



## David Leon Kananen

October 17, 1939 - November 27, 2023

David Leon Kananen, 84, of Napoleon, Ohio passed away at the Cleveland Clinic on November 27, 2023. He was born in Laurium, Michigan on October 17, 1939 to the late Eino and Ina (Waanen) Kananen. David married Kathleen Maier on October 10, 1964.

Dave proudly served his country in the US Army. He and Kathy hosted many international students from BGSU over the years, who became like family. He enjoyed curling and playing hockey, he was a season ticket holder for the BGSU Falcon Hockey Team. In his spare time, he enjoyed gardening and feeding his birds. Dave and Kathy enjoyed traveling and collecting music boxes together.

He is survived by his children, Laura (James) Lewis, Susan (Brian) Walrath, and Doug (Amy) Kananen; grandchildren, Charlotte, Jacob, and Elijah (Katie) Lewis, Kelley and Tanner Walrath, Ashley, Chase, and Colby Hutchison. In addition to his parents, Dave was preceded in death by his wife, Kathy; and sister Nancy (Steve) Sandor.

Friends and family will be received at the Rodenberger-Gray Funeral Home, Napoleon on Saturday, December 2, 2023 from 10 AM until the memorial service at 11 AM. Memorial contributions may be made to a charity of your choice. Online condolences and messages may be shared with the family at

[rodenbergergray.com](http://rodenbergergray.com)

# Previous Events

## Memorial Gathering

DEC 2. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Rodenberger Funeral Home - Napoleon  
1010 Westmoreland Avenue  
Napoleon, OH 43545

## Memorial Service

DEC 2. 11:00 AM (ET)

Rodenberger Funeral Home - Napoleon  
1010 Westmoreland Avenue  
Napoleon, OH 43545

# Tribute Wall

LX

“ I am one of the many BGSU international students Dave and Kathy hosted 25 years ago. I am so lucky to be matched with them , they are like family to us! Dave and Kathy are the nicest American couple I have ever met! I am so grateful for their kindness, love and caring to me and my family! I will never forget the first time they picked me up for ice cream at Friday’s, amazing music boxes playing, fishing at their pond with my son, and beautiful thanksgiving dinners in their home (best turkey I have ever tasted). Lots of fun memories! I feel the warmth surrounding me every time I think about them.

*We will miss Dave! Dave will be living in our hearts forever! He is forever young as a hockey man!*

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**Li Xia** - December 03, 2023 at 08:02 AM

TE

“ Dave was such a nice man. We always enjoyed when he would stop by the BGSU Hockey Coaches Offices. He was always so positive and encouraging, it was contagious. We will certainly miss him at Slater Family Arena and we know he was in Heaven looking out for us tonight. RIP my friend.

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**Ty Eigner** - December 02, 2023 at 12:18 AM

LX

“ Li and Xiaoming purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of David Leon Kananen.



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**Li and Xiaoming** - December 01, 2023 at 01:21 PM

F<

“ From The BGSU Women’s Hockey Team <3 planted a <a href="/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518">Memorial Tree</a> in honor of David Leon Kananen.

From The BGSU Women’s Hockey Team <3 - December 01, 2023 at 10:37 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of David Leon Kananen.



December 01, 2023 at 10:37 AM

AO

“ Dave had a contagious smile and cheerful spirit that made playing hockey with him a joy. He will be missed.

Aaron O’Brien - December 01, 2023 at 10:02 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of David Leon Kananen.



November 30, 2023 at 10:19 PM

MB

“ Dave was kind, curious and fun. Our whole family enjoyed being around him and I am grateful for what a good friend he was to my Dad. When Dad got the invite for his 70th Kindergarten reunion in Puerto Rico and didn't think he could manage the trip because of health issues, Dave said, " I'll take ya Ken!" Thanks to Dave (and Kathy and Barb!) Dad got to visit his hometown one more time and share it all with such lovely friends. Thanks Dave. It was a delight to know you.

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**Megan Bartlett** - November 30, 2023 at 02:46 PM

NB

“ We have lots of memories with 'Blueberry Dave,' as we call him in our family. My FIL, Ken Bartlett, introduced our kids to Dave for some blueberry picking and bluegill fishing at their beautiful farm. Dave, you are a kind and generous soul and our lives are better because we knew you. I loved talking with you. To his family, thanks for sharing him with us. I didn't realize until today that we share a birthday Dave! How about that. I'm honored.



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**Nicole Bartlett** - November 30, 2023 at 12:11 PM

UJ

“ David was an amazing human being and a great friend. I can't remember how many times they have invited us for the Thanksgiving and such special occasions. During 2014-2016, we had a lot of time together talking about road trips and (ice) hokey. He has told me countless stories about Falcons team and its best seasons. Whenever BGSU Falcons hockey team had a home game, David was there. I joined with him in many days. He inspired me in many ways. Cross-country road trips, farming, and above all... spending a lot of time for people beyond your immediate circle and truly enjoying that. David is a big part of my memory of small-town America. The ideals set by him will live with us forever.  
-Udaya Jayawardhana

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**Udaya K Jayawardhana** - November 30, 2023 at 11:39 AM

UI

“ Udaya Jayawardhana and Nayani Ilangakoon purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of David Leon Kananen.



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**Udaya Jayawardhana and Nayani Ilangakoon** - November 30, 2023 at 11:30 AM

DI

“ David was a remarkable individual whose kindness and generosity touched the lives of many. David, and Kathy, showed compassion by opening their home to us, providing a warm and welcoming environment as we settled into new surroundings as international students.

*David will be dearly missed, but his spirit of kindness and the memories of his compassionate actions will continue to inspire those who knew him.*

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**Dimuthu** - November 30, 2023 at 11:01 AM

Person icon

“ Pink Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of David Leon Kananen.



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November 30, 2023 at 10:57 AM

MB

“ What a gem of a human. Dave was generous, kind and has a great twinkle and giggle. Hoping Dad (Ken Bartlett) and he find a Tim Horton's coffee and donut to share in heaven. Love to your family. M'Lis

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**M'Lis Bartlett** - November 30, 2023 at 10:45 AM

TL

“ The Monday Afternoon Curling League planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David Leon Kananen.

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**The Monday Afternoon Curling League** - November 30, 2023 at 09:36 AM



“ *Blue Caribbean Bouquet was purchased for the family of David Leon Kananen.*



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November 30, 2023 at 09:36 AM



“ *Hilkka Tapola planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David Leon Kananen.*

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**Hilkka Tapola** - November 30, 2023 at 09:28 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of David Leon Kananen.*



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November 30, 2023 at 09:28 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of David Leon Kananen.*



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November 29, 2023 at 09:18 PM

WO

“ Dave is an amazing human. Kind, gentle, tough, knowledgeable, great humor, family man, nature lover, thoughtful, merlot connoisseur, always good natured, seemingly invincible. A true role model. Thanks for all you have given to us Dave.

William OBrien - November 29, 2023 at 11:18 AM

SM

“ Dave taught me how to have faith, love others unconditionally, and live the life to the fullest. He (and Kathy) opened up his home to a total stranger and made me feel I belong. His smile always made me feel everything is going to be OK. Thank you, Dave for sharing your love and life with me. I am so honored to be able to call myself your adopted Japanese daughter.  
Wish I had more time with you.

*Sending my deepest condolences to the family.*

Shizuka Matsunaga - November 29, 2023 at 06:36 AM

SM

“ Shizuka Matsunaga planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David Leon Kananen.

Shizuka Matsunaga - November 29, 2023 at 06:01 AM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of David Leon Kananen.



November 29, 2023 at 06:01 AM

MB

“ *A smile on his face and a hockey stick in his hand. A memory of a fine person and gentleman. May his family and friends cherish our time with Dave.*



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**Mark Bukowski** - November 28, 2023 at 07:19 PM

KV

“ *Dave was an awesome neighbor and friend. Memories of him rollerblading up and down the road and stopping to talk to my mom about flowers. He never met a stranger. Prayers for all his family and all who knew him He will be missed. We know he's with the Lord just skating along. RIP Neighbor till we all meet again.* 🙏💜🙏💜🙏

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**kathy Vollmar** - November 28, 2023 at 06:18 PM

CP

“ *My heart felt condolences go out to the family. Knowing Dave and his wife Kathy through curling was a joy to experience when I joined. Such a positive warm person that had a infectious way to make you happier and smile. So welcoming and approachable. I will cherish his well lived life! Charlie Pfaltzgraf*



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**Charlie Pfaltzgraf** - November 28, 2023 at 06:07 PM

CG

“ *When I joined the curling club, Dave was so welcoming. And over the years, he was always first with a smile to great people new and old. What a blessing it was to know Dave. -Chris Gohr*

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**Chris Gohr** - November 28, 2023 at 04:53 PM

MW

“ *Heartfelt sympathy to the family of David Kananen. He was such a special person, a very special cousin. He will be missed.*



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**Melanie Kananen Woodworth** - November 28, 2023 at 03:12 PM

PD

“ *'Let's Go.....' 'Blue's' outburst at about 6:35 am on Wednesdays and Fridays brought us to the beginning of our hockey skate. I always admired Dave as a model for a life lived well. I miss him already.*

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**Pizza Dave** - November 28, 2023 at 02:27 PM

BL

“ *BGCC Wednesday 6p League purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of David Leon Kananen.*



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**BGCC Wednesday 6p League** - November 28, 2023 at 02:08 PM

WM

“ *A wonderful man, will be missed.* ”



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**William Morrison** - November 28, 2023 at 11:22 AM