



Kenneth Eugene O'Connor

March 4, 1936 - September 27, 2020

Kenneth Eugene “Buzz” O’Connor, of Harmony, Minn., passed away unexpectedly at home Sunday, Sept. 27. He was 84.

Visitation is Friday, Oct. 2, 10 to 11 a.m. at Roble Funeral Home in Spring Grove, Minn. A graveside service will immediately follow at Trinity Lutheran Church cemetery.

Buzz was born March 4, 1936, to Paul Grant and Freda Luella (Kramer) O’Connor of Carimona Township, rural Preston, Minn. He attended country school, then high school in Preston, where he was an accomplished football player. He was baptized and confirmed, like generations of O’Connors, at St. Columban Church in Preston.

April 18, 1959, Buzz married Nancy Lou (Kiehne) O’Connor at St. Columban’s. The couple spent 30 years farming and raising their family in Spring Grove, Minn. In 2001, the couple sold the farm and moved to Harmony. Following Nancy’s passing in 2007, Buzz continued to reside in Harmony. His home was the heart of family holidays.

On April 19, 1989, Buzz began a 31-year career with Minowa Construction of Harmony. His Minnowa co-workers were his extended family, and they are full of stories reflecting his humor, (often irreverent) independence and loyalty. He worked far past any standard notion of retirement. He will be missed.

As a young man, Buzz joined the Army and was part of the 101st Airborne Division, commonly known as the Screaming Eagles. His intelligence and marksmanship apparent, Buzz became a Special Operatives sniper in pre-Vietnam activities. He was guarding the steps of Little Rock High School the day the Little Rock Nine made their historic walk. He was bound for the Bay of Pigs, and has told his grandchildren he “was glad that plane turned around.” His family will never know the extent of his military experiences. They know, however, that he had a soldier’s heart. His attention to detail, and his meticulous, routine nature and expectations of himself and others were with him the rest of his days.

Buzz had a great sense of humor. He was a natural storyteller, relaying tales of wildlife sightings, travels he'd taken or places he'd like to explore. He was an avid reader. His family knew not to call him during Sunday football, especially if one wasn't a Vikings fan. A collector of guns, he was known to contribute what he termed his "civic duty" in reducing the squirrel population of the City of Harmony, much to their chagrin. He treasured his grandchildren, who adored him. He commanded the respect, and the admiration, of those he met. Buzz was gruff, wise and had a heart of gold.

Survivors include his children, Jeff (Trista) O'Connor of Chatfield, Minn; Tanya O'Connor (Jesse Fish) of Decorah, Iowa; and Bridget (Trevor) Case of Harmony; Ten grandchildren, Cassie (Jordan) Rasmussen, Alaina, Keiran and Tristen O'Connor and Caroline Vorreyer, Zachary, Quentin and Zoey Case, Indigo and Isaac Fish; two brothers, Jim (Ann) O'Connor of Preston, and Pat O'Connor of Dexter, Minn; two sisters, Phyllis (Ron) Weathers of Fountain, Minn. and Kay (Vern) Ristau of Preston; brothers and sisters-in-law Arlen (Dorothy) Kiehne of Lanesboro, Minn. and Bonnie (Lawrence) Shanahan of Rochester, Minn; and many beloved nieces, nephews and their children.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Nancy; daughter Michelle Lanee in infancy; his parents; brothers Donald (Don) O'Connor and William (Bill) O'Connor; and brother and sister-in-law Dwaine and Beverly Kiehne.

Casketbearers are Buzz's grandchildren.

Roble Funeral Home in Spring Grove is handling arrangements. Internment will be next to his wife, Nancy, at Trinity Lutheran Church cemetery in Spring Grove.

Memorials will be dedicated to Gift of Life Transplant House.

Cemetery Details

Trinity Lutheran Cemetery

Hwy 44
Spring Grove, MN 55974

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 2. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Roble Funeral Home
225 East Main Street
P.O. Box 368
Spring Grove, MN 55974
mor4law@springgrove.coop
<https://roblefuneralhome.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Kenneth Eugene O'Connor.*



September 29, 2020 at 07:55 PM



“ *Tanya, Jeff and Bridget and families - Thinking of all of you and sending prayers for comfort during this difficult time. Your dad did have a great sense of humor and was admired by so many. Take comfort in all your wonderful memories ~ Roz Weis, Decorah*

Roz Weis - September 29, 2020 at 03:07 PM