



Staley, Kenneth T

Niskayuna, NY

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Kenneth T. Staley, of Niskayuna, New York, died suddenly of a stroke on March 31, 2011 while at his winter home, which he shared with his beloved wife, Elizabeth K. Staley, on Ft. Myers Beach, FL.

Ken was born in 1920 in Kennewick, Washington, son of Oden and Georgia Staley. In 1939 Ken enrolled at Art Center School in Los Angeles, CA. After a wartime interruption, he returned to Art Center School for his final two years of commercial art and advertising illustration classes. While in the Army,

Ken served as a rifleman with the 96th Infantry Division during most of the 82 day battle on Okinawa. After the Japanese surrender, Ken spent a year on the Philippine Islands of Mindoro and Luzon. He soon left the rifle company to join the information and Education office at Division Headquarters as an artist for the Deadeye Dispatch, the daily Army newspaper.

On his time off he did ink sketches and colored pencil drawings of camp scenes - one of which won first prize in the Armed Forces Pacific Art Contest. Ken began his professional art career in 1948 as artist for General Electric's Employee and Public Relations section at GE's Hanford Atomic Products Operation in Richland Washington. In 1962, Ken transferred to GE's Research Laboratory (now known as GE Global Research) in Schenectady where he became a senior artist. Ken illustrated projects of the scientists and engineers. During the 1970s, Ken was involved with the selection of artists to exhibit their paintings in the Schenectady County Public Library.

Ken retired from GE in 1980. Ken was first married in 1949 to Mona Chapman of Ellsworth, Kansas, and Los Angeles, California. The marriage lasted 41 years until Mona tragically died of cancer. On October 28, 1992, Ken married Elizabeth K. Chinoy, (f/k/a Elizabeth Kurz), a Niskayuna resident who was originally from Switzerland. Ken joined a family with six grown children and, at the time of his death, ten grandchildren. Ken continued his art work in retirement. Soon after retiring from GE, Ken and his first wife, Mona joined the First Unitarian Society of Schenectady. Ken was soon appointed Chairman of the Visual Arts Committee, a committee of one, and did various art projects for the church until 2001. Besides painting, Ken's other hobbies included photography, and wood sculpture.

In 1993, Ken began attending the annual reunions of the 96th Division and, in 1995, returned with other vets to Okinawa to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the end of the battle. Officially, it was to celebrate 50 years of peace and friendship with Japan.

Memorial services will be held at the First Unitarian Society of Schenectady, 1221 Wendell Avenue, Schenectady, New York on Friday, June 3, 2011, at 3 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Veterans of Foreign Wars, 406 West 34th Street, Suite 718, Kansas City, MO, 64111.