



## Keith D. O'Dell

September 18, 1938 - March 26, 2026

Keith D. O'Dell, age 87, passed away on Thursday, March 26, 2026, at St. Mary's Hospital in Kankakee, IL. Though he resided in Bourbonnais, Illinois, he remained a lifelong Michigan resident at heart and always considered it home.

Born on September 18, 1938, in Chicago, IL, Keith was the second oldest child of William C. and Loraine A. O'Dell. He was preceded in death by his parents. On December 18, 1965, he married Patricia L. "Pat"(Holdren) O'Dell in Owosso, MI, who survives him.

Keith is also survived by two daughters, Bonnie J. O'Dell of Vienna, Austria, and Diane M. O'Dell of Franklin, TN.; granddaughters, Stella-Louise Scheffer and Celia-Lorraine O'Dell of Seattle, WA; sisters, Donna Hurley (Arizona) , Judy Johns (Owosso, MI) , and Arlene Peplinski (Florida & Michigan); and brothers, David O'Dell (Garden, MI) and Jack O'Dell (Williamston, MI).

Keith began his work life early with chores on the family farm and summer jobs at the local IGA store in Cass City. After earning degrees in mathematics, he went on to teach a total of 22 years at various schools and colleges including Owosso College, Teso College Aloet in Soroti, Uganda in East Africa, and eventually at Olivet Nazarene University.

At times he was also able to satisfy his interest in engineering by drafting for his father's construction company, contributing his math skills to part of the construction of US127, and teaching himself computer programming, which he put to use as a consultant programmer. Ultimately, he returned to Olivet

Nazarene University as the telecommunications manager in the IT department in 1995. While in this position—several years before cell phones—he introduced personal phone numbers for students to keep during their entire stay at ONU. Before retiring in 2008, he also enjoyed running cables and managing comm logistics for the Chicago Bears when they held summer practices on the campus.

A member of the College Church of the Nazarene in Bourbonnais, Keith was a man of many interests. A Detroit Tigers baseball fan from the age of 11, he filled each summer with the broadcasts of their games. He enjoyed woodworking but later traded using a jig saw for assembling jigsaw puzzles. He loved swimming regularly, even though he only knew how to dog paddle and hold his breath under water a very long time. Keith played chess and, in recent years, euchre and canasta. He had a knack for cards, but an even greater talent for mischief; half the fun was wondering what he was up to, and laughter was never an option.

A lifelong reader, Keith had been involved in the construction of a new library in Caro, MI, before moving to Bourbonnais, IL, which, in 1981, had no public library. Without hesitation, he joined a group of volunteers to establish and build the Bourbonnais Public Library and served several years on the board as treasurer. His name remains recorded on plaques at the entrance to the library.

Visitation will be held from 10 a.m. until the time of the 12 p.m. funeral service on Monday, April 6, 2026 at Clancy-Gernon Funeral Home in Bourbonnais. A luncheon will follow at 1:00 p.m. at College Church of the Nazarene, Bourbonnais.

Keith will be laid to rest at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at Novesta Township Cemetery in Cass City, MI, just down the road from the old family farm. There will be a graveside service followed by a luncheon.

Memorials may be made to Family Wishes.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 6. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Bourbonnais - Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes, Inc.  
295 Main St., NW  
Bourbonnais, IL 60914  
(815) 932-1214  
cgfuneral@gmail.com

## Funeral Service

APR 6. 12:00 PM (CT)

Bourbonnais - Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes, Inc.  
295 Main St., NW  
Bourbonnais, IL 60914  
(815) 932-1214  
cgfuneral@gmail.com

## Graveside Service

APR 8. 2:00 PM (ET)

Novesta Township Cemetery  
2895 North Cemetery Road  
Cass City, MI 48726

# Tribute Wall

RF

“ I hadn't had contact with Keith since graduating from high school 71 years ago. I left Cass City after that. Keith and I and Dave Guzman were the trombone players in the Cass City High School band and my closest friends in High School. I was pleasantly surprised to get a message from Keith a couple months ago on the Classmates website. I left him a message to contact me by my e-mail address but never heard back. So today I Googled him and was shocked to read his obituary. My sincere condolences to the family. He was a wonderful person. I wish I was half the man he was.

*Robert Freeman - April 21*

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**Robert Freeman** - April 22 at 04:11 PM

MH

“ I'm going to miss having Keith visit the library, he was always kind and friendly to the staff.

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**Matthew Hamann** - April 06 at 09:55 PM

PR

“ My deepest condolences to the O'Dell family.  
*Parinaz Momeni*

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**Parinaz Momeni Rouchi** - April 02 at 11:03 AM

SS

“ A few years ago Keith and I and my wife all traveled to the upper peninsula of Michigan and stayed with his brother. We played golf, had maple syrup, and fought the most aggressive mosquitoes I had ever encountered. My wife played with the children, rode bikes and swallowed one of those mosquitoes. That'll fix them. Keith and I taught at Olivet together.

Steve Sherrill - April 02 at 09:23 AM

MT

“ Hugs and prayers are with the O'Dell family. May God's loving arms hold you tight, may He wipe your tears and replace them with smiles because of fond memories of a wonderful man.  
John and Mary Thomson



Mary Thomson - April 01 at 03:39 PM

MM

“ Michael Mitchell lit a candle in memory of Keith D. O'Dell



Michael Mitchell - March 31 at 11:25 PM

MM

Keith will be missed by all of his Bourbonnais Township Park District Senior Card players. We will remember Keith as a friendly spirit and warm hearted person who loved a good game of euchre and canasta. He always had a grin on his face and kind words for everyone.

Michael Mitchell - March 31 at 11:30 PM