



Donald Francis Kohlbeck

November 15, 1928 - October 15, 2024

Donald Francis Kohlbeck, 95, of Camarillo, California, passed away peacefully at home with family at his side on October 15, 2024, just one month shy of his 96th birthday. Don was born November 15, 1928, in Menominee, Michigan, to Frank Joseph and Evelyn (Hubert) Kohlbeck, and grew up in Menominee, Michigan. Don married Nora Ellen Clark at St. Jude Catholic Church in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, on November 5, 1955. Don loved to tell the story of the 360 miles he would drive every weekend after he met Nora, and before they were married, so he could visit her in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. Don built his first home for himself and his new bride in Marinette, Wisconsin. Although Don was an only child, family was especially important to him. Together with Nora, he raised nine children and had thirty-nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Don's interest in the science of physics led him to a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In 1950, he enlisted in the US Air Force where he trained for and worked as an electrical instrument repairman and a nuclear technician to maintain nuclear weapons. In 1952 he was commissioned as a Communications Officer and eventually obtained the rank of First Lieutenant. Don was Honorably Discharged from the US Air Force, and he returned to civilian life in 1953.

During Don's career, he worked in engineering design and development of heat transfer products, food processing products, and engineering cognizance of airborne weapons. Don's career took him from Marinette, Wisconsin to

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, then on to Littleton, Colorado, and eventually to Camarillo, California. There, he joined the Fleet Weapons Engineering Division at Point Mugu, California in 1967 and he remained at Point Mugu until his retirement in 1989.

Don's faith was important to him and Don was an active member of St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Church in Camarillo, California for 57 years, where Nora continues to serve. Don was active in the church choir for over 55 years, many of those years as the choir director. Don was a great bass singer and was well-known for his "Oh Holy Night" solo at Christmas Mass.

Don believed that everything could be fixed if one kept working at it. In fact, Don was often referred to as "Mr. Fix It" because he could fix just about anything. Don especially enjoyed working on automobiles and in his later years, when he was no longer physically able to work on some of his many projects, he kept busy working on smaller projects, often taking items apart and putting them back together because he continued to enjoy learning and discovering how things were made. Don was a kind and caring person, often assisting a friend or neighbor in need. Don's family was so important to him that if it were at all possible, he would have loved to live forever so he could experience the joy of watching each and every member of his family grow and learn.

Along with his parents, Don was predeceased by his daughter, Catherine Holt, son-in-law Howard Chagnon, grandson Jeremy Rencher, granddaughters, Nora Margaret Krzeminski and Michelle Renee Rencher, brother-in-law Giles Clark, brother-in-law Patrick Clark and wife, Barbara, and sister-in-law, Sue Schoshinski and husband, William. Don is survived by his loving wife Nora of 69 years; his children: Barbara (Michael) Elles, Jean (Richard) Rencher, Nancy Christy, Frank (Annette) Kohlbeck, June Kohlbeck, Stephen (Holly) Kohlbeck, Margaret "Peggy" (Paul) St. Martin, and Michael (Stacey) Kohlbeck; his son-in-law William Holt; Timothy Krzeminski; his grandchildren: Sondra (Brent) Nesbit, Sean Elles, Rebecca (Dave) Krause, Jessica Rencher, Nicole (James) Bryan, Dominic Rencher, Benjamin Rencher, Hannah (Robert)

Darling, Bethany (Kaezzy) Kalenga, Evan Rencher, Stephen Rencher, Laura (Zachary) Langfield, Elizabeth Rencher, Grace (Ryan) Thomas, Jennifer Holt, Anthony (Darla) Holt, Charles Holt, Daniel Holt, Keanan and Teague Kohlbeck, Tesia, Seth, Noel and Conrad Krzeminski, Christian, Jacob, Bridgette and Heidi Kohlbeck, Luke, Austin, Zeke and Savannah St. Martin, Ben, Emma, Lily and Sam Kohlbeck; and his great-grandchildren: Bradley, Ryan, Linnea, Collette, Kylian, Charlize and Garrett. Don is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

A very special thank you to Michael and Stacey Kohlbeck, and their family, who, along with Nora, took wonderful care of Don in his final years.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Don's honor to the Music Ministry at St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Church, 2532 Ventura Boulevard, Camarillo, California 93010.