



Kenneth E Kriete

February 11, 1932 - April 19, 2025

Kenneth Eugene Kriete, beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle, brother, and friend, passed away peacefully on April 19, 2025. A cherished and longtime member of the Ephrata community, Kenny's warmth, humor, and dedication to others will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

Kenny was born on February 11, 1932, in Wenatchee, Washington, to Dorothy and Frank Kriete. He was the third of four children, growing up on the family's small dairy farm outside of Ephrata alongside his siblings Ben, Ruth, and Donald (Red).

At just 16 years old, Kenny met the love of his life, Betty Wickwire, in front of the Bell Hotel in Ephrata. Though Betty's family soon moved to northwest Oregon, distance couldn't keep them apart. Kenny frequently made the long journey to Oregon to see her, cementing a lifelong love story.

A proud Ephrata Tiger, Kenny graduated from Ephrata High School in 1950. He opened the Signal Service Station on the corner of Division and Alder. He began serving in the National Guard beginning in 1949, starting a life of service to his community and country. After working at the Grant County PUD, Kenny found his true calling with the United States Post Office in 1957. Over a career that spanned 33 years, Kenny became a familiar and welcome face at

the post office window—always greeting everyone with a smile and often a joke or two. His philosophy was simple: “Never make your job, WORK,” and he lived that every day.

Kenny and Betty were married on August 27, 1955, at his parents' home in Ephrata. Together, they built a beautiful life filled with love and family. Their first daughter, Lisa, was born in 1961, followed by Lesli in 1963. Over eight years later, their “surprise oops,” Joey, completed the family in 1972. Family was the center of Kenny’s world, and he never missed a chance to support his children in their many activities, from 4-H events to countless sporting competitions. Some of the family’s happiest memories were made camping throughout the Pacific Northwest, especially near Mt. Rainier.

Even after his children had graduated, Kenny remained a passionate supporter of Ephrata High School athletics, faithfully attending games and events, and reconnecting with friends new and old. He was also an avid coin collector, with a special passion for trade tokens, and was a longtime member of the Northwest Token & Medal Association and the Odessa Coin Club, where he built lifelong friendships. He was also a proud member of the Grant County Historical Society.

He and Betty especially enjoyed traveling and made countless memories visiting different casinos with their friends over the years — always chasing a little luck and sharing a lot of laughs. Those adventures were just another way he built lifelong friendships and made every moment count. When he wasn’t traveling, he loved sitting down to play card games with his friends, where the competition was lively, the jokes were plenty, and the friendships meant everything.

After retiring in 1990, Kenny stayed active in the community, often visiting friends at Old World Trading, the Grant County Courthouse and other Ephrata

landmarks. True to his nature, he always brought along a good joke and a warm smile.

Kenny's pride and joy were his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Affectionately known as "Grandpa", "Papa", and "Grandpa Candy". He was a constant presence in their lives, celebrating their births and milestones with boundless love. A true patriarch, Kenny's camp and holiday speeches were a tradition, always ending with a reminder that family is the greatest gift and to always keep making memories. Many of those were made at their family property northwest of Entiat, for the past 13 years, where they enjoyed their treasured family reunions lovingly referred to as "Kamp Kriete".

In his later years, Dad relocated to the Garden Oasis Assisted Living Facility, where he was blessed to reunite with some old friends and create new relationships with fellow residents and the wonderful staff. He continued to spread his warmth, humor, and kindness every day, just as he always had. The family would like to express their heartfelt gratitude for the exceptional care Dad received from everyone at Garden Oasis during his time there, as well as the compassion and support shown to all of us, his family, especially over these past few months.

Kenny is preceded in death by his parents Dorothy and Frank Kriete, his brothers Ben Kriete and Donald (Red) Kriete, and his son-in-law Chester Hamilton. He is survived by his loving wife of nearly 70 years, Betty Kriete; his children Lisa Hamilton, Lesli Lehrman (Dale), and Joey Kriete (Jennifer); his sister Ruth Carroll; six grandchildren, Danny Voss, Jennifer (Mark) Shelton, Nick (Jessica) Husted, Lindsey (Joel) Dvorak, Sydney Kriete and Katelyn Kriete; eight great-grandchildren; several nephews and nieces; and countless extended family members and friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held on May 17th at the Ephrata Recreation Center (ERC) from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The ERC is located at 112 Basin Street SW, Ephrata, Washington.

Our hearts are broken and we will forever miss you, Dad. We know your legacy of love, service, laughter, and family lives on in all who were lucky enough to know you.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAY 17. 12:00 PM (PT)

Ephrata Recreation Center (ERC)
112 Basin St SW
Ephrata, WA 98823

Tribute Wall

LL

“ 10 files added to the tribute wall



Lesli Lehrman - May 09, 2025 at 01:07 AM

JK

“ 12 files added to the tribute wall



Joey Kriete - May 06, 2025 at 12:37 AM

JE

Sending Love, Prayers, Strength, Peace and Healing to all of you, in the passing of your beloved husband, dad, and granddad. He was a very SPECIAL man to many. REST IN PEACE Jan Eakin

Janet Eakin - May 08, 2025 at 01:08 PM

RT

Prayers and strength for the family. We were blessed to know him and enjoyed his kind and generous heart. Randy and Janice Tyler

Randy Tyler - May 08, 2025 at 05:36 PM

JK

“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Joey Kriete - May 06, 2025 at 12:32 AM