



Judge Kenneth Conn

October 20, 1933 - October 16, 2016

Kenneth Eugene Conn was born in Los Angeles on October 20th, 1933 to Esther and

Cecil Conn. He died October 16th, 2016 at his home in Visalia after a year-long battle with cancer. God is in good company. Ken died as he lived his life: with grace, humor, and courage, just four days short of his birthday. Ken died praying with his wife, looking out at his beloved roses, surrounded by his own paintings in the lovely home he designed. He said, in any sermon, to “please emphasize my pride in my family, the judicial community, and my country.

”Ken studied in the RCIA program for converts and was baptized at St. Mary’s in 2003. He was close to God. He asked in lieu of flowers or memorial that he would like donations to the Bethlehem Center, his favorite charity. His

treasured quote was from John Steinbeck’s *East of Eden*, which states, “A man, after he has brushed off the dust and chips of his life, will have left only the hard, clean question: Was it good or was it bad? Have I done well, or ill?”

His young years were spent in many different California towns and happy summers in Winnemucca, Nevada with his beloved aunt Doris and uncle Cecil Hawkins. Ken moved to Tulare with his single mother in 1949. He loved Tulare Union High School and graduated with honors in 1951. Ken was glad he joined the Navy ROTC program at Union. He earned a Navy scholarship for four years at Stanford. In 1954 he married his high school sweetheart, Peggy L. Halleen. After graduation, Ken became a naval aviator, flying on carriers. He became a flight instructor and trained many Navy pilots and even a group

of aviators from other countries. Ken took the LSAT, in his flight suit, in San Francisco. He was accepted into law school at Boalt Hall, UC Berkeley. When Ken passed the Bar Exam, he came to Visalia to practice law with Nat Bradley, which he enjoyed immensely. Ken was a member of the County Health Council. He was a charter member and secretary of the "Legal Aide Society". He served as the president of the Tulare County Bar Association in 1971. In 1977, Ken was appointed as a juvenile court referee and helped many children. In 1978, Ken was appointed to the Superior Court by Jerry Brown to finish the term of resigning Honorable Fred Jacobus. He was reelected in November of 1978, 1984, 1990, and 1996. From his early days, Ken was a director for the County Library, which now bears his name on the conference room. Judge Conn pioneered a settlement conference program for the Superior Court, which became a significant asset in eliminating the civil law backlog. In the halls of the historic courthouse of Mariposa in 1982, Ken married Carmelita M. Jarvis, a writer. They shared 35 joyful years together. Father Rod Craig, a dear friend, renewed their vows at a mass at St. Anthony's Retreat in Three Rivers several years ago. Ken truly enjoyed his many years in the California Judges Association (CJA), where he held many different offices and chairmanships. He was a prized instructor for many sessions at the California Judicial Education and Research Foundation (CJER). Ken served on planning committees and panels at CJER civil law institutes. In his final years on the bench, Judge Conn served as State Chairman of the Civil Law Committee for the CJA from 1997-1998. Ken is the author of "Settlement Conference", a handbook for judges and lawyers, which was used as a textbook at the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada. It was often included in course materials in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) programs by CJA and CJER. It is in hundreds of law libraries in California and many other states. Ken was presiding judge of the Superior Court three times in his 20 year tenure. He was awarded "Judge of the Year" by the Tulare County Bar Association three separate times. As a designated environmental judge, he dealt with many land use disputes and environmental

conflicts. Because of his wide experience in complex water rights cases, Judge Conn was accepted as a "Water Wonk" by the water community. Ken loved traveling to other courts to try cases. His favorite was a six-week stay in Bridgeport, California, where he tried a most sensational case of murder and intrigue. Ken was very popular. He and his wife enjoyed becoming locals. Ken was awarded "Pie of the Year" at the Mono County Fair. After retiring in 1998, Ken set up a mediation practice, settling cases on many "road trips" around California with his wife. They were happy traveling to many foreign ports also, including beloved London and Venice, as well as a special trip to Paris including a river boat trip on the Seine where they spent a day in artist Claude Monet's gardens at Giverny. Ken was a prolific oil painter. He had a solo exhibit at Arts Visalia in September of 2015 just before his cancer diagnosis. In recent months, he was awarded a nice tribute from the California Supreme Court for 50 years of serving justice in California. Ken is survived by: His wife Carmelita Conn; his sister, Brenda Lahner; daughters: Melissa Conn Smith (and husband Lloyd) of Visalia, Jennifer Conn Shirk of Visalia, Pamela Conn Flores (and her partner Michael Kirschner) of McKinleyville, CA, and Marjie Conn Roldan (and husband Nate) of Visalia; stepchildren: Terese Lane, Jack H. Jarvis III (and wife Dianne), Julie L. Polk (and husband Larry), Geoffrey Jarvis, Patrick B. Jarvis, Michael T. Jarvis (and wife Elizabeth), and Mary C. Jarvis (and husband John O'Leary); numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren ;and his beloved cat, Mickey. A rosary will be prayed Thursday, October 27, 2016 at St. Mary's Catholic Church at 6 PM. Mass of the Christian Burial will be held Friday, October 28, 2016 at St. Mary's Catholic Church at 1:30 PM followed by a graveside service at Visalia District Cemetery. A memorial tribute may be offered by logging onto www.salseranddillard.com

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Previous Events

Rosary

OCT 27 (PT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church- Visalia, CA
608 N. Church Street
Visalia, CA 93291
<http://tccov.org/st-marys/>

Mass of Christian Burial

OCT 28. 1:30 PM (PT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church- Visalia, CA
608 N. Church Street
Visalia, CA 93291
<http://tccov.org/st-marys/>

Tribute Wall

LG

“ *Linda T. Garcia lit a candle in memory of Judge Kenneth Conn*



Linda T. Garcia - October 26, 2016 at 04:46 PM

LF

“ *Our deepest sympathies in the loss of Judge Conn. Always a favorite person of our mother, Gloria Wright. She thought so much of him and Carmelita. Laurel Flores and the Wright family of Visalia*

Laurel Flores - October 24, 2016 at 07:22 PM