

Lt Col John William Kenney

28 April 1930 – 20 December 2008

John William Kenney, affectionately called Bill, Dad, and Grandpa by his many friends and family, peacefully passed away in his home on December 20, 2008, at the age of 78, after a courageous battle with cancer. Bill was a Chicago-born transplant to the Bay Area, riding the train cross-country as a child of the Great Depression to settle with his mother and father, John W. and Helen Kenney, in Alameda. He graduated from Alameda High School and was swept off to the Korean War as an Air Force enlisted man. While his war stories are favorites of those he knew, he was most proud of his service in the US Military in the Air National Guard, the Air Force Reserves, as a war veteran and of his rank as retired lieutenant colonel. Bill was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.

Aside from the military, Bill earned his teaching credential at San Francisco State University and started a family with his wife Mary, to whom he was married almost 55 years. Bill became an art teacher in the Richmond Unified School District teaching at De Anza and Juan Crespi, a job he held for over 30 years. Bill was a proud and active member of the Boy Scouts of America for over 45 years, a member of the Alameda Elks, and threw the best St. Patrick's Day parties on the Island. As a retiree, many remember Bill as listening to jazz music in his crowded workshop, or tinkering around in his attic. He loved cutting, painting, labeling, organizing and building, teaching these skills to his children and grandchildren, spending time at his Tahoe cabin, and traveling the world with his wife and family. His tremendous sense of humor, wisdom, generosity, and personality resonate as loudly today as they ever did. Bill is survived by his loving wife Mary Kenney; his three children Karen, Patrick, and Katy Kenney, their spouses Steve Choy, Diana Kenney, and Kevin Gorham, respectively; and his five grandchildren, Caitlin, Kiera, Annie, Hannah and Sean. He was preceded in death by his eldest son, Michael Kenney. A Memorial Service was held in celebration of Bill's life December 27, 2008, at the Officer's Club of Alameda. Donations can be sent to the Alameda Council of Boy Scouts at 1714 Everett; Alameda Welfare Council at P.O. Box 2265; Girls Inc of the Island City at 1724 Santa Clara Ave; or the [American Cancer Society](#)

