

Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller

April 30, 1938 - September 11, 2025

Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller, of Centreville, Maryland, passed away peacefully on September 11th, 2025, at his home. He was 87 years old.

Born on April 30, 1938, in Centreville, Donnie was the son of the late Joseph P. Miller and Catherine Middleton Miller. A 1956 graduate of Centreville High School, he was a proud member of the basketball team that won the state championship during his senior year. He went on to graduate from Washington College, where he was an active member of the Kappa Alpha fraternity.

In January of 1960, Donnie married the love of his life, June Laird. Together, they built a marriage rooted in devotion, laughter, and faith. One of Donnie's favorite joys was sitting down to June's wonderful home cooking, which he loved as much as he loved her. A lifelong member of Centreville Methodist Church, Donnie lived his faith through service, kindness, and a deep love of family.

Donnie lived a life of service to his community. For more than 30 years, he taught in Kent County schools, shaping the lives of countless students. For a decade, he also worked as a lifeguard at Conquest Beach in Centreville, where many young swimmers felt safer under his watch. In sports, he became a fixture across the Eastern Shore as a respected basketball referee and

baseball umpire, serving through the International Association of Approved Basketball Officials. His dedication earned him induction into both the Queen Anne's County High School Sports Hall of Fame and the Eastern Shore Baseball Hall of Fame.

A man of many talents, Donnie ran his own woodworking business, Country Checkers, creating custom checkerboards admired for their craftsmanship. He was also known as the town's go-to handyman—always willing to lend a helping hand to friends, neighbors, and family. Many remember his loyal companion, Tucker, his big white German Shepherd, who loved riding alongside Donnie in his work van.

At home, Donnie was happiest tending to his yard, pool, and pets—or cheering for his Ravens and Orioles. But above all, he adored his family. When his great niece, Madison Green, needed him most, he lovingly took her in and raised her as his own. Later, he found immense joy in every moment with his great-great nephew, Sheppard Forrest. To his family, Donnie was more than an uncle—he was a father figure, a mentor, and a source of unwavering love.

Donnie is survived by his devoted wife of 65 years, June Laird Miller; his sister, Judy Miles (Jack); his brother-in-law, Jack Laird (Robin); his nieces, Jennifer Laird (Richie), Kaye Einbrod (Kip), Andrea Harrison (Scott), Dawn, Suzanne, and Suellen; his great niece, Madison Green (Nicholas); and his great-great nephew, Sheppard Forrest. He also leaves behind many beloved cousins, extended family, and dear friends. He was predeceased by his parents; his brother, Benjamin; and his infant son, William.

A memorial gathering will be held on Friday, September 19 from 2:00 - 4:00 pm at Fellows, Helfenbein, and Newnam Funeral Home in Centreville.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the Talbot Humane Society at 7894 Ocean Gateway P.O. Box 1143, Easton, MD 21601.

Cemetery Details

Chesterfield Cemetery

406 South Liberty Street
Centreville, MD

Previous Events

Visitation

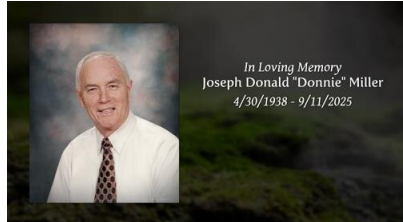
SEP **19**. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home, P.A.
408 S. Liberty Street
Centreville, MD 21617

Tribute Wall



“ *Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - October 09, 2025 at 10:10 AM

AN

“ *Mr. Miller was one of my favorite teachers in middle school. To his wife and family I am so sorry for your loss. I hope it brings some comfort to know he made a difference in hundreds of kids' lives during his career. His home and yard in Centreville were always immaculate! Truly one of the best men and role models ever. I'm glad he was my teacher during those middle school years.*

Amy Nickerson - September 27, 2025 at 11:44 AM

CL

“ *So sorry for your loss. I had Mr. Miller as a teacher in Chestertown Middle School. Such a kind and gentle man who I am sure will be missed.*



Cathy Atwell Legg - September 19, 2025 at 06:27 PM

HB

“ So very sorry to hear of Mr. Miller's passing. My dear mother relied on him for so many handyman projects when she moved to Centreville. He did a lot of painting for me also. I'll always remember him as a kind, honest and friendly gentleman.

Helen Benchoff - September 19, 2025 at 03:56 PM



“ June, thinking of you and your family. May good memories and your faith sustain you through this difficult time.
Jeanne Hechmer

Jeanne Hechmer - September 19, 2025 at 08:46 AM

MK

“ Mark And Lisa King lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Mark and Lisa King - September 18, 2025 at 06:59 PM

FB

“ I will certainly miss the dinners I had with Don and June when I got back to MD. I stayed in touch by phone. Donnie was my fraternity brother and roommate at Washington College . i was also the best man at his and June's wedding. It is with great sorrow that I say goodbye to a great guy. June, you were the light of his life. May the Lord be your constant comfort in the days ahead.

Fred Boutchyard - September 18, 2025 at 02:44 PM

GM

“ For as long as I can remember, "Donnie Miller" was a well-known name in the Detweiler household. He and my father, Ducky, were longtime friends. For countless years, they both officiated and umpired baseball and basketball games throughout the Eastern Shore. Donnie will be missed by all who knew him!



Gina Detweiler McConnell - September 18, 2025 at 02:30 PM

DS

“ Our sympathy to June and family. Many good memories of Donnie thru High School and the years of referring at so many basketball games. If he called a foul - it was a foul!!! May he Rest in peace!!!
David and Judy Sharretts

David Sharretts - September 18, 2025 at 11:10 AM

BA

“ Bayside Basketball Officials Association purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller.



Bayside Basketball Officials Association - September 17, 2025 at 10:17 PM

FC

“ Frank And Tish Palmatary, Centreville sent a virtual gift in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Frank and Tish Palmatary, Centreville - September 17, 2025 at 09:27 PM

TB

“ I always enjoyed “Mr. Miller” as a teacher. After graduating HS, I went to Salisbury State College. As a freshman, getting acclimated to living away from home and trying to slip into adulthood, imagine my surprise when I went to my first basketball game at SSC, and seeing Mr. Miller in his ref’s shirt, calling the game. I got to talk with him at half time and briefly after the game. He was interested in my experience as a new college student. It was very centering and grounding to see a familiar adult, for whom I had so much respect, as I was trying to navigate that new college experience.

Todd Brace - September 17, 2025 at 07:13 PM

SM

“ June and family, so very sorry to hear of Donnie's passing and keeping you in my prayers.



Sandra McClary - September 17, 2025 at 07:13 PM

JE

“ Jim And Mary Ann Edwards sent a virtual gift in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Jim and Mary Ann Edwards - September 17, 2025 at 02:44 PM

JE

Donnie was one of the nicest men I ever knew. Always smiling and very personable. I am really saddened by his passing and send my most heartfelt sympathy to his dear wife June and all the family.

Jim and Mary Ann Edwards - September 17, 2025 at 02:53 PM

DC

“ *Devone Comegys lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Devone Comegys - September 17, 2025 at 01:29 PM

JS

“ *Johnny Stubbs lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Johnny Stubbs - September 17, 2025 at 01:11 PM

DS

“ *David And Donell Smith lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



David and Donell Smith - September 17, 2025 at 08:55 AM

PV

“ *Patty Boone VanStavern lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Patty Boone VanStavern - September 17, 2025 at 08:05 AM

CE

“ Charles & Donna Hubbard Edwards sent a virtual gift in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Charles & Donna Hubbard Edwards - September 16, 2025 at 09:14 PM

MG

“ I'll always remember Uncle Donnie either sitting with Aunt June and Sophie on the back porch, intently watching the Ravens play, or asking Madison and I to grab him a McFlurry if we went out. He was a patient man to put up with so many loud sleepovers ❤️

Mary Golden - September 16, 2025 at 07:57 PM

EF

“ Eric Fykes lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Eric Fykes - September 16, 2025 at 07:48 PM

SB

“ Sarah Shakey Brown lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Sarah Shakey Brown - September 16, 2025 at 06:38 PM

SB

“ June, I can't remember being lost for words, but right now my heart is broken and I can't find words to express how I feel. For the moment, I'll say I hope to see you on Friday my dear friend. Blessings and Love. 🙏❤️

Sarah Shakey Brown - September 16, 2025 at 06:36 PM

GG

“ Gay Gunther lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Gay Gunther - September 16, 2025 at 06:15 PM

MB

“ I remember Donnie officiating basketball and umpiring baseball when I was playing at Easton High School. My Dad, Gene Butler, knew Donnie as he was from Centreville also and my Dad told me that Donnie was quite the athlete. When I graduated college, I had the honor of umpiring baseball with Donnie and he was an excellent mentor, who became a lifelong friend. May he Rest In Peace.



Michael Eugene Butler - September 16, 2025 at 05:30 PM

DD

“ Debbie Dean lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Debbie Dean - September 16, 2025 at 05:03 PM

JL

“ John Larrimore lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



John Larrimore - September 16, 2025 at 04:35 PM

NP

“ Norma And Bill Patton lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Norma and Bill Patton - September 16, 2025 at 04:08 PM

JC

“ June Clark lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



June Clark - September 16, 2025 at 03:40 PM

BE

“ Bonnie An Ronnie Edwards lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Bonnie an Ronnie Edwards - September 16, 2025 at 03:07 PM

BN

“ Bobby And Genny Norris sent a virtual gift in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Bobby and Genny Norris - September 16, 2025 at 02:19 PM

BC

“ Donnie stepped out of time into eternity. The first words he heard was well done my good and faithful servant. I remember you guys had just moved to Rock Hall and the first time I saw you I thought what a good looking couple you made . You two were just as beautiful on the inside as the out . We were all Blessed to have known you ! Thank you for making all of us feel so special. God bless you Miss June you guys had a big impact on Barry and I .

Barry and Nancy Conner - September 16, 2025 at 02:13 PM

HS

“ Mr. Miller was one of my all-time favorite teachers! I also spent many hours on a field with him as an umpire. He had a unique ability to be stern but fair, kind but in charge! He was the epitome of a true gentleman! RIP Mr. Miller--gone but never forgotten!

Hank Starkey - September 16, 2025 at 01:26 PM

SR

“ Sandra LeCompte Rust lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Sandra LeCompte Rust - September 16, 2025 at 01:06 PM

PW

“ I will miss seeing Mr and Mrs Miller every Sunday morning at the Centreville Farmers Market. Always joking that it was our weekly outing. A very kind gentle soul. Kent county schools were lucky to have such a wonderful teacher

Pat Gears Whitehill - September 16, 2025 at 12:32 PM

NM

“ Always enjoyed talking to Donnie when he refereed a basketball game or umpired for a baseball game. Prayers and condolences go out to he beloved wife June and sister Judy and their family!



Nancy Morris - September 16, 2025 at 12:01 PM

GP

“ Gene And Lynda Palmatary sent a virtual gift in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Gene and Lynda Palmatary - September 16, 2025 at 11:57 AM

GP

June and family: Donnie sure was an Icon in the Community. He will be missed by many and he left a legacy that will not be forgotten. It was great seeing Donnie at the many local dinners you both supported over the years. He always loved his sweets and looked forward to buying a treat. Hold onto the wonderful memories and it will help make the road a little smoother. Prayers and blessings to all at this time. Not sure I will make the gathering, as I am just getting over Covid. God bless. RIP good friend. Gene and Lynda

Gene and Lynda Palmatary - September 16, 2025 at 12:02 PM

LP

“ Sincere condolences to all the Miller family.



Lisa Plummer - September 16, 2025 at 11:50 AM

JK

“ Jeff & Mary Findley Kidd purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller.



Jeff & Mary Findley Kidd - September 16, 2025 at 11:41 AM



“ Sandy Green lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Sandy Green - September 16, 2025 at 11:13 AM



He was such a nice person. ❤️

Sandy Green - September 16, 2025 at 11:14 AM

CC

“ *My condolences to Mr. Miller's family. As noted, he inspired many students over his decades as an educator. I am fortunate to have been one of them. Mr. Miller always had time for students and would spend time with us after school talking about history and basketball-four decades later these are still two of my favorite subjects.*

To this day, I remember sitting after school waiting for my father to wrap up his day and Mr. Miller coming down the hall to say that President Reagan had been shot. There was something about his demeanor that made a very scary time not so scary to an 11-year old and that shows his character. I also recall his mentoring of student teachers from Washington College and imagine that he inspired many to continue his legacy well beyond him.

May his many blessing to others come back and comfort his loved ones at this time.

Carrie (Kornick) Conko

Carrie Conko - September 16, 2025 at 11:08 AM

BM

“ *Barbara McCreary lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Barbara McCreary - September 16, 2025 at 10:47 AM

EL

“ *Edgar & Nancy Legg lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Edgar & Nancy Legg - September 16, 2025 at 10:26 AM

PW

“ *Patti Kaufman Willis lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Patti Kaufman Willis - September 16, 2025 at 09:28 AM

GS

“ *Greg Starkey lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Greg Starkey - September 16, 2025 at 09:03 AM

CW

“ *Centreville Methodist Women sent a virtual gift in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Centreville Methodist Women - September 16, 2025 at 08:53 AM

SM

“ Shirley Middleton lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Shirley Middleton - September 16, 2025 at 08:41 AM

DP

“ Doug Pierson lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Doug Pierson - September 16, 2025 at 08:39 AM

WC

“ Dear Aunt June. My thoughts and prayers are with you during this sad time. You and Uncle Donnie have been family to me forever. I dearly love you both as did mom. She thought Donnie was the most special man she had ever met. Due to my health I won't be able to attend the service but my heart will be there with you. All my love. Wanda Collier



Wanda Lee Collier - September 16, 2025 at 08:07 AM

KM

“ *To the Family:*

Mr. Miller was a great teacher who I had at Chestertown Middle School. He also referred the church league basketball when there was a league. He will be greatly missed.
Ken Myers, Jr.



Ken Myers - September 16, 2025 at 07:10 AM

PF

“ *Donnie was such a fine man. Had the pleasure of officiating with him for several years. My prayers are with the family.*



Phil Foster - September 16, 2025 at 02:50 AM

BA

“ *So very sorry for your loss. He was one of my teachers in Chestertown High School, and was a great teacher. Thoughts and prayers to his family.*



Barbara Mills Allen - September 15, 2025 at 11:10 PM

PC

“ *Peg Chlada lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Peg Chlada - September 15, 2025 at 09:51 PM

MF

“ *Margie Freeman lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



margie freeman - September 15, 2025 at 09:35 PM

JC

“ *Jane Coppage lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Jane Coppage - September 15, 2025 at 09:29 PM

WH

“ *Wendy Hampton sent a virtual gift in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Wendy Hampton - September 15, 2025 at 08:28 PM

MS

“ *Marie Spray lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Marie Spray - September 15, 2025 at 07:07 PM

MS

He was a wonderful teacher and a great empire or ref always had a smile.

Marie Spray - September 15, 2025 at 07:10 PM

RJ

“ *Ronnie And Rhonda Jewell lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Ronnie and Rhonda Jewell - September 15, 2025 at 06:54 PM

BY

“ *Bill And Jane Young lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Bill and Jane Young - September 15, 2025 at 06:46 PM

DH

“ *Donna Hollett lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Donna Hollett - September 15, 2025 at 05:49 PM

AP

“ *Art Potts lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Art Potts - September 15, 2025 at 05:28 PM

AB

“ *Albert Brooks lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Albert Brooks - September 15, 2025 at 05:15 PM

CF

“ *Connie Fithian lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller*



Connie Fithian - September 15, 2025 at 04:46 PM

CF

Mr. Miller was one of my teachers at Rock Hall High School. Everyone loved both him and his wife while they were living in Rock Hall.

Connie Fithian - September 15, 2025 at 04:54 PM

DH

“ Denny And Judy Hickman lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Denny and Judy Hickman - September 15, 2025 at 04:45 PM

DS

“ Debbie Scott lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Debbie Scott - September 15, 2025 at 04:39 PM

DS

June,
I'm so very sorry to hear of Donnie's passing. He was such a kind, faithful man. He was always so generous in sharing his talents with those around him. It was such a blessing to sit and talk with him for a few minutes a couple weeks ago. He will be greatly missed by everyone. You are in my thoughts and prayers.

Debbie Scott - September 15, 2025 at 04:42 PM

RM

“ Robin McKinney lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald "Donnie" Miller



Robin McKinney - September 15, 2025 at 04:18 PM

TE

June and family. Sorry to hear of the passing of Donnie. Donnie , umpired with the Eastern Shore Umpire Association toward the end of his 55 years of officiating national federation high school Baseball (NFHS) and the MPSSAA. Because of his lengthy service, His professionalism and dedication to the sport. The ESUA nominated Donnie to the Eastern Shore Baseball Hall fame located at Purdue Stadium. It was an honor to get him inducted. Rest in Peace Mr. Miller

Thomas Hall ESUA - October 08, 2025 at 11:56 PM