



## George Kamenar

August 1, 1932 - September 7, 2023

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of George Kamenar, aged 91. Born Ratimir Juraj Kamenar in Zagreb, Croatia, George spent his formative years in a nation that was ravaged by war, in a city occupied by nazis and bombed by the allies. At age 12, he became separated from his family while they were fleeing from the communist takeover. He eventually found safety in a displaced persons camp in Italy and spent the remainder of his youth as a refugee. When he turned 19, he received an opportunity to relocate and chose to come to the United States, having been sponsored by a family in Davenport, Iowa. During his journey, he passed through Ellis Island. After coming to the United States, he worked in a factory, but his desire to serve and give back to his new country led him to enlist in the US Air Force as a medic. Even prior to becoming a citizen, he served a combat tour in Korea at an Air Force Field Hospital. In October of 1953, while still serving our nation, he felt privileged to be offered U.S.

citizenship, at which time he legally changed his name to George. While in uniform, George met the woman who would become his wife of 68 years, Connie Lentz. Prior to completing his enlistment, George and Connie were married at St. Theresa's Catholic Church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. In 1958, after working and living in San Antonio and Kansas City, George and Connie settled in Canton, South Dakota where he took a job as a bookkeeper, production and office manager for Canton Block and Tile. George worked at what would become Canton Concrete Products Inc. for nearly thirty years and for a time concurrently supported bookkeeping needs at Bid-Well Company. George and Connie raised three children, two boys and a girl. When George's boys were children, he told them they owe a debt of gratitude to our nation for the relative freedoms it provides. He went on to challenge all his children to give back, either through military service, volunteerism, or as an educator. As such, both boys served in the military while his daughter became an educator. Eventually George and Connie relocated to Yankton, SD, where George worked for the South Dakota Highway Patrol and owned a security company. He worked both jobs until he felt it was time to retire, well into his 70's. As a father and community member he served as a Scout Leader, catechism instructor, church choir member and for a time choir leader, was a life member of the VFW, an overly frequent blood donor, and for

a while served as a volunteer interpreter at a hospital given that he spoke five languages. He was a voracious reader, loved to visit with family and sing Croatian folk songs, and in later years made several trips to his home country to see family.

In retirement George and Connie moved to be near their daughter and her family in Nebraska.

They currently reside in Plattsmouth, a bedroom community of Omaha. It was during this time in

Nebraska that George was diagnosed with the cancer that would eventually take his life, a

month following his 91st birthday. George loved his adopted country, spoke at length about his

native lands, cherished his children and grandchildren, and lived a life of calmness, never

seeking self-glory or recognition, and only sought the pleasure of other people's company.

During his illness, we often heard how much people enjoyed their time with him and regarded

him as a sweet and gentle man.

George is survived by his wife, Connie, and their three children: Juraj, Tim (Janelle), and Tereza

(Sean) Kamenar McCoy and by their grandchildren Renata Kamenar (Markus), Katarina

Kamenar; Matthew Petersen and Lezlee Petersen and great-grandchild Rhodri Harris. George

is also survived by several brothers and sisters worldwide.

The family would like to thank those who provided such wonderful care for him at both the

University of Nebraska Medical Center, and the Douglas County Public Health and Hospice Center.

In lieu of flowers, the family wishes donations would be made to, Pets for Vets.

Private funeral services are limited to the immediate family.

# Tribute Wall



“ George Kamenar

October 09, 2023 at 12:23 PM



“ Floor Plant for Sympathy was purchased for the family of George Kamenar.



September 12, 2023 at 09:24 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of George Kamenar.

September 12, 2023 at 09:24 AM



“ Rachelle R. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of George Kamenar.

**Rachelle R.** - September 11, 2023 at 06:10 PM



“ Classic Sympathy Dish Garden was purchased for the family of George Kamenar.



September 09, 2023 at 09:24 AM