



Kenneth W. Kramer

July 7, 1938 - August 30, 2008

Kenneth W. Kramer, PE died Saturday, August 30, 2008 at Crystal Creek Assisted Living Center in Canton, Michigan following an extended illness. ❖ He was 70 years old. ❖ He was preceded in death by his brother, Lawrence, and sister, Marge Roth. ❖ His brother, Robert, and sister, Mary Beu, of Chicago, survive him. Mr. Kramer epitomized the best of his generation. ❖ He was a man of character who had a strong sense of personal and professional integrity. ❖ He cherished his family -- ❖ Bobbie Kramer, his devoted wife of 45 years; four (4) children, Kim (Steve) Benedetti, Mark (Judy) Kramer, Mary Beth (Carlos) Najarro, and Kevin (Amanda) Kramer; and eight (8) grandchildren: ❖ Melicce, Cassie, Alana, Marisa, Kevin, Anthony, Andrew and Mackenzie. Visitation will be from 4 p.m. - 9 p.m., Wednesday, September 3 and from 2 p.m. - 9 p.m., Thursday, September 4 at Vermeulen Funeral Home, 46401 West Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth, Michigan. ❖ Mr. Kramer will lie in state at 10:00 a.m., followed by a mass at 10:30 a.m., Friday, September 5, at St. John Neumann Church, 44800 Warren Road (west of Sheldon) ❖ Canton, Michigan. Entombment follows in the afternoon at Glen Eden ❖ Memorial ❖ Park, ❖ 35667 West Eight Mile Road, Livonia, Michigan. The family has requested that donations be made to Covenant House of Michigan, 2959 Martin Luther King Drive, Detroit MI 48208, ❖ or Right to Life-Lifespan of Metro Detroit, 27592 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia MI 48150. ❖ Ken's daughter, Kim, says "my dad worked hard to make a better life for his family. He will always be my hero." ❖ Ken's sons remember their father's lessons in good

sportsmanship and fair play from times when he coached their soccer teams. Born July 7, 1938 in Chicago, Illinois, Ken Kramer, attended the University of Detroit, during which time he served as a Co-op in the Detroit metro area for Chicago-based STS. He obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from U of D in 1961. In 1964, he co-founded Soil and Materials Engineers, Inc., a thriving consulting engineering firm headquartered in Plymouth with over 200 employees and 7 regional offices in Michigan and Toledo, Ohio. The company's success was built on performance principles communicated to employees at every turn by Ken: ownership, responsibility, attention to detail, setting priorities, knowing what is going on, hard work, checking up, and facing the facts. One of Ken's favorite expressions was, "Clarify and verify!"

For 40 years, Ken nurtured the careers of countless engineers, and project and business leaders as president of Soil and Materials Engineers, Inc. He inspired respect because he treated everyone with dignity. "Ken was at his best when someone was down on his or her luck," according to Sherri Fountain, Manager of Human Resources for SME. "He always gave people the benefit of the doubt and quietly took care of people behind the scenes. He was really compassionate and loyal to his employees." Although Ken enjoyed playing a round of golf every now and then, he reveled in hard work. During his career, he managed and provided technical oversight on geotechnical engineering and materials evaluation projects in 25 states and the Bahamas including the: Westland Shopping Center, AAA Headquarters Building and Addition in Dearborn, Chrysler's Sterling Stamping Plant and Auburn Hills Technology Center, Michigan Bell Headquarters, Detroit Renaissance Center - Phases I, II and III, Prudential Town Center, University of Michigan Additions and Renovations, and the Parklane and Fairlane Office Buildings. An accomplished business leader, Ken served on and led committees with the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC), American Society of Civil Engineers, Associated General Contractors, Engineering Society of Detroit, Michigan Society of Professional Engineers,

and ASFE. ♦ He had boundless energy! Along the way, Ken earned the trust of developers, architectural/engineering firms, and community and municipal clients in Michigan. ♦ According to Tim Mitchell, PE, SME's Regional Manager in Kalamazoo, "Ken taught me that it was more important to build a long-term client relationship than to win a single project." ♦ Frank Henderson, PG, SME Board Member and former Director of Operations, agrees. ♦ "Ken always told us to make sure we understood what a client wanted and to make sure we exceeded the client's expectations. ♦ He set a great example for us all." ♦ His legacy of excellence and generosity at SME lives on today under the leadership of his son, Mark Kramer, PE and the stewardship of many loyal, long-term SME employees. To ♦ share a memory with the family click on the view and send Condolence Link on this page.

Tribute Wall



“ *Kenneth W. Kramer*

December 07, 2023 at 05:11 AM



“ *Condolences to Mr.Kramer's family and to SME.*

Alejandro Family - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM



“ *I was very saddened to hear about Ken. He was truly a great man.
My prayers are with your family.*

Tom Stolz - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM



“ *We were deeply saddened to learn of Ken's passing. He will be
missed by all who knew him.*

Daniel Redstone and Redstone Architects - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM



“ *Though my words can be of little comfort, know you will find
strength and hope in the legacy of
beautiful memories that Ken Kramer
has left behind and will shine in each one of us that were blessed to
know him.*

Paul Bednarski - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

MR

“ Hi Bobbie,

I don't know if you remember me from High School but I just wanted to offer my sympathy and tell you that I will be praying for you and your family at this very sad time.

God bless you all. Mary

Mary (Hayes) Reeber - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

GH

“ *I was saddened to read the news of the passing of your husband, Kenneth. May God bless you and your family with peace and faith. When time allows and you are up to it, I would love to hear from you*

Gail (Clayton) Hodge - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

TB

“ *Ken was great mentor and a good friend. He accomplished much in his life and will be missed.*

Tim Bedenis - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

TF

“ *Mark, Judy, Cassie, Alana, & Kevin...we are very sorry for the loss of your father and grandfather...our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.*

Dave, Gloria & Christina Dreyer

The Dreyer Family - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

DB

“ *Bobbie, Mark and family;*

I was saddened to hear about Ken's recent passing. It has been years since I have had the opportunity to speak to any of you, but please know that my thoughts are with you in your time of loss. My sincerest sympathies.

David Bird - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

DD

“ *To the entire Kramer and SME Family -*

Please allow us to add our tribute for Ken on this very sad occasion. He was a true giant in our professional services industry and set his company on a path of true ethical performance. He will be missed by us all.

- The Staff of Harley Ellis Devereaux

Dennis King, CEO @ Harley Ellis Devereaux - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

JH

“ *Bobbie, Mark, and Family,*

Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you at this most difficult time. While working at SME with Ken was always a pleasure, we were also fortunate enough to enjoy his and Bobbie's company on the golf course--those memories are in our hearts forever.

God bless all of you.

Jeanne and Bob Hansen - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

PF

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with your family at this difficult time.

Ken will be remembered as a gentleman of high principles, a patient mentor and a leader that brought a kindness of heart to all his affairs.

Peter Schappach & Family - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

KL

“ Mark and Family you are in our thoughts and prayers .I enjoyed the business relationship with your father and will always remember playing golf once a summer with Ken and Richard Gershenson. We had alot of fun and got to know each other on a personel level.He had a great love for his family

Ken Lawless - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

DF

“ *Mark and Family,*

I share in your sadness, and my heart goes out to all of you.

I learned more in any given hour with Ken than I ever did during a whole semester in any classroom. Not only about business, but about people, about doing what makes sense, and most importantly about putting people first and doing the right thing. Ken was a mentor like no other. I remember so well, trying to take it all in. Every last bit of advice, both spoken and unspoken.

On Wednesday morning, September 3rd, the 1,329 children of Holy Family Regional School in Rochester will ALL be praying for Ken, his family, and friends.

I'll keep a special place in my prayers for you, Mark, and for your Dad and your family. My family will be praying for yours.

God Bless,

Deb Osuch and Family

Deb Osuch and Family - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

RF

“ *Our condolences on the passing of Ken, beloved husband and father.*

I will always remember him for his leadership and dedication to principles we can all believe in. Even more, I will remember that he believed in people most of all, and made a difference for many.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Ron Pelkie and Family - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

TF

“ Our thoughts and prayers go out to all of you. We're sorry to hear of the passing of your father, father-in-law and grandpa.
Love- your fellow soccer family - Michelle, Brian, Tyler and Morgan Gillespey

The Gillespey Family - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

JZ

“ All of the Staff of Campbell-Manix send their heartfelt condolences.

Jack Zelazny - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM

BR

“ Bobbie, Mark, and Family,

Please accept my deepest sympathy.

I will always be grateful for Ken's patience, encouragement, and unwavering faith in me. Most of all, he was a man of integrity and served as an important role model. I learned a great deal from working with Ken. He will be sadly missed.

Bob Rabeler - December 12, 2014 at 10:22 AM