



William J. Kennedy, III

August 20, 1915 - March 28, 2016

Bill passed away peacefully on March 28, 2016 at the age of 100. He was born August 20, 1915 to William J. Kennedy II and Stella (Sours) Kennedy in Rochester, New York, the third generation son to the Kennedy Family Real-Estate, Wholesale & Investment Companies. He graduated Valedictorian from St. Thomas Aquinas High School in 1933 and was accepted at West Point. West Point became an unfulfilled dream with the early passing of his father as Bill then became head-of-household at age 17. He continued to care for his mother and sister and ensured that his younger brother graduated the Wharton School of Business.

Bill graduated from the University of Rochester in Mechanical Engineering earning the prestigious Math Key. He started his long and very successful career in the optical industry with Bausch & Lomb (NY) under the personal tutelage of Bill Bausch who gave young Bill unprecedented authority at an early age. Bill was among a core team of mechanical and chemical engineers at Bausch & Lomb that developed the bifocal manufacturing facility that was featured in Business Week magazine in 1948.

During his long career, he subsequently worked for Univis Lens Corporation, Shuron Optical Company and Vision-Ease Corporation. Bill became renowned in the optical business for the many patents he held in design, manufacturing and specialized lenses. He played a vital role in the design & building of

optical manufacturing plants in New York, Germany, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, along with the Vision-Ease plant in St. Cloud, MN. After retiring in 1985, Bill consulted for, was recognized and worked with most of the premier optical companies and their affiliated businesses around the world. He was highly regarded for his generosity in sharing his knowledge and innovation in the optical industry and equally well-known and regarded for his deep dedication to his colleagues and employees.

Bill moved his family to St. Cloud, MN in 1965 from Ft. Lauderdale, FL. He enjoyed many years with dear friends at his home in the historic 3rd Avenue-High Banks area. He walked to his beloved Newman Center for Mass where he remained a member for 50 years.

Once retired, Bill built a Town Home at The St. Cloud Country Club Estates across from the 17th green. It was an "unofficial" club rule that a player could not exit the 17th hole without a wave to Bill who watched daily play from his porch (with a scotch in hand). He enjoyed 50 years of great friendships and golf at this beautiful course on the Mississippi River. His daughters held his 100th Birthday Party at the Club with over 75 friends in attendance. His retirement travels took him to Europe, Asia, China, Northern Africa, the Caribbean, Mexico and other ports of call. However, his favorite place to be other than home was at High Point Country Club in Naples, FL where he wintered for 25 years. He cherished his High Point friends who welcomed him back year after year. Bill played golf daily until he was 90 years old and rarely missed a party in MN or Florida!

He lived his values humbly and with a quiet dignity. The memorial quote by Pablo Casals was purposely chosen by Bill's family as it so reflects how he lived his life: "Each man has inside him a basic decency and goodness. If he listens to it and acts on it, he is giving a great deal of what it is the world needs most."

Bill raised his girls by exquisite example and they often expressed he was truly meant to be a father of daughters. Bill was extremely proud of his Irish heritage. His great-grandparents were born in Ireland and immigrated to upstate New York. His "Kennedy Clan" has now expanded to 6th generation Irish. Above all else, he was devoted to his daughters and they to him.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents and siblings, by Jean (O'Shaughnessy) Kennedy mother of daughters: Kathryn, Candice and Christina and by Marsha Kelly-Kennedy. He is survived by his daughters Kathryn Kennedy, Candice (Tom) Sweeney, Christina Kennedy (John Sorteberg), all of Edina, MN; grandsons Christopher (fiancée Shannon Tamashiro of Los Angeles, CA) & Thomas (Brandi) Wittman of Spokane, WA; granddaughter Callan Kennedy Sorteberg of Madison, WI and great-grandchildren Noah and Mia Wittman also of Spokane, WA.

It takes a collection of wonderful neighbors, friends, clergy, optical colleagues and many others to live so happily for 100+ years. Additionally, the extraordinary employees at The Waters of Edina Senior Living made Bill feel so special and greatly cared for every day. Bill was blessed by everyone's love and loyalty and truly grateful for it. We thank you all for your presence in his life.

Mass of Christian Burial at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 23 at the Newman Center Christ Church, 396 First Avenue South, St. Cloud, MN 56301.

Visitation one hour prior to the service. Private interment.

Memorials preferred to the Newman Center Christ Church or a memorial of your choice. - See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/sctimes/obituary.aspx?n=william-j-kennedy&pid=179465257#sthash.8igrilOt.dpuf>