



Lawrence "Whitey" Knannlein

April 15, 1941 - December 17, 2025

Lawrence "Whitey" Knannlein passed away on December 17, 2025. Whitey was born in Toledo, Ohio, on April 15, 1941. He was an extraordinary man who touched the lives of many people he came into contact with throughout his momentous life.

He was an American soldier trained as a combat engineer. During his time in the army, he was a platoon sergeant in the 463rd combat engineer battalion and then in the 983rd construction battalion. Whitey was also an expert on firearms, motivated by his love for history. As a member of the 20th army corps rifle team, he was regarded as one of the top competitors in the U.S.A. with the M-14 rifle.

Whitey was a proud member of the Toledo Police Department for 25 years. As a police officer, his favorite assignments were uniform patrol, instructing in the police academy, and working as certified and licensed chemical dependency counselor focusing on police officers. During his time as a counselor, he was ordered to turn over confidential records; an order he flatly refused to obey in the interest of protecting his clients. This was controversial at the time but ultimately is regarded as a glimmering stamp of his honest and just character. The story was published in The Blade and became an inspiration for many. A reminder to do the right thing, even when it is challenging. He also worked as an adjunct professor at Owens College for 21 years, instructing numerous law

enforcement courses to police trainees. When he retired from T.P.D., he worked as chief of security for Armada Oil & Gas for 20 years. He also taught a concealed carry course to hundred of civilians in the Toledo area.

Whitey was raised in the Catholic Church, and he was deeply proud of his Catholic faith. He adored the sacraments, especially confession. He remained loyal to the Church, even in the 1990s when the global church view was tumultuous. During this time, he was hired under Bishop Blair and Bishop Thomas as the primary investigator on behalf of the Toledo Diocese, and while this was some of his most difficult work, it was a vocation he approached with grave intent and pride.

If you asked Whitey, he would tell you that most important to his legacy, was his fierce and unrelenting love for his family. He is preceded in death by his parents, Pearl and Lawrence; and his sister, Marilyn, who passed unexpectedly at age 39. He spoke of her fondly and often. He is survived by his wife, Barbara; his daughters, Kristen, Lori (Chris Archer), Angela (Don Rahman), and Rebecca (Shawn Hogan); also his 7 grandchildren, Alexxis, Arika, Alex, Mason, Andrew James, Alyssa, and Jayvn, all of whom loved him dearly. He was a gentle giant, whose words could make you feel ten feet tall. He believed your mind, compassion, and honesty were your superpowers if wielded properly. Whitey was committed to the pursuit of knowledge and truth and he was an example to all those who were lucky enough to be in his periphery. The waves of his impact will be felt for decades to come and he will be so incredibly missed.

Any and all are welcome to please join us in celebrating his life for a visitation & urn showing January 2, 2025, from 4:00pm - 8:00pm at Ansberg-West Funeral Home, 3000 W. Sylvania Ave., and again from 9:30-10:30am on Saturday, January 3, 2025, at St. Catherine of Siena Church where a Mass of the Resurrection will begin at 10:30am followed by a polish luncheon. In lieu

of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Central Catholic High School or St. Catherine of Siena Church.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 2. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Ansberg-West Funeral Home
3000 W. Sylvania Ave
Toledo, OH 43613

Visitation

JAN 3. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

St. Catherine of Siena
4555 N Haven Ave
Toledo, OH 43612

Mass of the Resurrection

JAN 3. 10:30 AM (ET)

St. Catherine of Siena
4555 N Haven Ave
Toledo, OH 43612

Tribute Wall

JK

“ *Jim Kujawa lit a candle in memory of Lawrence "Whitey" Knannlein*



Jim Kujawa - January 02 at 02:00 PM

ML

“ *I am so sorry to hear the news of Uncle Whitney's passing. He was such a kind sweet man, always quick with a joke to make you smile. He had many qualities of my father that makes his passing so difficult. My sympathies to Aunt Barb and his children. His legacy will live on within you*

Margit Lister - January 02 at 11:05 AM

LR

“ *I was just informed of the passing of Whitey.....I am very sad to hear this. I knew that he had struggled with health issues for some time. I will always remember him as a kind man who loved his family. He joins my dad, Bob. Many prayers are being sent your way.....Lisa Hundsrucker*

lisa ramirez - January 01 at 06:09 PM

CK

“ Whitey might not remember me, but he had a huge impact on my life! When I was a high school student, Whitey and George Nimmo recruited me to participate in a peer drug and alcohol prevention program being implemented in the high schools. He was one of a handful of powerful father figures in my life, and taught me the importance of integrity. From Whitey, I remember learning that a person has to go to bed every night - it's that person's choice whether he will go to bed pleased with his actions and choices, or go to bed restless and regretful. Thank you, Whitey. Enjoy your well-deserved reward. Your family is in my thoughts and prayers.

Cliff Kurt - December 28, 2025 at 08:44 AM

TM

My deepest sympathy to you all from our family. St Catherine's was a great community and brought our families together over 50 years together. May Whitey now rest in the arms of God. He and Gary are probably sharing their many police stories together. Prayers for peace for you all.

Tami Mckinley - December 28, 2025 at 09:24 AM

RG

Prayers 🙏💙 for your family...

Rich Gadt - February 13 at 11:19 PM

RG

Prayers 🙏💙 for your family...

Rich Gadt - February 13 at 11:19 PM

KW

“ Barb so sorry to hear of Whiteys passing - my thoughts and prayers are with you and your family

Kathy (Skeldon) Woodward - December 28, 2025 at 01:41 AM

RB

“ *Whitey was a very good man. I worked for him my first time at the Toledo Police Academy. He taught me a lot about how to treat a recruit, from being hard to helping them. He then hired me to work for him as security for Barneys. I could always go to him for good advice. I had and will always have great respect for him. You will be missed Seargent.*

Russ Burke - December 27, 2025 at 11:06 PM

JB

RIP brother officer. You will not be forgotten

Jim Brunt - December 28, 2025 at 10:37 AM

RH

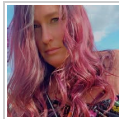
“ *Whitey was one of the great ones...always a steady smile and a pleasant phrase for all.*
Ray & Ruth Hemmig

Ray Hemmig - December 27, 2025 at 07:48 PM

PH

“ In life only a handful of times do you really truly come into the orbit of a person of enormous character, compassion, courage and incredible world view. By simply buying a house next door to Whitey, I got a front row seat to a mountain of a man. I enjoyed and cherished every single encounter and conversation with him. I loved him. I was lucky enough to bring in his mail a few days before his death and we had a beautiful conversation. I am certain he has now met his creator and that is such a comforting thought. He ran such a great race. I don't pretend to know such things but I feel confident that Whitey heard the words....."Well done my good and faithful servant." I saw Whitey's impact and love of Barb, his girls, their spouses, and in each of his grandchildren (of whom he beamed in their presence). I can't wait to see you again.

Patrick Hickey - December 27, 2025 at 05:02 PM



Words escape me. Thank you for this <3

Kris Knannlein - December 27, 2025 at 06:59 PM

AK

He thought the world of you and spoke so kindly of you, Patrick. Thank you so much for your kindness towards my grandparents. Your words mean so much.

Arika Knannlein - December 27, 2025 at 09:11 PM

KS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Kent Snyder - December 27, 2025 at 04:54 PM

KS

Rosary I helped him make.

Kent Snyder - December 27, 2025 at 04:54 PM



Thank you <3

Kris Knannlein - December 27, 2025 at 07:00 PM



Thanks for sharing, he told me the story of this Rosary at Arika's wedding. Another good snippet of Whitey's calculated thoughtfulness
♥♥

Kelly Maier-Sieg - December 28, 2025 at 09:12 AM

SK

“ *At Xavier he was the best team dad. Always supporting and cheering us on! He was simply the best! Fly high and look after everyone! You did your job now rest in the arms of the Lord! Until we meet again!* ”

Sheryl Krmpotich - December 27, 2025 at 03:53 PM