



## Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer

December 4, 1947 - August 28, 2023

Harley Kenneth Sweitzer ('Ken') was born December 4, 1947, in New Castle, Pennsylvania, to Raymond and Ruth (Tokos) Sweitzer. He grew up in Claremont, California, and graduated in 1966 from Claremont High School. In his younger years, Ken had a newspaper route and learned the value of a dollar.

Ken was drafted into the United States Army during the Vietnam War and proudly served for two years. For his faithful and honorable service, he earned several medals including the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal.

In 1972, Ken met the love of his life, Marilyn Scanlon, while attending college at Chaffey in Alta Loma. They were united in marriage on June 24, 1972, and to this union they were blessed with four wonderful children: Robert, Jill, Christian, and Katherine.

Ken finished his electrical apprenticeship in 1977 and worked as a journeyman electrician for twenty years. He was a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. After retiring from commercial and industrial electrical construction, he was hired by CalTrans as a maintenance electrician. Ken loved this job, and retired again in 2010.

Ken was always puttering around and working on a project. He could fix everything from automobiles to appliances. Ken loved to garden and was proud of his big vegetable garden and orchard trees. He enjoyed his small hobby farm and working with the beehives in California, then farming on a larger scale in Missouri.

Ken was an avid reader who truly loved history, especially military history. He liked going to museums and loved the adventure of traveling. Most important to him was making memories with his family. He was a proud grandfather. He cherished his grandchildren and adored his great-grandchildren.

Ken believed in the Lord and was a man of faith. He was an active member of the Salem United Methodist Church. Ken loved the community he lived in and proudly helped any way he could.

Ken entered eternal rest August 28, 2023, in Salem, Missouri at the age of seventy-five years. He is survived by his loving wife: Marilyn Sweitzer of Salem, MO; children: Robert Sweitzer and fiancé Crystal of House Springs, MO, Jill Reddell and husband Doug of Auburn, CA, Christian Sweitzer and wife Shannon of Honolulu, HI, and Katherine Malavenda and husband Brett of Puerto Rico; grandchildren: Tony and wife Olivia, Joseph, Luke, Camille, River, Henry, Jameson, and Remington; great-grandchildren: Colton, Blakely, Harley, Raelynn, and Maddie; brothers: Gary Sweitzer and wife Diane, and Raymond Sweitzer and wife Janice both of California; sisters-in-law: Janet Brannan of Salem, MO and JoAnne Know and husband David of Apollo Beach, FL; as well as a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives, and dear friends.

Preceding him in death, his parents: Raymond and Ruth Sweitzer.

Ken will be remembered for his tender, candid, gentle, strong, patriotic nature. The love he shared with those around him will never be forgotten. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends, and community.

Celebration of Life for Harley Kenneth Sweitzer was held Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at the Salem United Methodist Church with Pastor Barry Baugh officiating. Special Music was provided by daughter Kate, grandson Luke, and Ed Morris. Congregational Hymn sung was "How Great Thou Art" and additional song selections played were "Sweet Beulah Land" and "I Believe". Military Honors was provided by the U.S. Army Honors Team. Burial was in the Missouri Veterans Cemetery, Waynesville, Missouri. Arrangements were under the direction and care of Wilson Mortuary of Salem, Missouri.

Memorial Contributions may be made in memory of Ken to Patriot Paws of Rolla, Missouri or the Salem Area Community Betterment Association.

Online Condolences may be entered at [www.wilsonmortuary.com](http://www.wilsonmortuary.com)

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP 5. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Salem United Methodist Church  
801 MO-32  
Salem, MO 65560  
(573) 729-4551

## Memorial Service

SEP 5. 11:00 AM (CT)

Salem United Methodist Church  
801 MO-32  
Salem, MO 65560  
(573) 729-4551

# Tribute Wall

EG

“ My heart is with all of Ken’s family and friends as they try to navigate the pain of such a profound loss. I did not know him well, but I have been close with Jill for 14 years. From the few times I had the pleasure of being around Jill’s family, it was clear what a devoted husband and father he was. He was resourceful, hardworking and had a big heart. He was welcoming and adventurous and he was my birthday twin! I feel fortunate to have known him at all. I send my love to all those who are grieving, but take comfort in knowing he made the world a better place by just being in it. -Erika

Erika Garcia - September 07, 2023 at 08:48 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Videos Album



Wilson Mortuary - September 06, 2023 at 11:42 AM

AC

“ April C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.

April C. - September 06, 2023 at 10:50 AM



“ 2 files added to the album Videos Album



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**Wilson Mortuary** - September 05, 2023 at 08:06 PM

CL

“ Marilyn please except my heartfelt condolences of the passing of your wonderful husband and life partner. If you need anything please let me know. On behalf of of American Legion we mourn the loss of a brother.  
Clay Lindsay VFW JAG and American Legion Commander.

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**Clay Lindsay** - September 05, 2023 at 10:57 AM

LS

“ We will forever treasure our memories of times spent together when our kids were growing up. Ken and Marilyn, along with Robbie, Jill, Chris and Katie will always have a very special place in our hearts. We first met back in 1981. As a young family, we had just moved to the Oak Glen area and did not know anyone. On her very first day of kindergarten, Julie made friends with Jill Sweitzer! Marilyn called to welcome us to the neighborhood and thus began a life-long family friendship. Turned out that Jill and Julie, Chris and David, Katie and Steve, all became the best of friends! Doug and I were blessed with the friendship of Ken and Marilyn. They invited us to join their church, Faith Lutheran Church in Yucaipa. They, also, introduced us to the Byrem Family. The Sweitzers, Byrems and our family have lots of memories to share, including our very special, annual Progressive Christmas Dinners. Marilyn and Ken were married on June 24, 1972...same as us! Marilyn introduced us to Linda and Doug Baker, another young family that lived nearby with kids the same ages as ours...also married on June 24, 1972! We got together for BBQ's on our mutual anniversaries for many years after that! Our prayers for comfort, peace and love are with Marilyn and her beautiful family.  
Doug and Linda Schulz

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**Linda Schulz** - September 04, 2023 at 11:18 PM

GC

“ Gordon, Kristen and Elizabeth Cameron purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.



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**Gordon, Kristen and Elizabeth Cameron** - September 04, 2023 at 12:52 PM

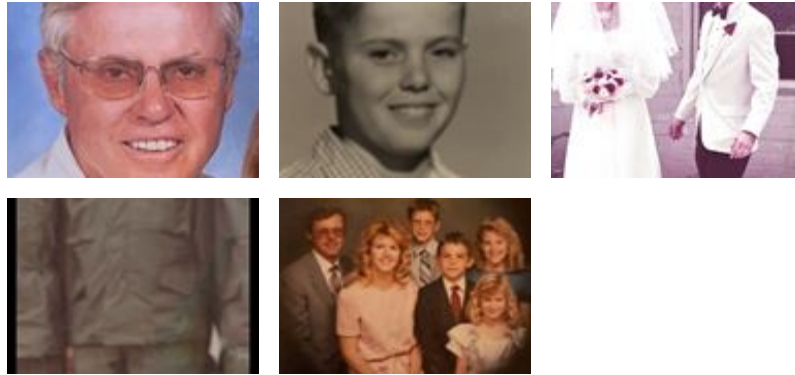
GC

“ Gordon, Kristen and Elizabeth Cameron planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.

Gordon, Kristen and Elizabeth Cameron - September 04, 2023 at 12:52 PM



“ 222 files added to the album LifeTributes



Wilson Mortuary - September 04, 2023 at 12:30 PM

RY

“ Marilyn, I am so sorry to read about Ken's death just now. He was such a great guy, a model of faith and service. May the love of God continue to comfort and strength to you and all who loved him, Robbie, Jill, Chris, and Kate, and grant you peace. Love to all the Sweitzers from Connecticut.

Rev. Peggy Yingst - September 04, 2023 at 11:10 AM

AB

“ We have so many good, shared memories of our families doing things together.....Backpacking, Colorado River, Christmas progressive dinners, Lake Silverwood, backyard, bbq's hanging out together, the list goes on. How blest we are! Ken was a great one with pranks when out and about.....One such time was on a backpacking trip out of Bishop. He is holding his thumb and going around showing everyone his injured finger and it looks like he did a number on it from a fish filet knife. Mind you first aid kit etc. is now being found to fix him up, with orders to soak it in the water.....lo and behold he pulls off his fake injured finger and is rolling with laughter. He was a great big hearted guy and friend to all.....We will miss you, Ken!!

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**April Christine Byrem** - September 04, 2023 at 10:28 AM



“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.



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September 04, 2023 at 05:13 AM

ES

“ I am honored to have met and counted Ken and Marilyn as friends. Ken was a life member of VFW Post 6280 who had served his country in Vietnam and was an active supporter of the Heroes Marathon. It's amazing that he and Marilyn have the energy to support Veteran programs and still run a farm. Ken, we will miss you!

*Eric Surles, Cdr VFW Post 6280*

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**Eric Surles** - September 04, 2023 at 12:06 AM

ES

“ Eric & Katharina Surles purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.



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**Eric & Katharina Surles** - September 03, 2023 at 11:39 PM

ES

“ Eric & Katharina Surles planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.

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**Eric & Katharina Surles** - September 03, 2023 at 11:39 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.



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September 02, 2023 at 11:21 PM

SC

“ Sharon and Steve have many wonderful memories of Ken and family through our connect at Faith Lutheran Church Lutheran in Yucaipa, CA, during the 80's and 90's. Steve in particular loved talking politics and life with Ken. Even though we had differing thoughts, we always found common ground and could move on as close friends. Some of our best memories have been more recent during our two visits to their Missouri ranch--one this past June 2023. We will always treasure our times together! Steve and Sharon Cady

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**Steve and Sharon Cady** - September 02, 2023 at 06:26 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.



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September 02, 2023 at 10:04 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.



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September 01, 2023 at 06:08 PM



“ Steve C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.

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Steve C. - September 01, 2023 at 01:53 PM

SC

“ I was honored in meeting Harley and you, Marilyn, for the very first time when I visited my brother and sister in law, Bill and Ann, last year. Here I was, a stranger from Texas meeting you for the first time but you and Harley immediately accepted me as a member of the family and made me feel right at home as if we were lifelong friends. I got to work with Harley, Janet and my siblings for a cattle roundup and bringing in hay bales from the field and hauling them to the barn. What an experience! And also got to be present for your very special wedding anniversary party. So meeting you and Harley was a very bright highlight of my 2022 summer! Thank you both for making me a member of the family! And my great sorrows for the tragic sudden departing of Harley from our lives.

Steve Chase - September 01, 2023 at 01:45 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.



August 31, 2023 at 10:20 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Harley "Ken" Kenneth Sweitzer.



August 31, 2023 at 05:01 PM

CS

“ Marilyn, I am so very sorry for your loss. Ken was such a pleasant dignified man to encounter at church. Our sympathy and prayers go to you, your children, grandchildren and all your family. I know he will be missed by many. Cindy Sachs

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**Cindy Sachs** - August 31, 2023 at 02:22 PM

JB

“ I remember when I was maybe 17 years old. Ken took me to a house he was rehabbing in lower Yucaipa. I knew nothing about anything. But he showed me how to work on the electrical system of a home. Something I have taken with me the rest of my life. He was such a kind and giving man. He will truly be missed.

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**jason Button** - August 31, 2023 at 12:00 PM

PM

“ Marilyn, I am deeply sorry for your loss. I remember first meeting you and Harley through the insurance agency. I recognized immediately what fine, sincere people you both are. You are in my thoughts and heart.

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**Phyllis McKinley** - August 30, 2023 at 05:29 PM