



## Donald Joseph Kern

February 12, 1928 - March 29, 2014

Don Kern, who helped organize Community Mental Health Boards in six Southeastern Michigan counties, directed the Wayne County and Macomb County Mental Health Boards before he retired died Saturday, March 29. He was 86. Mr. Kern was born in Detroit, MI on February 12, 1928 to Eula and Oswald Kern. The family later moved to Centerline where Mr. Kern and his 10 siblings attended Catholic schools. He enlisted in the Navy during World War II on his 17th birthday, the same day he learned of his older brother Richard's death in service battle at Okinawa, Japan. He later earned his Bachelor's Degree in teaching from Northern Michigan University and his Master's Degree from Wayne State University before entering the mental health field. In his retirement Mr. Kern volunteered at Bay Cliff Health Camp north of Marquette, MI and was a longtime member of the Ann Arbor Kiwanis. He impressed members and friends with his talents as a storyteller and knowledgeable historian of Michigan's politics, geography and people. He was also the co-founder of the Father Clement Kern Foundation in honor of the work of Detroit's renowned priest from Holy Trinity in Corktown to whom he is related. He spent much time working with Father Kern to assist in helping Detroit's less fortunate people better their lives and was awarded the Kern Foundation's highest honor. "As a pioneer in community mental health, an eloquent spokesperson for inclusivity and an advocate for the vulnerable and voiceless, Don's work was about doing the right thing. Nothing would honor or please him more than for others to carry this legacy forward," said his

colleague and son-in-law Marc Strauss. Mr. Kern is survived by his wife of 65 years, Sally, brother Bob Kern, sisters Helen Meduvsky, Irene Diotte and Dorothy Kern McMahan and Ilene Matt, Jo Woods and as well as his children, Colette Rivard Kern (Marc Strauss), Andrea Lee North (Jim North), Vince Kern (Sheila Kern) and Kevin Kern. Mr. Kern has three grand-children, Simone Rivard Strauss, Eliza Lee and Roseanna Lee. He is preceded in death by his brothers Richard, Vince and Fred and Sister Sharon Marie. Mr. Kern's public viewing will be at 9:45 a.m. Wednesday, April 2 at Our Lady Of Good Counsel, 47650 North Territorial Road, Plymouth MI. A Funeral Mass will be held there at 11 a.m. with a luncheon to follow. Mr. Kern and his family ask that in lieu of flowers; please consider a donation to his favorite charity: Bay Cliff Health Camp <http://www.baycliff.org/site/donate-today.html> PO Box 310 Big Bay, MI 49808 To leave a message of condolence, please use the condolences link on this page.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Donald Joseph Kern*

December 07, 2023 at 05:11 AM



“ *"Do not be amazed at this, for the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his (Jesus) voice and come out." This scripture can be found at John 5:28, 29 in Jehovah God's word the bible. You have my deepest sympathy at this trying time.*

**Zandra Walker** - December 12, 2014 at 10:11 AM



“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. I'm glad I was able to meet and spend time with him these past few years. A pleasure to be around.*

**Ellen Krichbaum & Ronnie Sabbag** - December 12, 2014 at 10:11 AM

CA

“ Dom, I never for to know you, but I got to know and work with your nephew Vince, and I'm here to say if Vince in someway was and indeed like you, then I got to know a real great man by the example your nephew is to those whom get to know him... I'm sure Vince and his loved ones are sadden by you going home, but they I'm sure they know that you aren't that far away and the very legacy, which you leave behind lives within them... May you not only rest, but May you continue to drop by and let them know that you are always around, just as you have before, but this time in a different brighter realm... May you rest in the peacefulness of His love and Spirit and may your memory continue to live on in those whom called you, Hubby, Dad, Uncle, Brother and most of all friend.... Vince and Dawn, we are with you in prayers and in heart.... Remember Never Alone...

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**Chaplain Palmer Allen** - December 12, 2014 at 10:11 AM

BF

“ I am so sorry for your loss. Uncle Don was a wonderful man.I have many memories of growing up when our families would get together. My thoughts and prayers are with you

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**Barb Rivard Flores** - December 12, 2014 at 10:11 AM

MC

“ Prayers and Condolences to all the Kern Family. It is very hard to lose a Loved one but God will get you thru this. Mrs Janice Berube Costine

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**Mrs Janice Costine** - December 12, 2014 at 10:11 AM

BC

“ Blessings to the Kern family at this time. We have wonderful memories of Uncle Don to keep with us as we move through life. You all were blessed to have such a wonderful man in your life. God bless you all

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**Bill,Linda,Kiana &Alia Cornelius** - December 12, 2014 at 10:11 AM