



William Franklin "Frank" DeButy

August 4, 1953 - June 2, 2018

Retired Police Lt. William Franklin DeButy, 64, of Decatur, passed away June 2, 2018, at Huntsville Hospital. A visitation will be held at 1:00 p.m. Sunday, June 10, 2018, with a memorial service following at 3:00 p.m. at Shelton Funeral Home in Decatur.

Frank was born August 4, 1953, to Charles Franklin DeButy and Jean Raulston DeButy. He studied engineering at the University of Tennessee and later earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Athens State University.

Frank enjoyed a long and storied career with the Decatur Police Department. He joined the department's patrol division in 1977 and held multiple roles until his retirement in 2008. He was named the Decatur Police Department's Police Officer of the Year twice before receiving the 1993 Alabama Police Officer of the Year award from the Alabama Veterans of Foreign Wars.

He was most recently a supervisor for Allied Universal Security at Nucor and operated ATOPTO, a firearms training company. A gifted artist, Frank also designed commemorative rings for law enforcement professionals. His happy place was his garage, where he often worked on his vintage yellow Chevy Nova and welded unique steel artwork for family and friends.

Frank, who was a local torchbearer during the 1996 Olympic Torch Relay, cared deeply about his brothers in blue. In 2017, he created gravesite memorials for fallen Decatur police officers and was part of a ceremony honoring the nine Morgan County officers who have died in the line of duty since 1905.

Known as much for his sense of humor and compassion as he was his dedication to law enforcement, Frank impacted the lives of those around him for the better. He was a friend, teacher, protector, and ally to all.

He is survived by his wife, Helen; son, Charlie and his wife, Lucy; stepson, Keith Cochran and his wife, Allison; stepson, Dylan Cochran; sister, Darlene Raim, and her husband, Mike; two grandchildren, Gracie and William; several nieces and nephews; and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, grandparents, and many loved ones he lost along the way.

In lieu of flowers, please send a donation to Decatur Animal Services, 300-A Beltline Road, Decatur, AL 35603, or Hospice of the Valley, P.O. Box 2745, Decatur, AL 35602.

Tribute Wall

CT

“ I worked with Frank at Wolverine. He was a good guy and full of humor. He will be missed.

Charlie Thompson - July 09, 2025 at 10:06 AM

JL

“ Helen, my prayers and sympathy go out to you and your family.



Judith Looney - June 25, 2018 at 12:00 AM

KF

“ Helen, Charlie : The Russell family, Keith, Linda and Jilayne send our sympathy to you and your family.



Keith and Linda Russell and Jilayne Kirby and family - June 09, 2018 at 12:00 AM

CW

“ On Dec. 30, 1982, I was hospitalized at Decatur General awaiting the birth of my twins. Dr. New determined that I was developing toxemia and sent me to Birmingham to have the babies delivered and put me where I could get treatment. I was so relieved to find Frank DeButy and Keith Russell loading me into the ambulance and driving me to Birmingham. I knew both slightly from working for the Decatur Daily, and because Frank was good friends with my brother-in-law. They were both steady and reassuring - I relaxed knowing I was in their care. In the years since, he showed himself an exemplary officer. He's still a hero to me.



Cathy D. Wahl - June 07, 2018 at 12:00 AM

CC

“ Frank will truly be missed. I have known him since I was in high school and he was a great man Funny, caring, loved being a police officer. Loved Alice Cooper, Tennessee Football and cars. Rest In Peace my friend until we meet again. 143



Connie Hopper Childers - June 06, 2018 at 12:00 AM

TP

“ Frank was a good neighbor, I will miss seeing working on his things. Sometimes, I would stop and visit with him. He loved the BIG ORANGE. PRAY HE IS RESTING IN PEACE. Tom Pangle



Tom Pangle - June 06, 2018 at 12:00 AM

B(

“ He will be missed,he was very helpful person
.Thanks for being there and for your kindness
when my sister passed



Brenda Faye Mills (Sissy) - June 06, 2018 at 12:00 AM

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Brenda Faye Mills (Sissy) - June 06, 2018 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ Lacey Sovik lit a candle in memory of William
Franklin "Frank" DeButy



Lacey Sovik - June 06, 2018 at 12:00 AM

HH

“ Frank and I worked at Bruno's together. He
was a great guy,and called him my friend. He
wille missed greatly!



Harry G. Hunter - June 05, 2018 at 12:00 AM

ST

“ Sean Tully lit a candle in memory of William Franklin "Frank" DeButy



sean tully - June 05, 2018 at 12:00 AM

CH

“ You will be missed. Rest in peace.



Cathy Hinton - June 05, 2018 at 12:00 AM

RM

“ Known to be a great friend, mentor, and police officer. I personally learned a lot from him and he'll truly be missed.



Raymond Malone - June 05, 2018 at 12:00 AM

GS

“ *My heart cries out to Frank's loved ones, Helen and Charlie, Lucy and William and Gracie, Keith and Allison, Dylan and so many other hearts he touched. Frank was such an amazing man, always doing whatever he could to help others. Blessed to have had him throughout my life to give me advice and support whenever it was needed. He made his mark, made a difference and would hate us making a fuss over him. He will live forever in our hearts and his stories will echo through the years.*



Gini Squire - June 05, 2018 at 12:00 AM