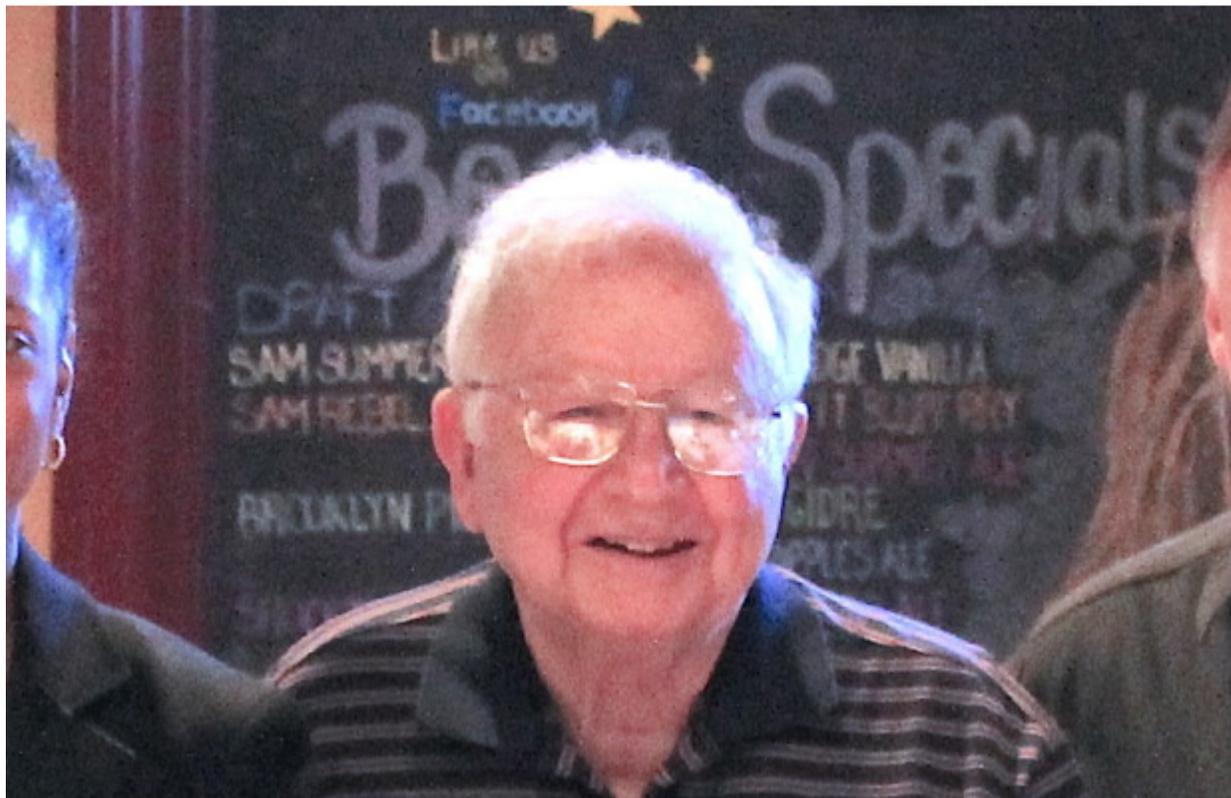


Wilton Mourns Ken Dartley, Former Selectman & Senior Citizen Advocate

By [Heather Borden Herve, GMW Editor](#) on August 19, 2016



Longtime Wilton resident **Kenneth Dartley** passed away on **Wednesday, Aug. 17**. An active member of the community, Dartley most recently served as a member of the **Board of Selectmen**, (Sept.-Dec. 2015) and was a champion of the Wilton senior community, as well as a founder of **Kick for Nick**.

“Ken brought conviction, commitment and passion to everything he did and toward everyone he cared for. From his deep, unwavering love for his family and friends to the impassioned advocacy for Wilton Seniors, his causes had no greater proponent and his loves no stronger bond,” said **Al Alper**, Republican Town Committee chair, in an email to ***GOOD Morning Wilton***.

On a personal note, the quality I found most prevalent in Dartley was his quiet, respectful manner and gentlemanly way of conducting any kind of matter, whether it was talking in interview or extolling the virtues and necessity of more senior housing in Wilton. Most endearing was that whenever we spoke, he always mentioned his young grandchildren, who live nearby, and how he regularly saw them and made it a priority to spend time with them before any other commitment.

It was his quiet, self-effacing way behind his actions [that spurred Kick for Nick’s founding](#). Kick for Nick, the Wilton-based organization started to honor **Nicholas Madaras**, a young Wilton man killed in Iraq in 2006. Nick’s wish was to connect with the young kids he met in Iraq through a shared love of soccer, something he hoped to do by having soccer balls sent from the States to him to distribute. Nick died before being able to do that, but Dartley was instrumental in making the dream happen in the weeks following Nick’s death.

That’s what **Shalini Madaras**, Nick’s mom, once told ***GMW***.

“The first or second week there were a lot of media and newspaper people coming to Wilton, wanting to know the story. Ken called us and asked, ‘Can I collect a few soccer balls and send them to the soldiers in Iraq and see if they’ll distribute them?’ I thought it was so nice for a total stranger to pick up on what we said and then act on it.”

Dartley got the soccer ball collection going at the American Legion, where he was an active member, even once being named Member of the Year. He helped to organize Memorial Day and Veterans Day events in Wilton and served on the **Veterans Memorial Committee**.

In addition to his recent time on the Board of Selectmen, he also served on **Wilton's Deer Committee** and founded the **Fairfield County Regional Deer Committee**, helping to start the first successful controlled hunt in this region.

The other area Dartley was most passionate about was helping seniors in Wilton. He co-founded **Stay at Home Wilton**, an organization that helps Wilton's seniors stay in their homes even living on fixed incomes. The organization is funded solely through private fundraising and exists without any town funding, something that pleased Dartley.

Dartley was also instrumental in making **Wilton Commons**, an affordable apartment building for senior citizens, happen, after a decade of effort. He sat on the Wilton Commons Board of Directors and was proud of the public-private partnership that made the project not only a reality but one that continued to grow with a second building now ready for occupancy.

Funeral arrangements have not yet been finalized, but there is a wake tentatively scheduled on Tuesday, Aug. 30, and a memorial service on Wednesday, Aug. 31.

RTC chair Alper sent the following statement to memorialize his former friend.

It is with much sadness that we mark the passing of longtime resident, active Republican party member and former selectman Ken Dartley.

Ken brought conviction, commitment and passion to everything he did and toward everyone he cared for. From his deep, unwavering love for his family and friends to the impassioned advocacy for Wilton seniors, his causes had no greater proponent and his loves no stronger bond.

Kens strong advocacy for Town senior citizens we instrumental in the founding of several institutions and policy changes that have enhanced and expanded the quality of life for those residents. Because of his good work the lives of a generation of Wiltonians have been changed for the better, and the legacy he leaves behind will impact generations to come.

Ken had a sincere, self-effacing posture that was disarming in its honesty and that demanded the message, not the messenger be taken seriously. He was a good, honest, sincere man who took nothing for granted, and his causes were personal to him.

Wilton is very fortunate for having known Ken. While generations to come will not have the benefit of this sincere, thoughtful and committed citizen, his legacy will enrich their lives in the same quiet way he enriched those who knew him well.