

KENNETH L. NIST

June 14, 1947 - December 3, 2023



Kenneth L. Nist of Saratoga died Sunday, December 3, 2023, at El Camino Hospital in Mt. View, CA, after a brief illness.

Ken was born on Flag Day, (and as a child thought people put out flags for his birthday), in Pittsburgh where he graduated from Penn Hills High School. He went on to Carnegie-Mellon University (his dream school) where he received both a Bachelor's and Master's in Electrical

Engineering. While at CMU, Ken, who was 6'5" enjoyed great success playing intramural 3-man volleyball. He also ran the 440' and played tennis regularly, once landing a ball on the roof of Fine Arts (from the tennis courts). He also worked at the CMU Computer Center, which is where he met his future wife, Pauline. They were married in 1970, and after several years in Pittsburgh they moved to Harvard, Massachusetts to continue their computer careers, Ken at Cambridge Memories and Pauline at Digital Equipment Corporation.

In the 80s and 90s, he and Pauline enjoyed international travel, starting with several European trips, including a Christmas in Germany with his Brother Philip and his family, followed by more adventurous trips to Japan, China, Hong Kong, the Soviet Union, Central Asia, India, Nepal (where they rode elephants), and the then Czechoslovakia.

In 1997 they made a major move to Saratoga, California. Following the move, Ken survived a major medical scare when a blood vessel burst in his stomach. After almost bleeding to death, three surgeries, and a lengthy recovery, (with some limitations, and great doctors), he miraculously survived another 26 years. Ken and Pauline enjoyed California, traveling up and down the coast, from Bodega Bay to Santa Barbara, along with visiting Yosemite, and Las Vegas.

Besides his love of Electrical and Software Engineering, Ken enjoyed playing his Kawaii grand piano, with a repertoire that spanned Gershwin, Liszt, Rachmaninoff, and Scott Joplin. He also enjoyed local events like staying at the Lodge at Pebble Beach for the golf tournament, where he saw many famous professional golfers and other celebrities.

Ken was a Renaissance man who never met an engineering challenge he couldn't tackle. He loved traveling, playing piano, Ham Radio (KQ6QV), home projects (rebuilding the deck in Harvard), teasing his pair of Abyssinian cats, playing with his nieces and nephews, and watching Steeler football (although rumor has it that he also cheered for the Patriots and 49ers after living near those cities, but never over the Steelers). He created his "HDTV Primer" website to help with the transition to Digital TV, and still offered free Antenna software on the site. He was a kind, sweet, gentle man, who took great care of Pauline (including following some of her surgeries), and enjoyed his extended family. He was a huge science fiction fan, and especially enjoyed the various Star Trek movies.

He still wrote software and mastered equations. He loved his home in Saratoga, and enjoyed the California weather and spending time with Pauline and all the family that regularly came to visit. He was an iconoclastic dresser and was known to come down to the beach at Cape Cod in dress pants, white shirt, and black wing tips. The family recalls one time he was working on the roof in the same outfit. Moving to California did get him to adopt Tommy Bahama Hawaiian print shirts.

He is survived by Pauline, his wife of 53 years, His brother Philip Nist (Ingrid), sister Susan Sams (Jim), brothers and sisters-in-law, Marian and Dominic Salvatori, and Barbara and George Pry, and nieces and nephews, Philip Nist, Lydia Sweetland, Will Vogler, Jessica Pry, Richard Salvatori, Gregory Pry, and Maria Piccolomini. He was preceded in death by his parents Harry and Betty Nist, and nephew Kenneth Vogler.

A Celebration of life will be held later this year in Pittsburgh, Pa. Donations may be made in his memory to the Carnegie-Mellon University Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, or to El Camino Hospital in Mountain View CA.

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