



Mr. Peter B. Decker

July 29, 1956 - September 28, 2025

NEW HARTFORD – Mr. Peter B. Decker, aged 69, passed away peacefully at home on Sunday, September 28, 2025, after a courageous battle with cancer. He was surrounded by his loving family at the time of his passing.

Born in Penn Yan, NY, on July 29, 1956, Peter was the son of the late Harry and Mary Decker. He was a proud graduate of Arlington High School, Class of 1974. After high school, Peter continued his education at Dutchess Community College and later attended Utica College, where he earned his B.A. He went on to receive a master's degree in special education from The College of Saint Rose in Albany.

After meeting at a work fundraiser, Peter fell in love with the former Anna Marie Bendino, and the two were married on October 12, 1991. Peter was devoted to Anna Marie and took great joy in ensuring that she and their family were always cared for.

Peter began his teaching career at BOCES and later joined the Utica City School District as an elementary school educator. He taught and mentored children at General Herkimer, Kernan, and Jones Elementary Schools, where he ultimately retired. Peter's natural patience and deep understanding made him a perfect fit for teaching special education. For over 35 years, he prioritized the well-being of his students and made a meaningful difference in

the lives of countless children and their families. For a time, in addition to teaching, he also served as PTA leader for all the schools in the district—a community role he found deeply fulfilling.

Peter was gentle, kind, sensitive, and caring, with a dry sense of humor that his friends came to deeply appreciate. He possessed an admirable sense of service, balanced with compassion, which made him, quite simply, a truly good man. He was charitable to many civic organizations, and he also had a deep affection for animals, especially dogs, man's best friend.

In his spare time, Peter was an exceptional gardener. His impeccable landscaping transformed the yard into a family oasis, adorned with special trees, flowers, and shrubs—a personal vacation spot for the entire family. Inside the home, Peter was a true Mr. Fix-It. If something was broken, he would always find a solution. His talents also extended to music: he was an accomplished saxophonist, playing first chair in both the Jazz Ensemble and the Marching Band. He even taught himself to play the organ by ear. Remarkably, Peter was also a master of automobile knowledge—able to identify the make, model, and year of any car with just a quick glance or by hearing its engine.

In his younger days, Peter served as a camp counselor at the Fresh Air Camp, where he helped children with disabilities experience the joy of the outdoors. It was during one of these summers that he met his lifelong best friend, Wally Erck. Peter also cherished hosting family holidays, bringing together the people he loved most under one roof to share meaningful time and create lasting memories.

Peter is survived by his loving wife, Anna Marie; daughters, Samatha Decker (who will always be a Daddy's girl) and her husband, Tom Carnright, Allison and Steve Bolander, and Nicole and Giovanni Santiago, Sr.; adored

grandchildren, Sienna, and Maya Carnright, Landon, and Liliana Bolander, and Isabella, Giovanni Jr., Anthony, and Xavier Santiago; siblings, Brett Decker and Cindy, and Mary Gail Decker; and uncles and aunts, John Decker, Vito Rometo, Frances Spina, Betty Bendino, and Eleanore Leone. He is further survived by numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins; and in-laws, Maria and Paul Devins, and Donna and Jim DeLaura. He was predeceased by his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Nicholas F. and Gaetana C. "Donna" (Spina) Bendino; and aunts and uncles, Ruth Decker, Diane Rometo, Marie E. Bendino, Joseph and Hazel Spina, Julio Spina, Clara and Angelo Papa, and Robert Leone.

Peter's family extends a very special thank you to Dr. Thomas John and Dr. Alicia DeTraglia for their care and compassion.

Visitation will be held on Sunday, October 5, 2025, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave. Peter's funeral service and Celebration of Life will commence at 4:00 p.m. at the funeral home. In lieu of floral offerings, memorial contributions in Peter's honor may be made to the Fresh Air Fund online at <https://secure.freshair.org/a/donate>; envelopes will also be available at the funeral home.

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 5. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Eannace Funeral Home, Inc.
932 South Street
corner of Hammond Ave.
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 724-6714
eannacefh@roadrunner.com

Funeral Service

OCT 5. 4:00 PM (ET)

Eannace Funeral Home, Inc.
932 South Street
corner of Hammond Ave.
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 724-6714
eannacefh@roadrunner.com

Tribute Wall

TS

“ *Trixy Smith lit a candle in memory of Mr. Peter B. Decker*



Trixy smith - October 06, 2025 at 02:09 PM

TS

“ So sorry for your loss .I had him for a teacher he definitely was one of my favorites he was fun funny and always had use on are feet and back wan I was in his class I didnt make it to school do to are was was in a really bad bus accident on dike road head onhe finds out and was completely concerned of his students .so seeing that I was hurt I couldnt alten school he come show up to see how I was doing also wan it was time for me to come back to school I was petrified to go on a bus he made a deal that he would take the bus to school with me. So wan I got on the bus he was on there I felt scared.

But he may sure that I was comfortable now that he mad me feel safe algen after a year of not getting in eney vehicle he mad it happing also he always mad his classrooms fun to wanna be in he always bought toys and had riffles for the kids to buy the items.If they were good. I just wanna add this in.Don't ever wear somebody else's shoes.Because when I had worn my friends' shoes, he said you don't do that.And made me wear his and made me walk up and down the hallway ten times he was the greatest teacher.I've ever had, and I'll always remember him.im always talking about his class to family and friends. And it just happened to be talking about him having my kids as well then few days latter someone calls me and tells me that he's want to see the man upstairs heven. I was so hurt cuz I didnt no he was sick 🥰👉 well eney ways I wanna say this he will definitely be missed love you miss docker

Trixy smith - October 06, 2025 at 02:08 PM

SH

“ Sheila Holliman lit a candle in memory of Mr. Peter B. Decker



Sheila Holliman - October 01, 2025 at 11:55 PM

JD

“ Our sincere condolences to you Ann Marie and your family. We both had the pleasure of working with Peter and you. Peter was a great teacher, a super all around great guy always willing to help anyone out if needed. His sense of humor had us laughing all the time. May your memories help you through this difficult time. Joann & Dan Donovan

Joann Donovan - October 01, 2025 at 08:32 PM

RB

“ Dear Ann Marie and girls! I was very saddened when I heard Peter had passed! I had great memories working with him! I know he loved his wife and children so much! I remember him bringing lunch for Ann and him and he would always warm it up for her! I enjoyed working with both of you very much! He will truly be missed! I am glad I have so many great memories of both Ann and him! Love to all of you Becky Blaise

Rebecca Blaise - October 01, 2025 at 08:20 PM

MB

“ Dear Decker Family,
I'm so sorry for your loss. Peter was a very unique person. He was kind to everyone including me and the children he taught. He will be missed.

Marguerite Brooks

Marguerite Brooks - October 01, 2025 at 01:14 PM

RB

“ *Rosemary Brown lit a candle in memory of Mr. Peter B. Decker*



Rosemary Brown - October 01, 2025 at 11:53 AM

RB

“ *Dear Ann and family,
I am heartbroken to hear of Peter’s passing. He was a wonderful friend and co worker. I enjoyed our many conversations at work and his very long text messages that I always got a kick out of. The world has truly lost a dedicated educator and all around special person. I will miss him so much.
My deepest sympathies to you and your family.
Rest easy my dear friend.
Love Rosemary Brown*

Rosemary Brown - October 01, 2025 at 11:53 AM

VB

“ *So sorry for your loss I remember him through our teaching days he was a good guy virginia boehlert*

Virginia Boehlert - October 01, 2025 at 10:38 AM

CD

Dear Anna Marie & Family

I am so very sorry to hear of the passing of Peter. I have many fond memories of the parties I was invited to at your home. Peter always made sure people felt welcomed and well fed! He was such a kind man, and you could see the love for his family at all times. He was a good man taken too soon. The Love you shared was very evident. And I never left your home without a smile on my face because Peter cracked a good joke! my heart goes out to you.

Cynthia Dillon-Papa

Cynthia Dillon-Papa - October 05, 2025 at 09:27 AM