



Ross W. Fichtner

October 26, 1938 - October 14, 2022

Fichtner, Ross, October 14, 2022, after a several year struggle with Parkinson's disease, age 83 of Plymouth. Loving husband of 49 years to Karen Fichtner.

Affectionate father of Randy (Jennifer), Tami (Steve) Resch, Tonya (John) Laderer, Rustin (Julie), and Daniel (Katie). He was a tender "PapPap" to his 12 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

Dear brother of Roberta and the late Judi.

Ross played quarterback at Purdue and defensive back for the Cleveland Browns during their "glory years" when they won the 1964 World Championship.

He coached for the Green Bay Packers, the Chicago Bears and the Minnesota Vikings.

He also worked for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. And he worked with Athletes in Action leading coaches' conferences about coaching to character qualities in their athletes. The family moved to Spain for 1 ½ years while he held those conferences for coaches in Spain, France and Poland.

Ross had an enormous trove of jokes and stories. He treasured the frequent large family gatherings.

Every morning for decades he could be found in his easy chair reading a chapter from the

Book of Proverbs in his well-worn Bible.

He was an avid sportsman, enjoying golf, fishing and hunting. Ross developed

Parkinson's disease and dementia from the concussions he had while playing football. But even when he couldn't walk without assistance his son Dan was able to get him settled into a deer blind, and that day Ross bagged his last deer.

When Ross's care became more difficult Dan shared in it by taking Ross home with him for several days a week. For the last 18 months of his life he resided in StoryPoint's memory loss unit under their excellent care along with CorsoCare Hospice.

Ross will be remembered for his blue eyes, his easygoing nature and his love for family.

Memorial service to be held at a later date. Memorial contributions may be made to Athletes in Action via athletesinaction.org. To share a message, please use the share a memory tab on this webpage.

Tribute Wall



“ *Ross W. Fichtner*

December 07, 2023 at 05:11 AM



“ *Dear Karen and family, I remember some wonderful days working with Ross for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in McKeesport. He had such a sweet fun spirit, a love for his family and a great love for His Lord. I am so sorry for your loss.*

Laurie Dubyak Bezeck

laurie dubyak bezeck - February 09, 2023 at 10:43 PM



“ *Dear Karen, Daniel & Katie, Pops is resting and celebrating with the Buen Pastor. Most probably asking Him when is it time to go golfing, challenging Him to crossword puzzles or waiting to be served rosada frita con ensalada mixta and a glass of red wine.*

We miss but at the same time conforta and illuminates our challenges forward Ross' mischivious smile and stubborn strength, commitment and endurance. His love for teaching and coaching everything he'd learnt from Jesus has always blessed and humbled me.

We look forward to reunion with Him one day not too far. Meanwhile we hope you live fully and joyfully as Ross would always desired.

Os queremos mucho ❤️🙏🔥💪

Ruben Morales - November 13, 2022 at 03:10 AM

MG

“ Ross and my husband Len Wilson played at Purdue for 4 years and were very good friends. Unfortunately Len passed away at the young age of 28. When Ross was coaching in Chicago for the Bears we reconnected. He invited us to a Bears game and took my son David into the locker room to meet some of the players including Walter Payton. David never forgot that. Then after we moved to Los Angeles area, and he was coaching for the Green Bay Packers he also met us afterwards at a game against the Bears I think. It saddens me to think what football did to him physically and how much he loved the game. Maybe he and Len are up In heaven talking football.

My sympathies to Karen and all the children and grandchildren. You are lucky to have him for so many years. Today would have been Len's 84th birthday.

Mary M Goodenough - November 07, 2022 at 04:35 PM

BP

“ Ross was a loyal Cleveland Brown team mate of mine and it was a joy working with him with FCA activities. He was a wonderful friend, a devoted Christian with great character and a deep sense of compassion..

My heart is with Karen and family. He is at peace now with Our Lord and Ross's memory truly will be eternal.

Bill Priatko

North Huntingdon, PA...

Bill Priatko - October 31, 2022 at 05:16 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Ross W. Fichtner.*



October 25, 2022 at 09:26 PM



“ *I was blessed to have Ross as a coach my first year in the NFL. He treated me so well and we had the common bond of being from Western Pa. Stories sitting in the driveway in Lake Forest, bible study camping trips, and rafting Ohiopyle hold special memories for me. He lived life with such enthusiasm and with a strong faith. He had a big influence in my life..... much love and condolences to Karen and the family! Doug Plank*

doug plank - October 21, 2022 at 05:08 PM



“ *Such a great, loving man, who I am so blessed to have known! Coach, you are soooo missed! ❤️*



Chelsey - October 20, 2022 at 07:57 PM

MA

“ Dear Karen and Daniel. Our thoughts and prayers are for you. We were very close neighbors for your time in Spain. Ross loved his time there. Not only did we share a common wall in our homes but we shared driving our children to and from school (Daniel may prefer to forget that), many delicious meals and Ross' favorite, a nice glass of red wine on the patio. As eerily serendipitous that one in a million meeting was, we enjoyed some wonderful times with you all. Scott and Ross could hash out the USA sport world (instead of studying Spanish!), which neither could have done without the other in Europe. We have the most beautiful memories of our times with you all, both in Spain and Michigan and will never forget Uncle Ross and his special smile. Mary, Scott and Sarah.

Mary - October 20, 2022 at 06:09 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Ross W. Fichtner.



October 19, 2022 at 10:13 PM

ZB

“ Karen and Family,

I first met Ross in 1998 when he came to Poland. Thus began our acquaintance and friendship over the following years. Ross had the opportunity to teach on character, to coaches of the Polish Olympic and Paralympic teams, in many sports clubs, as well as to players and university students. The last time Ross visited our country we were also in prison and met with prisoners with long sentences or life sentences. That is, for serious offenses. The meeting started in a rather dark atmosphere after which, the good God used Ross and poured a lot of hope into those hard hearts of the convicts. When they left the room after the meeting, they came to hug each other and there was a smile on their faces!

Ross, see you in God's courtyard! Thanks for our adventures together, thanks for your and Karen's open hearts and your home, where you hosted me, my family and my friends.

Pictured is your recent stay in Poland, in Krakow, Poland, where you bought Christmas tree ornaments in the shape of an American football ball!

*Zbyszek & Kasia Masewicz
Warsaw, Poland*



Zbyszek - October 19, 2022 at 09:16 AM

RG

“ Dear Karen and family, firstly our heart and prayers are with you! As the former AIA Director I remember Ross willing to serve and share his faith anywhere! In our Lord's care and love, Ross Georgiou and the former AIA Europe Team

Ross Georgiou - October 19, 2022 at 06:07 AM

 Bob Givens

“ 1 file added to the album Tribute Wall



Bob Givens - October 18, 2022 at 11:00 PM

SB

“ Dear Karen and Family,
My most poignant memories of Ross came from when I was a little girl, and “Aunt Mary”, my grandfather's sister and Ross' beloved mother (always elegantly dressed in a shade of purple), would tell us all about Ross' life and fame as a young person and rising star. Even though I was 15 years younger, if Ross was present at a relatives' get together, he was always smiling and even took the time to say hello to me.

Much later in life after his much older cousin, my uncle, passed away, I got to meet with him again on occasion. He was still that kind person I remembered. And, he was intelligent and thoughtful. I'm certain you had a wonderful life with Ross. May you always enjoy all of those years and special moments that you shared.
Thank you.

Sincerely, Susan Burkman

Susan Burkman - October 18, 2022 at 10:01 PM

DM

“ We always had good memories with Karen and Ross especially when we visited them in Spain, and when Ross would come and visit us in Florida. We will miss him tremendously. Glad he is with his savior and no more suffering. Debbie and George Muneio

Deborah Muneio - October 18, 2022 at 09:54 PM

JC

“ Dear Karen and Daniel - We have good memories of evenings with our Newcomers Games group, when Ross loved to tell stories of his football days. You are in our prayers. Janet and Brian

Janet Carson - October 17, 2022 at 10:15 PM