“ Steve and I started teaching at Perry County Middle School in August 1994. Over the twenty-plus years I taught with him, he showed me the huge heart he had for kids. He showed up at work at 5 A.M. (and sometimes even earlier) everyday to get ready for his day - cutting the wood for the projects needed that day, getting the materials out, and prepping the tools. I never knew him to be anything but a giver. He was patient, kind, and generous with his time. I enjoyed our Summerscape trips together. He would share with me about his time in Vietnam, returning to the states, his childhood in St. Louis, and his passion for organ playing. As his time at PCMS moved past 15 years or so, others began to ask him when he might consider retiring. He always said he still loved what he did and loved the interactions with the students. One story sticks out because it defines Steve's heart. He told me of a young man who went to high school with him. This student was a rebel and didn't engage with school. He seemed to be going down a bad road. Many people were worried for him. The young man's shop teacher reached out to him and the teenager began to thrive. Steve said that's all he ever wanted to do - give students an alternate mode of education and inspire a passion of learning in them. This sacrificial, loving man exemplified the spirit of teachers - give, and give, and give until it hurts, for the sake of kids, then give some more. He was a wonderful man and we will miss him greatly.

---

**Jane Narrow** - January 09, 2019 at 10:35 PM



How true! I watched him buy lunch for so many kids on field trips & last year at the magic house he handed a kid \$20.00 without any other kids attention & he told him, go get what you want and share if you have anything left. My heart must have shined on my face because he looked at me & said "he's got a lot going on & kids have been a bit rough on him, hope that's enough for him to get food & snacks" this was after a 10 minute argument that he wasn't buying my ticket because I forgot to turn in on time & had pay full price. Truly amazing soul!

---

**Tabitha Reed** - January 10, 2019 at 01:06 AM

WE

*I have witnessed his true unselfish giving heart ❤️! Some of my children & my grandson were fortunate enough to have him for a teacher. He had more patience than Job! I too sat back, shaking my head, wondering how on earth this wonderful person could possibly stand being in the same room every day with these young people! Obviously he had nerves of steel! Lol That smile no one can forget when one of the kids made him proud will be forever engraved in my mind! Those are some of the toughest years for kids to get through and bless his heart, he was always right there listening and watching for those in need! I'm proud to have known such a caring , giving and loving human being!*

*Our thoughts and prayers are with his family at this time!  
Harold, Sharon, Lyndsey, Immanuel, Isaiah, & Zander  
Weisbrod*

---

**Weisbrod** - January 10, 2019 at 10:57 PM

SC

“ *We were very sad to hear of Mr. Koeln’s passing. Our sons were fortunate enough to have him for a teacher. He was always a patient, dedicated and hardworking teacher who cared for all his students. He touched many young lives throughout his career. He was respected by those who knew him and will be missed.*

*Sincerely,  
Bill, Sherry, Kyle & Kristopher Cottner.*

---

**Sherry Cottner** - January 09, 2019 at 09:13 PM

RW

“ *To Steve's Family,*

*I was part of that Perry County Middle School "family". I assisted Steve with special needs students in the classroom. I also helped with the Industrial Tech Club for a short time of his many years. I witnessed Steve's patience and teaching skills many, many times. His legacy will live on through his countless students.*

*Steve was a friend of Brad and mine. He had been a guest at our home. Since my retirement, we had lost touch. Brad and I will treasure our memories of shared times. Steve will be missed by many.*

*God's peace to you.*

*Rita and Brad Weber*

---

**Rita Weber** - January 09, 2019 at 01:07 PM