

# Dennis DeToye leaves behind legacy to arts, community that won't soon be forgotten

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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**EDWARDSVILLE** - Rarely do teachers and leaders like Edwardsville's **Dennis DeToye** come along.

DeToye was not only what many viewed an “incredible” art teacher, but he was a top-notch artist himself, with works that hung for years in galleries throughout the St. Louis area. He loved working on large-scale paintings.

DeToye died this past week at age 68 and left behind a legacy in the Edwardsville community that won't be soon forgotten.

He taught for more than 35 years in the Edwardsville High School and helped establish a home for the Edwardsville Arts Council at EHS.

He was also once mayor of Edwardsville. He was a proud member of ESIC Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon and trustee. First and foremost, he was a family man. He was completely devoted to his wife, Lela, and a loving father to his daughters Anne and Kate and to his sons-in-law Cody Moore and Zac Friederich. He was also the proudest grandfather he could be for Emma and Joey Moore and Olive Friederich.

**Gary Niebur**, the **former Edwardsville mayor**, was on the City Council when DeToye was mayor. When DeToye decided not to run again and was supportive of him running, Niebur entered the campaign and was elected where he stayed for 20 years.

Niebur perhaps summed DeToye up better than anyone else could have with these words: “Edwardsville is a better place because of his presence. He will be greatly missed, but always remembered.

“I am deeply saddened to learn of Dennis’s passing. His contributions to this community in so many ways made this community so much better. From the extremely positive role he played in education and working with students, to his service as mayor and to his many contributions to the arts, Dennis DeToye will always be remembered for what he did to touch the lives of people and the entire community.”

**Liz Link** director of the **Edwardsville Arts Council** said DeToye was simply “a sweetheart.” So many times over the years, she said she called on DeToye for help and advice and he was always there, she said.

“He was an amazing guy,” she said. “He suffered from a number of ailments toward the end of his life, but he was always working and giving back. He inspired a lot of kids for a long time. There wasn’t a job at the Arts Center that Dennis wasn’t willing to tackle. He stayed in touch with former students and graduates and they stayed in touch with him.

"He was beloved. When we needed help painting a wall, he would show up, or anything else, Dennis was always there. He painted beautifully and did great portraits, colors and flowers.”

