

Ross Hamilton Calvert III

March 27, 1947 – September 7, 2025



Ross Hamilton Calvert III died on September 7, 2025 in Glen Mills, Pennsylvania at age 78. Ross spent his final years lovingly attending to his wife Kay through her declining health from Alzheimer's disease. Ross was placed in hospice care on May 16, the same day it was determined that Kay had only days left to live.

Born March 27, 1947 in Washington, D.C., Ross (nicknamed Topper) was the firstborn of a US Infantry Officer, growing up in various states, as well as Japan, England and Germany where he graduated from Berlin American High School. Ross dreamed of becoming an Air Force pilot like his grandfather, General Muir Fairchild, but his plans for military service were cut short by a football injury at the Air Force Academy Prep School. Fortunately, this pivot introduced two defining elements of the rest of his life: his beautiful wife, Kay, whom he met his freshman year at Lebanon Valley College and would cherish for fifty-seven years, and his career in teaching.

Ross and Kay started their married lives together in Memphis, TN where Ross earned a degree in education from Memphis State University, and a deep appreciation for the ribs from the Rendezvous Cafe by frequenting the restaurant so regularly that several of the waiters would know him by name decades after he moved away. Having grown up a military brat, Ross grew restless living in one place for too long. He found an outlet for that wanderlust by joining the Department of Defense Dependent Schools as a teacher. For thirty-two years, Ross taught high school and occasionally - begrudgingly - middle-school at AFCENT in the Netherlands (1974-1984), SHAPE in Belgium (1984-1997), Incirlik Air Base in Turkey (1997-1999), and Bitburg in Germany (1999-2006). Much of this time is recorded in Ross' book, "A Wild Ride: Memoir of a Teacher and Coach Working with Families in Military Communities Abroad."

While Ross enjoyed teaching biology, math, video production, and the occasional psychology or history class, his greatest professional fulfillment came from coaching. Known by many who will read this as "Coach Calvert," Ross loved training wrestlers, football players, track athletes, and others, frequently traveling long distances to sleep on gym floors and wake the next day stiff and underslept (though not as much as the athletes forced to endure the sound of his snoring). Ross said it was the immediacy of being able to help an athlete learn a play or practice a skill and see them master it in real-time that he appreciated most about coaching, but judging from his massive collection of mascot-bedecked hats, jackets and shirts in school colors, tournament tees, polyester coaching shorts, color-coordinated tube socks, and even a custom airbrushed roaring lion's head motorcycle helmet in honor of the AFCENT Lions, it might also have been the fashion. He extended that school spirit by serving as the Athletic Director at four high schools, helping usher thousands of young people through the challenges and celebrations of athletic achievement.

Ross really loved a good meal. His happiest times were spent dining at friends' houses, enjoying Europe's finest restaurant cuisine, and serving as co-host for the magnificent dinner parties prepared by Kay. Even in his last conversation with his kids days before he died, Ross rhapsodized about butter pecan ice cream. The only thing he loved more than a delicious meal was his main chef, Kay.

An inveterate jokester, Ross was known for elaborate pranks with his colleagues, his students and his own children, each of whom he would consistently and straight-facedly claim to have found in a dumpster behind the Piggly Wiggly throughout their now-middle-aged lives. Never one to seek a "regular" life, after retiring from DoDDS Ross and Kay moved to new homes in remote Florissant, Colorado and more remote Boquete, Panama. Later the pair moved to Grand Prairie, Texas, and finally as Kay's Alzheimer's disease progressed, to Glen Mills, Pennsylvania.

Ross is survived by his three children and their families. His daughter Heather (Matt Gauntt) and their son, Peter; his son, Ross (Leslie) and their children, Ross, Charlie, and Miles; his daughter, Megan, and her children, Owen and Posey; as well as his closest friends for life brother Harry (Judy) and sister Lucy Gowrie (Chris), plus several nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his wife, Kay, and his parents Ross "Bo" and Betty Anne Calvert.

A joint service for both Ross and Kay will be held in the chapel at Maris Grove in Glen Mills, Pennsylvania at 10:30 AM on Saturday, November 22, 2025. The pair will later be inurned at Indiantown Gap National Cemetery.

Ross derived great pleasure maintaining ongoing correspondence with many of his former students and teaching friends, and as such, the family welcomes shared memories of their time with him as a teacher, coach, or friend. Those wanting to memorialize him can do so by donating in his and Kay's honor to the Cure Alzheimer's Fund or by supporting your local public school's sports.

Ross' wife Kay's obituary can be accessed here:

<https://obituaries.cremationofpennsylvania.com/obituaries/blue-bell-pa/kay-calvert-11010934>