

# Gov. Raymond P. Shafer

1917-2006 • A Special Tribute



## 'Pennsylvania has lost one of its finest sons'

— Gov. Ed Rendell

By Jane Smith  
MEADVILLE TRIBUNE

"Pennsylvania has lost one of its finest sons."

That's how Gov. Ed Rendell described Tuesday's death of former Gov. Raymond P. Shafer, the only Crawford Countian to serve in the state's highest office.

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"The commonwealth had lost a dedicated public servant," Rendell said. "Ray Shafer was one of the most dedicated public servants in the commonwealth's history. His dedication to the public good continued long after his service as governor and throughout his life."

Rendell's sentiments were echoed by countless Crawford County residents and many across the state as news of Shafer's passing spread.

Although the 89-year-old had been in declining health for several years, his death this week at Meadville Medical Center came as a surprise to many, including Allegheny College President Richard Cook. Cook had visited Shafer in his hospital room and talked with him early Tuesday morning and described the governor, who also once served as Allegheny's president, as upbeat and in good spirits.

Rendell ordered that all U.S. and Pennsylvania flags under the state's jurisdiction be flown at half-staff until Shafer's interment.

Shafer's political career started in 1947

when he was elected district attorney of Crawford County. He eventually campaigned his way to the state's highest office, where he enacted a number of reforms, some of which required changes to the state's constitution.

During his term, legislative sessions of the General Assembly were extended to two years and a unified judicial system was established under the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

In addition, the governor's term limit was upped from one to two and arrangements were made for audits of the state's finances.

Shafer also enacted legislation creating the Department of Environmental Resources and consolidated state-run transportation functions — previously dis-

persed among four separate agencies — into the new Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

He also successfully championed tax increases to pay for social service programs.

After leaving office, Shafer continued his public service. President Richard M. Nixon appointed him chair of the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse. From 1974 to 1977, he served as counselor to Vice President Nelson Rockefeller.

He also maintained an active relationship with his alma mater, Allegheny College. He served on its Board of Trustees in 1964 and served as president from 1985 to 1986.

Calling hours are Saturday from 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 p.m. at Robert W. Waid Funeral Home Inc., 581 Chestnut St., Meadville.

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