



Dean Alan Wilpula

March 30, 1949 - September 1, 2025

Dean A. "Duck" Wilpula, born March 30, 1949, of Ashtabula, Ohio, passed away peacefully on September 1, 2025, surrounded by his loving family. He was 76 years old.

Dean was a loving father, grandfather, father-in-law, and friend. He was known for speaking his mind and for his dry, simple humor, often teasing just enough to earn a smile. To his family and close friends, he was simply "Duck," a nickname given to him by his grandson Eliot during early childhood, and one that stayed with him for life.

Dean was a proud Teamster and spent many years driving a truck, but his greatest joy came from being a grandfather. Later in life, he moved to Pittsburgh to be closer to his grandsons, a decision that became one of the most meaningful chapters of his life.

He was endlessly proud of Eliot's strength and resilience, and he cherished the time they spent together watching Westerns and going out for breakfast at their favorite "greasy spoon" diners. Eliot especially loved that "Duck" always made time to take him out to eat, just the two of them. He was equally devoted to supporting Holden's love of hockey. From early morning practices to weekend tournaments, "Duck" was always there. He encouraged Holden, cheered him on, and did everything he could to help him succeed. Anyone

who knew Dean, knew that rink-side was where he was happiest.

He was a proud father to Jennifer Wilpula and Ryan Wilpula, and he felt fortunate to have Melissa Pearlman as his daughter-in-law. Dean was a devoted grandfather to Eliot and Holden, who were the greatest joy in his life.

Dean was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Mary Anne; his parents, Wilbert and Jane; his brother, Dale; and his sisters, Karen and Kathie.

Dean's ashes will be laid to rest next to his beloved wife, Mary Anne, on September 19 in a private ceremony for immediate family.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in Dean Wilpula's memory to the Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Program at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. Donations can be made online at www.givetochildrens.org, by calling (412) 692-3900, or by mailing a check payable to UPMC Children's Hospital Foundation at 4401 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15224. Please include a note indicating the gift is in memory of Dean Wilpula and designated for Pediatric Hematology/Oncology.

Professional services entrusted to D'Alessandro Funeral Home & Crematory Ltd.

Tribute Wall

LD

“ We always knew Dean as “butch” and spent lots of time together in Ashtabula Ohio in our younger days when our family would visit from Illinois. I can remember many fun adventures with butch especially when he raced motorcycles. He always had a smile and funny story to tell and was a great cousin. Larry Donoval

Larry Donoval - September 19, 2025 at 10:35 AM

RW

Hi Larry,

Thanks for remembering Dad! He never forgot his Illinois roots!

Ryan Wilpula - October 07, 2025 at 07:18 PM

GM

“ Duck and I became good friends through the love of watching "our kids" play hockey. My son Caden, and his grandson Holden played on the same hockey teams throughout the amateur ranks and also middle/high-school hockey. We would always save a seat for each other and even to the point Duck would call me and let me know exactly where he was sitting. I will never forget the simple gesture of Duck buying me a large Pepsi to drink during the game. It was never about the money, it was about the thought of a good friend. I'm gonna miss Duck. You took the place of my dad I lost years before. Go rest high on that mountain my FRIEND!!

Greg Martin - September 04, 2025 at 08:32 AM

RW

Thanks for the kind words Greg and keeping in touch with him. He loved to talk with you and your brothers about hockey and everything else going on!

Ryan

Ryan Wilpula - September 04, 2025 at 02:27 PM