



## Obituary

**Died:** Thursday, April 29, 2021

Eugene Sidney VanGorder (July 11, 1951-April 29, 2021)

In early April 2021, Gene stood at the head of the family table with his five children, four grandchildren, and beloved wife surrounding him as he led them to bless the meal. He began the prayer as he did most, and those loved ones around the table leaned in to hear his quiet but eager and sincere words, "Dear Heavenly Father." Late into the evening, the family laughed and talked across the table as they played and replayed hands of Pinochle, which they had done so many times before.

Eugene Sidney VanGorder, a devoted husband, father, grandfather, pastor, veteran, and friend, died April 29, 2021. He contracted COVID which led to a devastating stroke that ultimately ended his life.

Eugene, Gene to most, died months before a planned 70th birthday celebration for which he requested a firework display and full family attendance. Some might associate such a grand party with a boisterous man, but Gene was well known for his gentle spirit, his curious disposition, and his steadfast commitment to his family. He loved to be outside and was an avid hunter. He was recently at work on a new, elaborate tree stand on the family's property to rival his previous build. He proudly taught all of his children how to hunt, fish, and be industrious with their labors.

Gene graduated from Port Allegany High School with the class of 1970. He enlisted to fight in the Vietnam War and served his country with dignity and bravery for two and a half years in the United States Navy. Upon his return, he was a driller in the gas and oil field industry until his retirement in 1990. Most importantly, Gene loved Jesus and committed his efforts and his attention to knowing God and sharing His love with others. Gene was saved at a Billy Graham service in 1968 and since then, the abundance of joy that Gene found in his relationship with Jesus overflowed into his family and community. His family rejoices that Gene now resides in Heaven, where he can finally ask the deep, philosophical questions that so occupied his earthly conversations.

He is survived by his adoring wife, Sally Anne, of 47 years. Eugene and Sally shared a playful and adventurous love and faced adversity together without fear, assured by their faith.

He is survived by his five children, whom he loved fiercely and counseled wisely. They are Joshua R. (Nyasia)

VanGorder, of Port Allegany, Brandy L. (Brad) Scott, of Meadville, Tammy S. (Robert) VanGorder of Smethport, David J. (Megan) VanGorder of DeKalb, Illinois, and Gerritt S. VanGorder, of Port Allegany. He is also survived by his sisters Sharon (Rick) Swanson of Kersey, PA and Sandy Urbanick of Fernley, NV; his brother, Stanley VanGorder of Indaina, PA; and his half-brother, Rick Valentine of Minnesota.. He is preceded in death by his parents, Albert

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## Service Summary

### Visitation

6:00 PM to 8:00 PM, Sun May 02, 2021

### Birch Grove Mennonite Church

Two Mile Rd.  
Port Allegany, PA 16743

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### Funeral Service

Mon May 03, 2021

### Birch Grove Mennonite Church

Two Mile Rd.  
Port Allegany, PA 16743

and Lois Hardy VanGorder, and his brother, Gordy. Friends will be received from 6-8 p.m. Sunday in the Birch Grove Mennonite Church, Port Allegany. Masks will be provided. A private funeral service will be held on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 11 a.m. in the Birch Grove Mennonite Church, with Rev. Dale Detweiller, pastor, officiating. Burial will be in Annin Creek Cemetery, Turtlepoint, PA. He left an indelible mark on his family, friends, and church community. Memorials can be directed to Gene's church, Birch Grove Mennonite Church, Two Mile Road, Port Allegany, Pennsylvania. Funeral arrangements are under the direction of the Switzer Funeral Home, Port Allegany. Condolences can be made @[www.switzerfuneralhome](http://www.switzerfuneralhome). Anyone wishing to see the funeral service can watch on YouTube--  
<https://youtu.be/EzHmjGsVG7w>.