



Stephen William Kenkel

February 4, 1955 - December 24, 2019

Stephen William Kenkel, age 64, of Cary, North Carolina, died on December 24, 2019. Steve died peacefully after a long illness and was surrounded by family. He was predeceased by his parents William Francis and Marion Scott Kenkel. Steve is survived by his wife Debbie Travers; sons Samuel and John; brother Phillip and his wife Evelyn Quillen of Stillwater, Oklahoma; brother Donald and his wife Delia of Ithaca, New York; brother Kenneth and his wife Joan of Union, Kentucky; and sister Kathryn and her husband George Bravo of Marina, California. Steve was born on February 4, 1955 in Ames, Iowa. He was fascinated with science and technology as a child, and built model rockets, HAM radios, and other devices, including spectacular science fair projects for his younger siblings. Steve earned a B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. in physics from the University of Kentucky, and an MBA from the University of North Carolina. He worked in integrated circuit design at Microelectronics of North Carolina and in computer engineering at Nortel, Cisco, and Fidelity Investments. Steve was a devoted husband and father and took great pride in his wife's and sons' accomplishments. All who knew him were impressed by his intellect, the breadth and depth of his knowledge, his sense of humor (puns aside), and his humility. Steve enjoyed big band music, science fiction, history, musicals, and poetry. Steve loved bicycling and he and Debbie had many adventures including riding the coasts of California, North Carolina and Maui, and along the Seine in Paris. He was raised a Catholic, and considered himself a Catholic all his life, even when he was in between parishes. Steve was also an active participant in the United Church of Christ with Debbie and John. He faced his final diagnoses with tremendous dignity and grace, and above all wanted to spend time with his family, his friends, and his dogs. Steve took up writing poetry after his brain tumor diagnosis and found inspiration and new friends in the Funshop poetry group.

The family expresses gratitude for all who cared for Steve during his illness including Duke Neurology, Duke Cancer Center and Transitions LifeCare. Donations in Steve's memory are suggested to the Preston Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center at Duke or the ALS Association- North Carolina Chapter.

There will be a funeral mass for Stephen Kenkel at 1pm Friday, January 31, 2020 at Saint Andrew the Apostle Roman Catholic Church at 3008 Old Raleigh Road, Apex, NC 27502. Following the mass there will be a celebration in honor of Stephen's life at 3pm Friday, January 31, 2020 at United Church of Chapel Hill at 1321 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, Chapel Hill, NC, 27514. Friends are welcome to attend either or both of the services.

Flower Cupboard in Cary (<https://theflowercupboard.com/>) is the floral provider for the service.

Comments



“ 4 files added to the album Memories Album



Debbie Travers - January 09 at 05:10 PM



“ Dr. Travers, I'm so sorry to learn of your husband's passing. I have the utmost respect for you and your family. I wish I were there to give you a very long hug, but know I am in my heart. Jen Massengill

Jen Massengill - January 06 at 08:36 AM



“ May Steve's memory be for a blessing. what a wit and talent Steve brought to Funshop friends.

Elaine - January 07 at 08:37 AM



“ Steve had a wonderful sense of humor, was a sensitive and creative poet and a friend to us all; he shall be missed.

jongold11@aol.com - January 11 at 01:54 PM



“ I have two favorite memories of Steve, the first is of seeing him taking the two dogs out for a walk/run when I was heading out on a weekend morning bike ride. This is when you folks still lived on Frenchman's Creek. The other is from a while ago at one of the NC Bike Club Rallies. Parking was tight and Steve was late and had to park across the road in overflow. The ride was starting out and Steve said that he hadn't paid yet, someone else said to just join in, the main group of riders was just heading out. It was like Sure! Why not? Not sure if Steve paid or not to ride that day.

Michael O'Connor
Durham, NC

Michael O'Connor - December 27, 2019 at 03:47 PM