



## Kenneth Vianello

March 7, 1940 - June 17, 2016

Celebration of Kenneth John Vianello 1940 - 2016 Ken Vianello of Ocala, Florida, passed away peacefully at his home the morning of June 17, 2016, surrounded by his wife and two children, at the age of 76. He touched and guided countless lives. Behind each life is a memorable story, relationship, good time, friendship, accomplishment, filled with respect, admiration, and love. He was a loving husband, father and grandfather, a career educator, and a role model for all. Born on March 7, 1940, in Chicago, Illinois, Ken grew up on the south side of Chicago surrounded by a large family and lively family gatherings. His father John Vianello worked in the steel mills and his mother Lorraine Vianello was the homemaker. Growing up there wasn't much money for the household, but there was always an abundance of love which he often credited for his success in life. He graduated from Fenger High School in 1958 and it was there he met the love of his life Diana Dietrich, whom he would marry on December 29, 1962. They remained happily together for 53 years. Ken excelled at football resulting in a scholarship to Western Michigan University. He modeled, appearing on billboards in downtown Chicago and on the back cover of Sports Illustrated. In 1972 he moved his immediate family to Ocala, Florida. Much of his extended family soon followed. As in Chicago, everyone lived on the same street or just a few blocks away. To this day, his house is a mere three houses down from his sister Carol's residence. He dedicated his life's work to education where he guided, advised, and prepared others for their life's work. He loved giving advice, and those receiving it were

always better off. Throughout his career he served as the principal of Harvard St. George in Chicago, Ft. King Middle, Forest High School, Vanguard High School, and West Port High School. Frequently throughout his retirement, Ken spoke fondly of his 18 years with his Vanguard family. Over his 35-year career, he hired hundreds of teachers, graduated tens of thousands of students, and mentored three Superintendents. His impact on the community and the lives he touched is immeasurable. He is survived by his wife Diana, and two children, Sheri Fanelli, a staffing specialist for Seminole County Public Schools, and Mark Vianello, an administrator for Marion County Public Schools. His daughter Sheri is married to Scott Fanelli for 23 years and they have two children, Mitchell, a senior at Lake Brantley High School and Kathryn, a sophomore at Lake Brantley High School. His son Mark is married to Shannon Rowell Vianello for 23 years and they have three children, John who attends the University of Florida, Nicole a senior at Forest High School, and Christine, a sophomore at Forest High School. Ken has three siblings, Carol Bard, a retired principal and long term educator, and her husband Roger; Robert Vianello, a professor at California State University at Los Angeles; David Vianello, a retired executive for ABC and his partner Walter Meyer. Also an aunt, Louise Rodd, who recently moved to Florida, two nephews, Thomas Bard and his wife Michelle who have daughters Kyra and Lauren, and Jason Bard and his wife Karla. His cousins, Diana Vianello Thornhill and Barbara Vianello Pettit still reside in Chicago. Ken's leisure included spending time at his weekend oasis, a second home on the St. John's River. Upon his retirement in 2004, his attention turned to traveling the world with his wife and long-time childhood friends Jeanne and Larry Quinlivan. Their destinations included Alaska, the South Pacific, and countries throughout Europe. His favorite destination was Rome, Italy, which he visited twice. He took his family on vacations as well including multiple trips to Disney World, Caribbean cruises, and most recently a beach-house in St. Augustine. We marvel how a child from the south side of Chicago grew up to experience so much. The reason, of course, comes from his strong foundation of family

and love. The great man will be missed, but not forgotten. Do not weep that he is gone, celebrate that he was here. His celebration service will be held on Friday, June 24, beginning at 2:00 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, in the Family Life Center, located at 1126 E. Silver Springs Blvd, in Ocala. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Public Education Foundation of Marion County located at the Thelma Parker Center, 1239 NW 4th Street, Ocala, Florida 34475. Please visit the website at [www.robertsfuneralhomes.com](http://www.robertsfuneralhomes.com) to leave in loving memory messages.

# Tribute Wall

CM

“ Sincere sympathy to Ken's family. He is remembered as a true educator, a loving husband, father and grandfather. Celine Mack, Retired Educator, Marion County Public Schools

Celine Mack - June 24, 2016 at 12:00 AM

HM

“ Now that Mr. V. Has come to the end of his journey here on earth, remember all the smiles, & good times that were had. May God bless & keep everyone!

Hugh & Leila Mathews - June 24, 2016 at 12:00 AM

FS

“ I will always have fond memories of my friend and colleague Ken Vianello. 33 years of marital bliss, what a blessing. Joan and I love you Dianna and are always here for you. Fred and Joan Smiley.

Fred J. Smiley - June 23, 2016 at 12:00 AM

DF

“ I remember my years at Vanguard High School when he was the principal. He was very exuberant and fair. I will miss him and will always be grateful that I had the opportunity to have known him.

Dianese Frye - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

BP

“ Ken was a positive influence where ever he went. Now Heaven has him to help brighten the sky

Brenda Petkanics - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

DH

“ I will never forget that autumn years ago when I came up from Orlando to meet this charming giant. He hired me to teach English at Vanguard High School. Thus I began some of the happiest years of my career. Not before, nor since have I taught under such fine leadership. He was a true gift to his profession, and I consider myself fortunate to have been under his tutelage.

---

**Dee Hampton** - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ I am truly so sad to see this today...Mr. Vianello was an absolutely wonderful man with a huge heart and an infectious sense of humor. I had the honor to be hired by him at West Port and work with him for 3 years as a teacher and Athletic Director. He saw something in me others did not and is definitely a driving force and influence behind where I am today as an administrator. He was and always will be a one of my role models, especially for how he created relationships with his staff and knew all his students. Everyone loved Mr. V and as I have always said to anyone who has ever heard me talk about him...his teachers would run through a wall for him! RIP Mr. V... I'll never forget all those morning chats in the courtyard 😭🙏🥹. You are a special man...and will be missed.

---

**Jennifer Cotton** - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JT

“ I have very fond memories of Mr. V. He was the sponsor of Key Club when I went to Vanguard. Kurt Kelly was the president of the club in my senior year and Mr. V. was very active with our club. He had a dry sense of humor and often used it at our expense. He became principal after I graduated and worked for many years with my aunt, Anita Gallagher who was his secretary. I send you my deepest sympathies but also my joy for having known him. Jim Towry

---

**Jim Towry** - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ *Mr. V was my favorite principal. I certainly wish all principals could follow his example of great leadership. Tears fill my eyes as I write this message. My condolences and prayers go out to his family.*

---

**Sue Moran-Rela** - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

BA

“ *Many years have lapsed since the autumn of 1962 when I shared a WMU dorm room with you and Barry. I recall your friendly outgoing way which made you welcome by all, and also the ox tail soup at your wedding, a new eating experience for me. Life for you was good it seems, as it should be - your attitude toward it would have allowed no other way. Essere in pace per l'eternità.*

---

**Bruce Anderson** - June 19, 2016 at 12:00 AM

TG

“ *Dear David and Family, My love to you all at this difficult time of Ken's passing. You all are truly blessed to have shared so much with him. I hope the happy memories of his wonderful life will bring you comfort and joy always. Much love and sincere condolences from my family to yours, Tracy Gamble*

---

**Tracy Gamble** - June 19, 2016 at 12:00 AM

DP

“ *Wonderful role model at Vanguard High School - prayers and thoughts go out to his family.*

---

**Debra S Holly Poole** - June 18, 2016 at 12:00 AM