

Kenneth Peterson Obituary

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Kenneth Francis Peterson, 78, passed away on May 23, 2025, in Danville, New Hampshire. Born on November 5, 1946, in Brooklyn, New York, Ken lived a life marked by resilience, intellect, and deep love to both his family and community.

He lived by his favorite motto: We will either find a way or we will make one
(Hannibal)

Ken's journey began in the boroughs of New York City, where he pursued higher education at Hofstra and Brooklyn Colleges, earning a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Business. His professional life was a testament to his brilliance and determination. Starting humbly in the mailroom at Pan Am, Ken rose through the ranks to become a director. After leaving Pan Am, he continued to share his expertise as a consultant for IMR before founding his own business, Diamond Electronics.

A proud veteran of the United States Army, Ken served as a forward observer and artillery officer during the Vietnam War. He received many Air Medals and a Bronze Star for meritorious achievement. His time in service was marked by courage under fire-the helicopter he was in was shot down and the team was rescued under harrowing circumstances. Though these experiences were difficult for him to speak about for many years, he recently found peace in sharing them. Tragically, it was exposure to Agent Orange during this time that ultimately led to his passing.

Ken's passion extended beyond business and military service into the world of martial arts. As a highly ranked sensei, he dedicated himself to teaching martial arts and in 1997 opened his own dojo alongside his beloved wife Josephine Panasci-his partner in crime for 44 years. Together they emphasized not only physical discipline but also the rich traditions and ceremonies that accompany this art form. Their dojo became more than just a place of learning; it became a family. Many students remained lifelong friends and consider Ken and Jo part of their extended family.

Ken had an unshakable sense of civic duty and was deeply passionate about politics and serving his community. Whether through conversation or action, he sought ways to make a difference.

Those who lived near Ken often first encountered him while he was out walking his two dogs-Saxen, who resembles a great big wolf, and Murphy, a tiny Morkie with an outsized personality. His sense of humor shone through in these everyday moments; neighbors quickly came to know him as someone who could make them laugh while offering thoughtful insight on nearly any topic.

Ken is survived by his loving wife Josephine Panasci; daughter Jessica Peterson; granddaughter Solangel; great-grandchildren Armani and Julian (affectionately known as JuJu); brother Dennis Peterson (Laura), nieces and nephews and his sister-in-law Linda (Len) and the many friends he thought of as family. He was predeceased in death by his parents Rose and Francis Xavier Peterson.

Ken's legacy lives on through the many lives he touched-as a mentor in martial arts, a leader in business, a soldier who served with honor, and above all else, as a husband, father, brother, neighbor, and friend.

May his memory bring comfort to those who knew him and continue to inspire strength and compassion in all whose lives he graced.