



## Kent Earl Sutherland

January 4, 1949 - January 16, 2024

Kent Earl Sutherland passed away peacefully on the morning of January 16, 2024 at Poudre Valley Hospital from complications caused by treatment for preleukemia.

Kent was born on January 4, 1949 in Ida Grove, Iowa to Wayne and Deva (Behrends) Sutherland. He was welcomed home by his 2-year-old brother Keith.

Kent spent his first 18 years on a 360-acre farm near Schaller, Iowa. Until he was old enough to drive a tractor and become a full working member of the farm operation, summers were spent with him and his brother riding their ponies to Grampa and Grandma Sutherland's house which was a half mile away. He was baptized and confirmed at St. Paul Lutheran church in Schaller, Iowa. Kent continued his interest in horses throughout his life and when he married Brenda he brought his Dad's youngest horse, Slick, to their house in Fort Collins to add to Brenda's herd of horses.

His education began in a one room schoolhouse. After kindergarten, he went to the Galva Public School for the remainder of his elementary and secondary education. Kent was an avid and accomplished golfer, beginning this sport as a junior high student. He was an outstanding basketball player, starting on the varsity squad for all four years. In his senior year, he set the conference

record for the most points scored in a high school basketball team. Kent was the valedictorian of his high school graduating class in 1967. Kent attended the University of Texas and Morningside University prior to graduating magna cum laude from the University of Kansas, where he played basketball as a walk on. It was after graduating from college that he and Keith had the adventure of a lifetime hitchhiking from the family farm to the Wilmore Wilderness in Alberta, Canada. They spent ten days bushwhacking through the Canadian Rockies. Their intent was to live off the land, but they subsisted mostly on oatmeal and rice. When the food was running low, and they decided it was time to return to civilization, they realized they were lost. However, with Kent reading his compass and topographical map, they reached a state road in two days.

Not long after this excursion, Kent moved to Fort Collins where met and married Deborah Artzer. Kent enrolled at Colorado State University and received a master's degree in reading education. He began his professional career teaching middle school in Thornton, CO then moved to Grover, Colorado to teach and where his first son, Joshua, was born. After three years of teaching, he was accepted to Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts where he received a Juris Doctor cum laude.

He began his legal career in 1982 at the prestigious law firm of Davis, Graham & Stubbs in Denver where he worked for eight years. It was during this time his second son Will was born. Kent next held the position of Vice President and Regional Manager, Investment Management and Trust for Norwest Bank for several years, then practiced law with several prestigious firms in Fort Collins before opening his own office in 2003. Kent was divorced in 2002.

Beginning in 2008, Kent practiced law with Erin L. Connor until his retirement at the end of 2022. He helped many Fort Collins families through his law practice which specialized in wills and estates. Kent was a member of the

Colorado Bar Association for over 40 years, during which time he served one year as the chair of the Colorado Bar's Trust and Estate section. He taught law classes at both the University of Denver College of Law and Colorado State University and presented at numerous seminars for other attorneys.

Kent adored his wife Brenda Carns. They had a beautiful June wedding in 2005, completing their perfect day with a moonlight horseback ride; Brenda wore her wedding veil. They spent many happy hours riding their horses near their home overlooking Terry Lake and at their cabin on Prairie Divide near Red Feather Lakes. Kent enjoyed polka dancing with Brenda and the couple spent many hours at Dutch Hops held in Northern Colorado. Kent loved travelling with Brenda and the couple toured Budapest, Prague and the Black Forest before their marriage. They enjoyed a 2 week honeymoon driving around Spain later that year, evading the gangs of monkeys on the Rock of Gibraltar and climbing the windmills of Don Quixote. Another time, they visited Athens to see the Parthenon and walk the Roman ruins. After that the couple toured Turkey, taking a sunrise balloon ride over Cappadocia and seeing Whirling Dervishes. They took a Carnival cruise down the eastern coast of Mexico and Kent kept winning prizes for trivia nights. Another time the couple flew to Frankfurt and rented a BMW that they drove through Southern Germany to Bern, Switzerland where they boarded a Viking River Cruise to go down the Rhine to Amsterdam. In the Black Forest, Brenda dressed up in her dirndl and they enjoyed a few polka dances in small town Kneipe with onlookers clapping out the rhythm as they danced. They toured Southern England by car. Kent adapted quickly to the English roadways and they saw lots of museums, the iconic Stonehenge monument, stayed in charming 300 year old inns where Kent kept banging his head on the doorways; they weren't built for 6 foot Americans but Brenda had no problems in this regard. Kent accompanied Brenda to Mexico twice to visit Mayan ruins and enjoy the sights of Playa del Carmen and Cozumel. They enjoyed an adventure to Belize

where Kent used his newly acquired Spanish and they were able to ride horseback to Mayan ruins. Kent's method for learning Spanish was reading the Spanish language copy held in one hand and comparing it to the English version in his other hand. Kent loved thinking games and solved hundreds of the New York Times crossword puzzles. His world knowledge was astonishing. He told Brenda he was happy to be able to use her as his dictionary.

The pride of Kent's life was his two sons, and their families. He was a dedicated father and always made time for his boys. He found the sport of baseball a way of connecting with his sons and spending quality time with them. This love as a father and the love of sports built a strong bond between Kent and his sons. Kent used this love in the same way to connect with his grandchildren.

Kent was generous in giving his time to the community. He served on the American Legion Youth Baseball Board and coached Josh's and Will's summer baseball teams. After his sons were grown, he loved umpiring for youth baseball games around Fort Collins. He was a member of the Fort Collins Rotary club and served on various committees for many years and it was there he met his future wife, Brenda Carns. Brenda was the Director of the Fort Collins Public Library and Kent fell in love with Brenda while he was serving as the attorney on the Fort Collins Library Trust Board. After they were married, he assisted her in working with the community to successfully create the Poudre River Library District. Kent is a past member of the Ft. Collins Country Club and during the pandemic became a regular at Mountain Vista Golf Club where he played golf almost every afternoon year-round due to the mild winters in Fort Collins.

Kent is survived by his wife, Brenda Carns, his two sons Joshua (Sara), Will (Lindsey), and four grandchildren Jacob, Cora, Wesley and Owen, Brenda's

son Byron Mueller (Jennifer) and grandchildren Callie, Ben and Matt, Kent's brother, Keith Sutherland and his wife, Patricia, his nieces Ashley and Elizabeth, and great niece Norah, and nine maternal first cousins, and many good friends and longtime associates.

A memorial service honoring Kent's life will be held at 1:00pm on Friday, January 26 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church at 2000 South Lemay Avenue. Friends, family, and colleagues are invited to attend. In lieu of flowers please consider making a donation in Kent's name to the American Cancer Society or to Our Savior's Lutheran Church.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JAN **26.** 1:00 PM (MT)

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church  
2000 S Lemay Avenue  
Fort Collins,, CO 80525

# Tribute Wall

LJ

“ Kent was my daughter Erin Connor's friend and partner in the long-respected law practice that he had developed over the years in Fort Collins. Kent was Erin's mentor in estate planning, and out of their compatible relationship and respect for each other, the firm continued to maintain its high regard and Kent's reputation as a senior Counselor in the community. His expertise, and most of all his friendship, will be missed by all of us who knew him. Linda Johnson

---

**Linda Johnson** - January 26, 2024 at 09:30 AM

RP

“ Kent was one of the finest attorney I have known. He and I grew up in small farming communities in Northwest Iowa about 15 miles apart, but did not meet until some time in the early 1990's while through our careers as attorneys in Fort Collins. We were fellow Rotarians, attorneys, little league baseball coaches and baseball fans. His only fault was that he was a Yankees fan. I will miss him. Bob Penny

---

**Robert Penny** - January 25, 2024 at 01:05 AM