



Kenneth Francis Ritchhart

October 26, 1927 - October 21, 2023

Kenneth Francis Ritchhart, age 95, of Estero, Florida, went to be with the Lord on Saturday, October 21, 2023, in Naples, FL.

Ken was born in Rocky Ford, Colorado on October 26, 1927, to Reverend S.C. and Marianna Ritchhart. Ken graduated from Liberal High School (KS) in 1945. While still in high school, he and several friends enlisted in the Navy during World War II. He was in boot camp and Yeoman's school in San Diego, CA, before being transferred to several bases in the US and he was discharged in Bainbridge, MD. He attended and graduated from Kansas State University with a BS degree in Architectural Engineering in 1950.

Ken was initially employed by General Motors Plant Engineering Dept. in Kansas City, KS. In 1954 he moved to Anderson, IN. He joined Architect John Kane. There they worked at the Department of Church Extension of the Church of God. Together they worked helping Church of God congregations build better worship facilities. In 1956, Ken was asked to join in a partnership with Architect James Johnson, and the architectural firm of Johnson, Ritchhart and Associates was formed. They continued to work with churches of all denominations in Indiana and surrounding states, as well as designing schools, shopping centers, commercial and office buildings. Because of the large amount of traveling time required to perform the required services away from Anderson, Ken took pilot lessons, became a licensed instrument-rated

pilot, and flew several thousand hours to serve his clients.

After the death of Mr. Johnson, Ken continued the architectural firm with Architect James Dauss as Dauss, Ritchhart & Associates. Ken was involved in the design and construction of over 150 churches of various denominations in the Midwest areas, as well as Anderson University buildings and many Warner Press remodeling's. He also did several Church of God agency buildings, several government buildings in Anderson and Warner Auditorium and received several awards for his work. The most prestigious award was for "Engineering Ingenuity" for the design and construction of Warner Auditorium in Anderson. This building seated 7,500 people and was the largest "lift slab dome" constructed up to that time with a 300-foot diameter and weighing over 3 million pounds for the dome alone. It was in use for 42 years and was featured in Ripley's Believe it or Not! His firm was also the architects for all Pay Less grocery stores and several shopping centers. He was also the owner/developer of several of those projects.

In 1996, the S.C. and Marianna Ritchhart Endowment Scholarship Fund was established by Ken to honor the ministry and devotion to God and the Church of God, of his parents Rev. S.C. and Marianna Ritchhart. The Endowment is funded in part with Pay Less and other private donations. Park Place Church of God was Ken's church, where he was active in serving on different boards, as well as serving on several business boards. He was a local board member of Selective Service from 1982 to 1990. He was also a very active member of the Lions Club for over 60 years and served as a past president and on the board of the Indiana State Lions Club. Every year, no matter where he lived, he would make a point to support them by going to their Pancake Breakfast to support their many projects.

In 2015 Ken was asked to go on the Honor Flight to Washington DC, honoring war veterans. Ken said, "This experience was just unbelievable and gave me

a great deal of faith in our country and our youth that they would spend their weekend to remember those who served to keep our country free, almost 70 years after World War II was over.”

Ken’s main love and interest was his family, and he was happiest when with them on the many trips they all took. He had been married to his first wife Leona V. Barker for 47 years and had 5 children: Linda, Ken, Steve, Ron and Jeff. He was blessed with his second wife, Jeannette Martino and the whole Martino family.

Ken was preceded in death by his wife of 47 years, Leona V. (Barker) Ritchhart and his wife of 25 years, Jeannette (Martino) Ritchhart. He was also preceded by his father, Rev. S.C. Ritchhart, his mother Marianna, brother Arthur, sister Patricia (Patsy) and grandson Zackery Groover.

He is survived by his daughter Linda (Larry) Robinson, sons Kenneth M. (Tena), Steve, Dr. Ron (Kevon Zehner) and Jeff (Ann), Mark Martino (Jose Fidelino), Kathy (Steve) Bailey, Tom (Barbara) Martino, Christine (Mario) Del Prado, Dr. David (Paige) Martino, Judy (Greg) Zarick.

Grandchildren: David Grossman, Helene (Paal) Grossman Grillo Ekeheien, Tracy Robinson, Christopher (Megan) Ritchhart, Michael (Kelsey) Ritchhart, Amy Ritchhart (Angie Groover), Chris Ritchhart, Shawn (Dr. Anna) Olsen, Rebecca (Carl) George, Michael Bailey, Brian Bailey, Amanda Del Prado, Eve Del Prado, Mia Del Prado, Tess Del Prado, Guy (Cierra) Martino, Max Martino, Maria (Matt Schroeder) Zarick, John (Mia) Zarick, Tommy Zarick, and Nicky Zarick

Great Grandchildren: Mason Ritchhart, Finn Olsen, Maggie Olsen, Harper Ritchhart, Adam Grillo, Andrea Grillo, Peter Grillo, Skyler (Haley) Tincher,

Preston Groover, Sophia Bailey; Dominic, Gabriella and Roman Martino.

Great, Great, Grandchildren: Brileigh, Paislee, Lincoln and Kora Tincher

A Celebration of the Life of Kenneth Ritchhart will be held at Rozelle Johnson Funeral Home in Anderson Indiana on Monday, November 6, 2023. Viewing at 10:00 am, service at 11:00 am.

In Lieu of flowers, honor Ken, by “pay it forward” donations to the S.C. and Marianna Ritchhart Endowment Scholarship Fund, at Anderson University, 1100 E. 5th St., Anderson, IN 46012, phone (800) 428-6414 to enable a young person to attend a Christian college; or to Indy Honor Flight, Inc, 9093 South SR 39, Mooresville, IN 46158, in his name.

Local arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home, Family Owned Since 1978.

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 6. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Rozelle Johnson Funeral Home
229 S. Rangeline Road
Anderson, IN 46012

Funeral Service

NOV 6. 11:00 AM (ET)

Rozelle Johnson Funeral Home
229 S. Rangeline Road
Anderson, IN 46012

Tribute Wall

EH

“ *Eve Del Prado & Zach Hamilton purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Kenneth Francis Ritchhart.*



Eve Del Prado & Zach Hamilton - November 01, 2023 at 02:05 PM

JC

“ *I had the opportunity of spending time with Ken when I would visit the Martino family at Christmas. Ken was always so happy and welcoming. He had the kindest eyes. When he looked at you and smiled you felt loved. He treated everyone as family. Ken is dearly missed .*

Jan Carnaghi - October 29, 2023 at 10:35 AM