



A lasting memorial has been given to Spirit of Hope Church in memory of Thomas R. Kuenne

June 6, 1938 - May 6, 2014



Tom was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Florence and Kuno Kuenne. His first love was fishing. He grew up fishing on Lac La Belle in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, where he lived until age 16. His father was transferred to California, and the family moved to Whittier, where Tom graduated from Cal High in 1956.

Tom served in the Air Force from 1960 to 1964. He learned Polish and became a spy. He served in Germany, where his job was to monitor Polish aircraft. Upon his return he raised money for non-profits and taught stockbrokers about tax shelter programs. He also traded commodities on the Minneapolis Grain Exchange.

Fishing, the outdoors, and the family cabin on the Mondeaux Flowage (where Tom caught his first muskie), spawned Tom's desire to own a resort. After he married Barbara Gayle Smith in 1973, they bought a remote American plan fishing lodge in N.W. Ontario. When the resort was later sold, Tom was able to pursue many lifetime dreams. He learned to fly and got both a private and multi-engine license. He bought a Beechcraft airplane and went flying, which allowed for many memory-making moments.

Old cars were a big passion of Tom's, and he found his "beauty," a 1951 Dodge Club Coupe. He joined the Walter P. Chrysler car club, where he enjoyed new friends, club meets, and car cruises. Tom enjoyed many forms of music throughout his life, especially ragtime, jazz, bluegrass, religious, and old-time piano. He always played by ear. His favorites were "Five Foot Two" and "Great is Thy Faithfulness."

Tom was a consumer of information. He loved the library, words, reading, and writing. He could spend hours constructing a letter. Writing made him happy because he had a very special way of saying things. He loved reading his own writing. Tom also spent much time watching and feeding the backyard birds. He loved his many pet rabbits and the two cats that came into his life recently. They were real buddies and constant companions.

After Barbara retired from teaching, they began traveling internationally. They kept this up until it became too hard to travel safely. He studied maps and geography and wanted to visit every country.

Tom passed away peacefully on May 6, 2014. He is survived by the love of his life, Barbara, his wife of 41 years. Tom is also survived by sister Barbara Jean Olson of Plymouth, Minnesota; brother Richard of San Jose, California; brother Russell of Las Cruces, New Mexico; as well as many nieces, nephews, and friends.



October 22, 2014