



Kenneth Lee Haggart

May 24, 1962 - August 26, 2022

I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Timothy 4:7-8

Kenneth Lee Haggart, age 60, of Fremont, Michigan, passed away peacefully in the hope of Eternal Life with his loving wife, Nancy, by his side at the Newaygo County Compassion Home on August 26, 2022, after a courageous battle with glioblastoma.

Ken was born on May 24, 1962, in Escanaba, Michigan, to Ken and Laverne (Seronko) Haggart. He attended Newberry High School (Class of 1980) where he excelled in football, basketball, golf, and academics as well as a little mischief every now and then. He then attended Northern Michigan University, eventually transferring to Central Michigan University where he earned a Bachelors Degree in Education as well as a Masters degree in History.

On June 16, 1984, Ken married his high school sweetheart and love of his life, Nancy Kujala, at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Newberry, Michigan. Over their 42 years together, which included 38 years of marriage, he gave her many gifts, but none greater than their two beautiful daughters whom he loved so deeply that at times it was difficult for him to find the words to express that love.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy, daughters, Abigael Haggart (fiance Ian Ketchum) of Holland, Michigan and Anna (Jason) Fritsma of Newaygo, Michigan. He was also the best Papa in the whole wide world to his two amazing grandchildren, Aubree and Isaac, with a third, Baby Fritsma, due in February 2023. Ken is also survived by his parents, Ken and Laverne Haggart of Newberry, Michigan, one brother, Steve Haggart of Marquette, Michigan, sisters and brothers-in-law, Lynda (Dennis) Burgess and Rich Kujala, all of Newberry, Michigan, Marlene Clark of Rockford, Michigan, many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and cousins, special friends and travel companions, Zeke and Pam Zuchowski, and his brother-from-another-mother and golf partner extraordinaire, Jeff Sevigny.

He was preceded in death by his mother-in-law and favorite polka partner, Kitty Kujala, father-in-law, Tom Kujala, maternal grandparents, Mildred and Walter Seronko, paternal grandparents, Helen and Kenneth Haggart, as well as several aunts and uncles.

Ken had an unwavering faith in his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, that carried him through his life and comforted him in his time of illness. He was a member of St. Michael Catholic Church in Brunswick, Michigan, where he served as Lector and Eucharistic Minister for many years. He was a member of The Knights of Columbus, 4th Degree. Special thanks to Father Peter Schafer, Father Steven Geerling, and Cheui Totten for caring for the spiritual needs of Ken and his family.

In 1985, Ken began his career in education at Holton Public Schools as a social studies teacher and assistant varsity football coach. It was there that he met fellow teacher and head coach, Mark Houston. They became instant friends. Mark and his wife, Mary, graciously opened their home to Ken and Nancy when they first moved to the area, a kindness that was never forgotten. Houston and Haggart coached Holton Red Devil Football together for many years (with the Haggart and Houston kids often accompanying their dads to practice). Along with many fine young men, they enjoyed much success over the years due to the discipline, determination, and grit that was and always will be Red Devil Football.

Ken was humbled and honored to be inducted into the Holton Athletic Hall of Fame on two separate occasions for his contributions to the Red Devil football program.

As important as athletics were to him, academics were the priority to Mr. Haggart. He was an outstanding coach and an even better teacher, loved by his students for his ability to make learning fun. He always believed in the importance of giving kids and parents hope and he never turned away from anyone in need of that hope. Mr. Haggart also coached basketball, wrestling, volleyball, and directed many theater productions and talent shows at HPS that were always entertaining.

While teaching at Holton, Ken earned a Masters degree in Secondary Education Administration through Grand Valley State University, which prepared him to assume the role of Principal at Holton Middle School, and subsequently at Fremont Middle School.

Football was in his blood and, as a result, he returned to the sidelines once again with Coach Houston, for several years, this time for the Fremont Packers as defensive coordinator under head coach and good friend, Dan Rohn.

A life-long learner, Ken furthered his education once more, earning an Ed Specialist degree. He then became Fremont Public Schools' Superintendent (aka "The Yooperintendent", who most likely holds the record for least number of snow days taken). His 37 year calling as a dedicated educator came to a close as he retired in June of 2022, due to his declining health.

Ken lived his life to the fullest every day and had many hobbies and interests. His love of music took many forms, from his love of ELO and BNL, to a fiery stint in high school band, to his role in the formation of the local rock legend that was FCG. Uncle Kenny loved to play guitar, sing, and make people laugh. He was notorious for a number of impromptu performances in public places that usually found Nancy heading for the nearest exit.

An avid sports fan, Ken's favorite teams were the Minnesota Vikings, Wisconsin Badger Football, and Michigan State Spartan Basketball. He did his best to tolerate the fact that his wife is a Duke Blue Devil Basketball fan.

He loved to spend time with Nancy, the girls, and good friends at the family camp in the Upper Peninsula on summer vacations and "guys' weekends". Any time of year was the perfect time for a swim in Lake Superior in his book. When the original camp was lost in a forest fire a number of years ago, it was Ken who took the reins and orchestrated the construction of a new cabin on the original site, enlisting the invaluable help of his many talented friends. His girls are committed to continuing the tradition of vacationing with their own families at that very sacred place for many years to come. The Big Dog would have wanted it that way.

Once their nest was empty, Ken and Nancy rediscovered their love of downhill skiing, enjoying every winter weekend they could at Crystal Mountain. Ken also loved to read, golf, hike, travel, and spend time bubblin' around Fremont Lake on his pontoon boat with family, friends and an ice-cold beverage. Or two. Godspeed, El Conquistador...

The family would like to extend their sincerest gratitude to everyone at The Newaygo County Compassion Home, especially Diane, Ann, Chris, Melodie, Melissa, Denise, Barb, Erin, and Brandee for the loving, compassionate care they provided to Ken and the entire family. They would also like to thank Promedica Heartland Hospice. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you please direct all memorial contributions to The Newaygo County Compassion Home.

Knights of Columbus Assembly 3161