



Wayne Paul Donnelly

May 24, 1947 - April 26, 2025

Wayne Paul Donnelly, 77, passed away on April 26, 2025, at Mahaska Hospital in Oskaloosa, Iowa.

He was born on May 24, 1947, to Clifford and Mary Ward Donnelly in Ottumwa, and grew up in Ottumwa. He graduated from Ottumwa High School in 1965, and from Northeast Missouri State College in Kirksville, Missouri, with a Bachelor of Science of Education. He married Anne Yenger on June 28, 1969, and in August, the couple began their lives and teaching careers in Somers, Iowa.

On September 5, 1971, they welcomed a daughter, Eva, while Wayne was attending graduate school in Kirksville. Wayne graduated with his MA degree from Northeast Missouri State College in 1972. The couple then moved to Oskaloosa that following year and Wayne worked as a carpenter in Pella for a year. Wayne was then hired to teach English at Moravia High School where he was also the speech coach, ran the lights for the drama department for the plays and worked at the football games until retiring after 19 years.

Wayne worked at the True Value Hardware store in Albia for 10 years and then at Henderson John Deere Implement for one year before accepting the job as a teacher for the SOS, School of Success, the alternative school, at the Albia High School before retiring permanently. He graduated 35 students in 5

years.

Wayne liked to fish, work on black powder rifles and shoot them, go hunting with his friends, and sometimes just sit back and enjoy a cold beer with his friends. He also was a voracious reader, reading about World War II and the Civil War. He also liked to go camping, taking many trips with Anne and Eva every summer, in particular to Civil War battlefields, the Great Smoky Mountains, the Black Hills and the Grand Canyon, to name a few. Wayne and Anne then visited the Outer Banks, Mackinac Island, and the Great Smoky Mountains, just to name some of the places they have been and continued that tradition until 2024.

Wayne also enjoyed being “Papa” to his 3 grandchildren and loved to spend time with them and watch them grow up. He once mentioned to Anne “this grandpa business sure is fun!”.

Surviving are his wife of 56 years, a daughter, Eva (Tory) Spiess of Ames, 3 grandchildren, Audrey, Katie and Wyatt Spiess of Ames and a sister, Linda, of Colorado.

He was preceded in death by his parents and parents-in-law.

Visitation will be held from 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 7, 2025, at the Tharp Funeral Home in Albia, with Wayne’s family present to greet family and friends.

A memorial service will be held at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 7, 2025, at the Tharp Funeral Home in Albia, with Pastors Rayl Robbins and John Chadwick co-officiating.

An open memorial has been established to the family to be determined at a

later date.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 7. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Tharp Funeral Home
116 Benton Ave.
Albia, IA 52531
(641) 932-3129
<https://www.tharpfh.com/>

Memorial Service

JUN 7. 3:00 PM (CT)

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Tribute Wall

DL

“ Wayne and I were high school buddies and went fishing together several times. We first met in Madrigal in high school and formed a lasting reindship. I was especially grateful when he and Ann attended my father's visitation. Wayne had a great sense of humor and loved people.
David Livingston

David Livingston - July 10, 2025 at 09:43 AM

PP

“ Mr Donnelly had a profound influence on the trajectory of my life! He believed in me when I didn't believe in myself! His humor and insight made learning fun! I am forever grateful!

Paula McClurg-Dal Ponte - June 11, 2025 at 07:12 AM

ES

“ I was listening to the Beach Boys and remembering Dad playing those records when I was growing up. I miss you Dad.

Eva



Eva Spiess - May 07, 2025 at 01:55 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Wayne Paul Donnelly.



May 06, 2025 at 09:39 AM

SB

“ Mr. Donnelly was a GREAT English teacher for our class of '80 from Moravia Iowa High School. He will be spoke about at our 45 year class reunion this year. The class will all have story's to tell when I mention him at the reunion. Wayne having his daughter, a part of him will always be here. Sorry for your loss.

Susie (McBride) Bischof - May 01, 2025 at 09:48 PM

NL

“ I am heartbroken. Donnelly was my best teacher and a better friend. Even after school he still checked in on me. The last time I saw him, he finally said the words I yearned for for years. He said he was proud of me and he always had been. He changed my life in so many ways and I am sorry I didn't tell him how much he meant to me. Please reach out if I can help at all. Nicholas Lippert



Nick Lippert - May 01, 2025 at 04:57 PM

DW

Anne, Eva and family. Condolences to you all. Prayers

Diane Whitson - May 01, 2025 at 05:45 PM

AT

Spring! And the sap just keeps on running!
If you were in one of his classes, you may have been a “victim” of this prank. It still brings a smile and I graduated 47 years ago!

Alan Tisue - May 01, 2025 at 06:37 PM

MA

Mr. Donnelly was an outstanding teacher. He made class fun & interesting. He was a favorite of many students.

Marcia - May 01, 2025 at 08:38 PM

RO

He was amazing. He was the only teacher who saw my potential and my love of reading. I am living so well, after serving my country I am retired and loving life. He inspired me to me! He told me to reach for my dreams, and I did!

robin - May 02, 2025 at 10:26 AM