

# Stephen S. Konz

September 6, 1926 – August 16, 2017



*Those we love don't go away,  
They walk beside us everyday.  
Unseen, unheard but always near,  
Still loved, still missed  
and very dear.*

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Stephen Stanley Konz was born in Poland on September 6, 1926 to Lillian Kwiatkowski and Michael Rosinski. As a three-month old baby he came to America through Ellis Island in the arms of a teenage mother. Raised in Chicago as a city kid he worked at a dairy at age 15.

Konz graduated high school in 1944 from CVS (Chicago Vocational School). He joined the Navy at age 17 where he served until the war ended in August 1945. He attended college after the war at Utah State studying agriculture and forestry while the summers found him working at guest ranches in Arizona, Wyoming and Colorado, where he gained a love for horses. Konz was accepted into Michigan State where he completed

horseshoeing school and took a job with Wilson Meat Co. shoeing and caring for a large team of Clydesdales. He volunteered on a few cattle ranches in Texas and Arizona to gain experience and then took a job to earn money on the Texas Pipeline so he could afford his first 1956 Chevrolet.

1957 took him to Washington state where he worked at a fish hatchery and then as a lineman climbing power poles. He accepted a job as an extension agent and moved to Harrington, where he lived on a wheat farm with Jannots and spent weekends cutting firewood on their property in Keller. Continuing his education, he returned to school at Washington State College, studying civil engineering, where he met the love of his life. Konz changed majors to industrial arts education after marrying Dr. June Kuzma, DVM in 1958. Leaving Pullman a year later they moved to Bellingham where he continued his education and received a degree in teaching. Steve and June moved to Snoqualmie where he taught wood shop, history and drafting.

In 1961 the couple settled into Republic, founding the K-Diamond-K Cattle Ranch and Veterinary Clinic. They were welcomed with open arms and so glad to call Republic home. Steve got a job in Republic teaching fifth grade while raising five kids, building a log home and growing a cattle herd. The log home burned in 1978 but was rebuilt with the help of friends and neighbors. He was asked to

serve as district court judge where he sat the bench for 14 years. He was involved in the Kiwanis Club, Grange, PTA, school board, Cattlemen's Association, WA Farm Forestry, fair board and served as manager of the Ferry County Fair and was a Grange Insurance agent for 25 years.

Steve was passionate about politics, supporting the Republican party as a small business owner and advocating for private property rights, smaller government, freedom and The Constitution.

He was active for many years with the Republic Chamber of Commerce, serving as president for many. He was proud of all small business owners and especially female entrepreneurs. His captivating stories often had listeners laughing and crying. In 1994 the family supported the idea of keeping the ranch together and opening it up to guests creating K-Diamond-K Cattle & Guest Ranch.



At age 75, he drew up plans, and with the help and support of his family began building his dream lodge. The foundation was dug in 2000, and Konz worked on it from sunup to sundown seven days a week, year round, for the past 17 years—with a smile on his face. Steve is survived by his wife June Konz, Dave Konz, Kathy (McKay) Konz, Karen (Hoffman) Konz, Wayne Konz and four grandchildren: Stephen and Lexi McKay, and Kristy and Cody Hoffman.

Steve Konz passed away at age 90 in the lodge he built, on the ranch he loved, with family at his side.