



# Walter P.J. Gilefski

FEB 18, 1948 - APR 7, 2020



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## **Walter P.J. Gilefski**

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**W**alter P.J. Gilefski passed away on April 7, 2020. He was 72. He was born and raised in Kingston, PA and attended St. Hedwig Grade School and Central Catholic High School where he met the love of his life, Ruth. He graduated King's College, Wilkes-Barre, PA in 1969 with a degree in Mathematics and subsequently earned Master's Degrees in Education and in Physics from the University of Delaware and Delaware State University respectively. He joined the Woodbridge School District in 1969 where he worked as a teacher through 1991. He served as an administrator in the district until his retirement in 2003. In 2005 he was elected to his first term on the Woodbridge School Board. From 2005 until present he served as a member of Woodbridge School Board, most recently as Vice President. Additionally he served as mayor of the Town of Bridgeville from 1980 to 1990. He was a past dues-paying member of the Seaford Moose Lodge and VFW. He enjoyed volunteering at his parish church, Our Lady of Lourdes, in Seaford. He was always a strong supporter of literacy and an enthusiastic patron of the Bridgeville Public Library.

He was a proud "Woodbridge Raider" and loved attending Woodbridge activities including ballgames and fundraisers with friends and family. He thoroughly loved reading and membership in his book club. He always enjoyed the companionship of good friends and had many good times at Jeff's Tap Room on Market Street with his buddies.

He is survived by his wife of 49 years, Ruth (nee Giampetro) Gilefski of Bridgeville, DE; his children, David Gilefski (Alison) of Wilmington, DE and Amy Gilefski (Ben Rosen); granddaughter Elliana Rosen of Townsend, DE; sister Loretta Katoski (Bob) of Brunswick, GA; brother-in-law Joe Vanderhoff of Kingston, PA; sister-in-law Carol (Bill) Kelly of St. Pete's Beach, FL; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents Walter and Stella Gilefski and a sister, Rita Vanderhoff.



## Obituary

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The family will have a private burial with a celebration of life at a later date.

In lieu of flowers the family asks that contributions be made to the Bridgeville Public Library  
<https://www.bridgevillelibrary.com/page/donations>.

Please sign Mr. Gilefski's online guestbook located on this site



## Tribute Wall

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JS

**Joseph Saba** posted:

Whitey was a good friend in high school and college. A pillar in our peer group, he was always great fun. We shared many good times, especially at the Lake. His sense of humor, intelligence and integrity were his hallmarks. I wish we had stayed more closely in touch. My sincere sympathy to his wife and high school/college friend Ruth. Joe Saba

June 22 at 5:20 AM

SK

**Sylvan Kaufman** posted:

I was in a book club with Walter, and will always remember his joy and enthusiasm for so many natural history topics. He had a zest for learning and sharing knowledge. He will be greatly missed. My condolences to his family.

August 22 at 6:41 AM

LM

**Larry Metzner** posted:

To my good friend Ruth, although I did not personally know Walter, I have read his accomplishments & have seen his name in the local paper many times for services to the community. Just my association with you gives me some understanding of the man he was. I, and on behalf of WSAH, do send heart felt sympathy and love. Larry Metzner

April 20 at 7:02 AM

SM

**Sandy Mullett** posted:

My heartfelt condolences go out to Mr. G's family. I worked with him at Woodbridge ECEC. He was a wonderful man and never hesitated to sit on the floor with the kids and would greet each and every one at the door when they arrived. He will be greatly missed. I feel fortunate to have known and worked with him. Rest in peace Mr. G.

April 12 at 9:54 AM

MS

**Mike Sipple** posted:

My fondest memory of middle school is Mr G reading aloud "The Hobbit" to our home room. He really inspired a love of reading. In later years I always enjoyed saying hello to Walt at Union United Methodist Church as he was helping serve breakfast during the Apple-Scrapple festival. Rest In Peace Walt.

April 12 at 7:40 AM



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RD

**Ron Dukes** posted:

What a great person. Sad to see. A true Blue Raider fan and supporter. Always had a smile and something nice to say. He always came up to me when my team visited Woodbridge and shared a handshake and welcomed me back. I will surely miss those receptions. Ron Dukes.

April 12 at 6:26 AM

KH

**Kristen Hatfield** posted:

Heartfelt condolences to the family. I have the fondest of memories of Mr. G as a teacher and colleague, as well as, a true supporter of the Woodbridge community. I spoke to him many times at athletic events in which my kids participated. He loved to come out and show his support for Woodbridge. He will truly be missed.

April 11 at 12:13 PM

GW

**Gary Wray** posted:

Walt was a wonderful guy and a great supporter of all things Bridgeville/Woodbridge School District! I had the pleasure of being around him on several levels and met him years ago as a fellow principal (I was in Cape Henlopen) and we spent lots of time together at state and county meetings. Later, when I was on the Cape Henlopen School Board and he on the Woodbridge board, we sat beside each other at many county and statewide meetings. After his retirement we would see each other again at Delaware State Retired Personnel meetings. Always with a big smile and something nice to say, he was always positive and upbeat. His counsel was always wise and informed and when he spoke, folks listened. He will be missed. Dr. Gary D. Wray, DE Cape Henlopen School District

April 11 at 8:12 AM



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HB

**Harry Brake** posted:

My deepest sympathy for the loss of Mr. G. If anyone defined the phrase of "being present" it was Mr G. Our SGA Class of 2020, ever since the beginning of stepping into the school district, he represented being a Raider with the spirit unmatched every single day. As a coach and librarian, no one could want a more welcome and positive supporter in your corner than Mr. G. He never would fail to let you see both the positive and negative sides of an issue and offer his insight into those for the benefit of the school district, as well as you the individual. He will be missed in person, but never forgotten in spirit as a true Blue Raider. We think of his family and all he touched - which is a multitude of individuals and Blue Raiders. Sincerely, Harry Brake

April 10 at 4:28 PM



**Gary Bottiger** April 12 at 5:37 AM

My friend of 51 years will be missed. Walt and I came to Woodbridge the same year and lived together our 1st year at Woodbridge. Dr Flint the two of us to teach math and he put me in the HS because I was bigger and Walt in the Elementary because smaller. Walt was my assistant to the Woodbridge Wrestling Team. Walt was with me when Alonzo Frisby won a State Wrestling Championship. We were so excited and happy. We did many activities together, like traveling tennis, golfing, and sharing a drink. I am so sorry for the family. Walt will be remembered for ever. Good Bye Old Friend. Gary



**John T. Rahe** April 10 at 4:58 PM

A great man. Rest In Piece Walt.



**Harry Brake** April 10 at 4:30 PM

(part of the above did not come out so we wanted to make sure the message was received clearly!) My deepest sympathy for the loss of Mr. G. If anyone defined the phrase of "being present" it was Mr G. Our SGA Class of 2020 strived for the same feeling. Ever since the beginning of stepping into the school district, he represented being a Raider with the spirit unmatched every single day. As a coach and librarian, no one could want a more welcome and positive supporter in your corner than Mr. G. He never would fail to let you see both the positive and negative sides of an issue and offer his insight into those for the benefit of the school district, as well as you the individual. He will be missed in person, but never forgotten in spirit as a true Blue Raider. We think of his family and all he touched - which is a multitude of individuals and Blue Raiders.



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WF

**Woodbridge Football** posted:

We are deeply sorry to hear of the passing of "Mr. G." Our thoughts and prayers are with all family, loved ones, and the Woodbridge Community. Mr. G was always a positive presence in and a huge part of Woodbridge. We personally, will miss seeing you gracing the sidelines or leaning over the home-side fence on Friday nights in the fall.

April 10 at 2:58 PM

PO

**Patrica S. Oliphant** posted:

Walt Gilefski met life and the world with graciousness, an open heart, and a smile. He will be remembered as a wonderful family man, a dedicated educator, and consummate community member. May your faith in our Savior at this very Holy time sustain you. Surely Walt is in His arms. Please accept my prayers and sympathies for your loss. Patricia S. Oliphant

April 10 at 2:44 PM

EP

**Emilio Perry** posted:

Our deepest sympathy for the loss of Mr. G. We will hold the memories we shared together so close to our hearts during these difficult times. Mr. G cared enough to stop by the classroom; drop in at a practice or a game to check-in to see how things were. He would ask if there was something he could do to help or if there was anything needed. Please accept our heartfelt sympathies for your loss. Emilio & Erin Perry

April 10 at 10:02 AM

DE

**Dawn Ellis** posted:

Mr.G was such a great friend when I started at WOODBRIDGE, he was the Principal at ECEC in Bridgeville and I would drop my son Zach , now 24, off as I drove by on my way to Greenwood and he would watch over him until school started . I am still the school nurse at WHS and he never missed a chance to stop in and check in and ask about me and me family. He will be missed! So sorry for your loss and I am praying for you and your families! God Bless! Dawn Ellis and Family

April 10 at 9:39 AM



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LZ

**Lynne Zanowic** posted:

Just terrible news during this trying time. I am so sorry for your loss. Walt brightened everyone's day & was a good man. We still have a cat that we got from the many litters at your house years ago. She makes me think of you guys often. Be strong stay safe & know you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers.

April 10 at 8:55 AM

GB

**Gary Bottiger** posted:

Ruth and Family,I am so sorry about Walt's passing. My ex-wife notified me. If there is anything I can do to help in any way, please leave me know. Walt and I started at Woodbridge the same year and lived together our first year. Please say goodbye to my old friend of 51 years.I hope he didn't suffer. My prayers are with you and your family. Gary bottiger

April 10 at 8:05 AM

JJ

**Jimmy Johnson** April 16 at 5:27 PM

Ruth,My sincere condolences to you and your family. I remember the first year that Mr. G arrived at Woodbridge and taught math at the North Bridgeville elementary school. I have many fond memories of him as a math teacher, a coach, and in later years as a friend. Walt was always so supportive of the school district and of the community, and I am very appreciative of all that he did for all of us. Jimmy Johnson

MW

**Marlyn Webb** April 10 at 4:04 PM

Ruth and family. So sorry to hear of Walt's death. Both Shannon and Scott had him for math. Ronnie and I got to know him well and so enjoyed talking with him. He was always so kind. With deepest sympathy. Marlyn and Ronnie Webb. 🙏🙏🙏



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**John H. Parker Jr** posted:

My sincere and heart felt condolences to family. Mr. "G" was a great father, teacher, administrator, mentor, and friend. I worked with him at the "Bridge" for several years and he was always positive, supportive, and loved the community. He worked tirelessly to make his students, school, and community better. He would many times stop by weight training, after school, and shoot some hoops or play in a pick-up game. He will no doubt be missed! May GOD grant the family peace and comfort through this loss. Keep the Faith! John H. Parker jr

April 10 at 7:08 AM



**Claude And Pat Massey** April 18 at 10:18 AM

We will miss seeing Walter at Our Lady of Lourdes Church. Although we did not know him well he was a kind and gentle man always ready to volunteer when asked. He will be missed.



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Walter by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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