



Ronald A. Ellett

November 20, 1942 - February 20, 2026

Ronald A. Ellett, 83, of Marengo , passed away peacefully at home on February 20, 2026, following a courageous 16-year battle with Parkinson's disease.

Ron was born on November 20, 1942, in Logansport, Indiana to Homer Archibald Ellett and Francis Elizabeth (Guthrie) Ellett. He graduated from Jamaica High School in Sidell, Illinois, where he distinguished himself as a star athlete. He continued his education and football career at Eastern Illinois University, earning a degree in business and physical education.

In the fall of 1963, Ron began his lifelong impact on young athletes when he was hired as a teacher and coach at Hampshire High School in Hampshire, Illinois. There, he established the school's football program and built it into a powerhouse. Over 21 seasons, he compiled an impressive 124–68 record, highlighted by state championships in 1976 and 1979 and a state runner-up finish in 1978. As a coach, Ron emphasized hard work, toughness, and determination—values that shaped the lives of countless players. He later coached Elgin High School to the 1984 quarterfinals and served as head coach at North Park College the following year. In addition to football, he led Hampshire's baseball teams to numerous conference championships.

In his forties, Ron began a second successful career as a builder and contractor. Over the next 20 years, he constructed many homes throughout the Hampshire area, leaving a lasting mark on the community he loved.

In his free time, Ron enjoyed golfing—celebrating five holes-in-one over the

years—and was a devoted fan of the Chicago Cubs. Nothing brought him more joy than watching his children and grandchildren participate in their many activities. He and his beloved wife, Karen (Holze) Ellett, shared 39 wonderful years of marriage and cherished their snowbird lifestyle, spending more than three decades between Marengo, Illinois, and Phoenix, Arizona. Ron is survived by his loving wife, Karen (Holze) Ellett, with whom he shared a life filled with devotion and cherished memories. He leaves behind his children, Ronald J. (Rayme) Ellett, Douglas R. (Sue) Ellett, Amy M. (Ken) Johnson, and Matthew L. (Jennifer) Ellett, and his stepchildren, Gregg (LeAnn) Dunlap and Kirstin Dolan-Susick, all of whom were a constant source of pride and joy in his life.

He was a proud and devoted grandfather to 13 grandchildren: Ronald, Lucas, Meghan, Duncan, Ellianna, Jace, Matthew, Madison, and Casey Ellett; Taylor (Kyle) Loftus; Connie (Connor) Nelson; Michael Seyller; Payton Johnson; and 2 step-grandchildren Miranda and Lauren Susick. Nothing brought him greater happiness than time spent with them and his three precious great-grandchildren, Edie & Josie Nelson and Bennett Loftus.

Ron is also lovingly remembered by his sister, Dixie Todd; his brother, Terry (Linda) Ellett; and his brother-in-law, Lee Fischer. He was preceded in death by his parents and his sisters, Mary Culp and Bette Fischer. Though he will be deeply missed, his love, guidance, and steady presence will live on in the hearts of all who knew him.

Visitation will be held on March 13 from 4:00–7:00 p.m. and again on March 14th at 9 am with funeral services on March 14 at 10:00 a.m. at Zion United Methodist Church, 157 W. Jefferson Avenue, Hampshire. The family invites attendees to wear purple in honor of Ron's favorite color. The service will be live-streamed and can be watched live starting about 9:45 am by clicking on photos and videos then play the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Michael J. Fox

Foundation for Parkinson's Research at give.michaeljfox.org. A graveside burial will follow.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 13. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Zion United Methodist Church
157 W. Jefferson Ave.
Hampshire, IL 60140

Visitation

MAR 14. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Zion United Methodist Church
157 W. Jefferson Ave.
Hampshire, IL 60140

Funeral Service

MAR 14. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Zion United Methodist Church
157 W. Jefferson Ave.
Hampshire, IL 60140

Graveside Service

MAR 14. 11:15 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

Hampshire Center Cemetery
17N002 Harmony Rd
Hampshire, IL 60140

Tribute Wall



“ *Fredrick Funeral Home created a Ron Ellett Service in memory of Ronald A. Ellett*



Fredrick Funeral Home - March 10 at 02:00 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Ronald A. Ellett.*



March 12 at 01:08 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Ronald A. Ellett.*

March 12 at 01:08 PM



“ *Dixie, Mike & Mattie purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Ronald A. Ellett.*



Dixie, Mike & Mattie - March 12 at 10:55 AM

AJ

“ Dad,

Over the past year, our relationship changed in a way I never expected. As I helped oversee your care and finances, we spent more time together than we had in a long time. What started as responsibility became something much more meaningful to me. Those months gave us time to talk, to understand each other more, and to grow closer in a way I'll always be grateful for. Being there for you was never a burden—it was an honor. I'm thankful I could help, support you, and make sure you were cared for. Those moments, even the difficult ones, meant everything to me because they gave us time together that I'll carry with me for the rest of my life.

I learned a lot from you during that time—about strength, patience, and what it means to keep going even when things are hard. I hope you knew that I was there not just because I had to be, but because I wanted to be. You're my dad, and being there for you mattered deeply to me.

I'll always be grateful for the closeness we found in that last year. It meant more than I can ever fully express. I'll carry those conversations, those quiet moments, and the bond we rebuilt with me forever.

I miss you, Dad. I hope you're at peace. Thank you for the time we had and for the chance to be there for you when it mattered most. Love you! See you in heaven, Amy

Amy johnson - March 12 at 12:40 AM

RM

“ Rory Maynard:

My memories with Coach Ellett and the family span many years. From being in elementary school, middle school, and even Sunday School with Ron Jr. and Doug. We participated in MANY activities from chorus, school plays, Little League Baseball (Geyer’s team vs Ellett’s team), and basketball—all before football began for us in high school. Coach Ellett put together an ad-hoc basketball game when we were in the 5th grade to play against a team from Glen Ellyn coached by a college friend of Coach Ellett. We had a 2-game competition—one in Hampshire and one in Glen Ellyn (we won both games). Coach Ellett instilled in us a competitive spirit from an early age. In 7th grade basketball—he coached us again—adding many tournaments to the schedule—where we finished the season with 31 wins and 0 losses. 2 years later—the 1976 Hampshire football team set the standard for excellence winning the state championship with Ron Jr and a few others suiting up and playing some on that championship run. 2 years after that season, Coach Ellett challenged our team in 1978 to continue the trend of championship football—but we fell a little short, losing in the State Championship game.. With Coach Ellett’s grit—he guaranteed that, after that loss—we would be back to win the following year. With focused determination and the school and town behind us, we accomplished that goal in 1979. The drive and determination of Coach Ellett, by starting the high school football program, caring about the players and the team, drove a “can do” attitude. This “can do” attitude was instilled in players that went before us—and all he coached after us. Although I did not play high school baseball, he expected the same from those teams also. Those experiences from an early age have carried into our lives today. The small school and small town atmosphere of that era are things movies are made of. I often say “Life is a Team Sport,” and the team attitude has helped my family and me to this day. Coach Ellett and Team Ellett—thank you for the life experiences and the memories

- Rory Maynard

1978 State Runner-up Football Team
1979 State Championship Football Team

Rory Maynard - March 11 at 12:49 PM

ME

“ Rest in peace, Dad.

A Hall of Fame coach, father, and grandfather who impacted so many lives. Your influence on my life — and on the lives of my children — has been immeasurable. You showed us the value of hard work and sacrifice, and you planted seeds of faith that became the foundation of our family.

You rarely missed one of my kids' games. And if you couldn't be there, you'd call me again and again for updates. That was you — always present, always invested, always caring.

From humble beginnings, you started and built the Hampshire High School football program into a perennial powerhouse, but your greatest legacy was never just wins and championships. It was the lives you shaped, the character you built, and the example you set.

You always told us, “Anything that the mind can perceive, the body can achieve.” You didn't just say it — you lived it. You taught your players, your children, and your grandchildren to believe, to work, to push through adversity, and to trust that with faith and effort, great things are possible.

Because of you, we know what it means to work hard, to love deeply, and to trust God in all seasons. The faith you modeled for us continues to guide our family today.

While our hearts ache, we take comfort in knowing you are at peace in the presence of the Lord. Until we see you again, we will carry your lessons, your love, and your faith forward.

I couldn't be prouder to be your son. We love you always.

matt ellett - March 11 at 11:41 AM

MF

“ *Madigan Family purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Ronald A. Ellett.*



Madigan Family - March 08 at 12:27 PM

MF

“ *Madigan Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ronald A. Ellett.*

Madigan Family - March 08 at 12:27 PM

KG

“ Karen and family, I am so sorry to hear of Ron's passing! He and Bob had some really good times "back in the days" and Ron was instrumental in helping his cousin fulfill a lifelong dream of building houses! I don't know if Ron ever knew how much this did for Bob but Bob told me how much pleasure he got knowing that he was leaving something behind that he built. To this day, every time I look out my window I can see the condo's he oversaw, in the distance, and I think of him and how he was instrumental in leaving behind something that had "his mark" on it. If Ron had not offered him the job of overseeing the houses for him while he was back in Illinois, this never would have happened. I am forever grateful! They were such good friends (and relatives) over those years and Bob cherished the times they spent together. Bless his heart, Parkinson's is not an easy disease to live with but I know the disease met it's match in Ron. May he rest in peace! I made the decision to plant a tree for Ron in honor of the trees that were part of the houses he built and the fun that he and Bob had. It is from the Guthrie Family. I don't believe the sight let me sign that way. Ron was a good guy Karen and I know you will miss him. Hugs to all of you!
Karen Guthrie and family

Karen Guthrie - February 27 at 09:30 PM

KS

“ Karen S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ronald A. Ellett.

Karen S. - February 27 at 09:13 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Ronald A. Ellett.*



February 25 at 10:52 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Ronald A. Ellett.

February 25 at 10:52 AM



“ *Ron was my coach and teacher from 1964 through 1968. Football at Hampshire was in it's infancy and because of a small class of '68 and numerous injuries, we ended up with 3 seniors left on the team by season's end. It was a losing season but I wouldn't trade it for anything. By 1976, Ron had built a team that won the State Championship. I must say I enjoyed playing football for Ron more than being a student in his Business classes. My condolences to family and friends. R.I.P.*

Darrel Johnson - February 24 at 05:46 PM

SW

Hi friends and family, I will try to keep it short. Coach Ellett was huge in my life. Living next to the Hampshire High School I witnessed this man small in size but huge on ability. I might of been 13 years old and watching the Hampshire football team practicing right next to our back yard. Here was a man that drove the young Wippers into a wild group of hunters. Wanting so bad to catch coach Ellett as he ran left right around end and down the field daring them to make a play. It was rare that he would have to blow his whistle to calm the hungry team down. Looking back, he was living his dream, he was building a team of boys into men. Week after week he ran this Hampshire team into a strong group of men. I was young, a few years later I was a freshman and part of something big. Little by little I did what I could to make the grade. The bar was high and coach Elliot was always looking ahead. I could not help but notice this man was huge, often he was my Sunday school teacher, he was the varsity baseball coach, if there was going to be a golf outing it's because he made it happen. He was everywhere. Also he was my driver's Ed instructor. Oh lord the excitement Mike S. And Anna B. And I had driving around as he taught us how. I can remember it all like it was yesterday. Then came my senior year and low an behold an opportunity to be somebody. I tried so hard to make this man a winner. He was a huge part of my life and it was me trying to pay it all back. Coach Ellett, Ron Ellett has always been big in my heart for all he did. It wasn't just me, he did the same thing for hundreds of us. I will never forget him. See you soon Coach.

Sid Widmayer - February 25 at 06:29 PM

BB

“ Bayartsetseg B. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ronald A. Ellett.

Bayartsetseg B. - February 24 at 03:58 PM