



Kenneth Leo Roderfeld

June 11, 1951 - August 30, 2021

Kenny Roderfeld, 70, of Alton, died peacefully on Monday, August 30. Born June 11, 1951, to Alvin “Slick” Roderfeld and the late Lucille (Pavelek) Roderfeld. He was the oldest of four children.

He was a 1969 graduate of Alton Senior High School and played on the 1968 AHS football team with a winning record of 9-0-1. He attended Western Illinois University majoring in architecture until a swimming accident in September 1971 left him paralyzed. A quadriplegic at age 20, he changed his major and graduated from SIUE with a degree in Business Administration and Marketing. In 1979, he received the SIUE Outstanding Young Alumnus award for professional achievement.

Despite over 65 rejections at interviews, often due to wheelchair inaccessibility, Kenny was determined to get a job. He kept trying until he was offered a position at First National Bank in Alton in the auditing department and became a computer programmer at their data processing affiliate, MIPCO. He later worked as a program analyst at Mercantile Bank in downtown St. Louis until 2001. Kenny received recognition at each place of business for his outstanding work ethic.

Kenny was a determined advocate for individuals with disabilities and was instrumental in working with college officials to obtain wheelchair access with electric doors at SIUE and an elevator at LCCC. He worked closely with Alderman Tony Vambaketes to obtain sidewalk cutouts in Alton. Kenny served as chairman of the board at IMPACT, center for independent living for

individuals with disabilities.

Kenny enjoyed cheering for the St. Louis Blues and Cardinals. He loved trout fishing trips to Bennett Spring, MO, going to the Alton Little Theater, and playing trivia and Jeopardy with caregivers.

Despite his health challenges, Kenny maintained a positive attitude. During his hospitalizations, he always took an interest in the staff asking where they went to school and about their families. He had amazing recall of the stories they shared, even years later.

Kenny lived 50 years as a quadriplegic, a testament to the excellent and loving care provided by his parents and family. His family is eternally grateful to his caregivers who became like family, continuing that excellent level of care and compassion. If you were fortunate enough to have crossed paths with Kenny, you know firsthand what a special individual he was and indeed felt blessed to know him.

Kenny was an active parishioner at St. Matthew's Catholic Church in Alton and St. Ambrose Catholic Church in Godfrey helping with their auctions by donating sports memorabilia he collected throughout the year.

He was a godfather to his cousin Sharon Godfrey, nephew Michael Means, nieces Alicia Orris and Colleen Schoeberle, and family friends Kathleen Wiegand and Amy Pruetzel.

Kenny is survived by his father Alvin Roderfeld, three sisters: Pat (Jim) Means, Shirley (Roger Motley) Roderfeld and Joyce (Brian) Semmler; three nieces: Jacquelyn (Tomas Alarcon) Means, Alicia (Max) Orris, Colleen (John) Schoeberle; nephew Shawn (fiancée Bethany Frick) Semmler; a step-niece Roanna Motley, a great-nephew Milo Orris, his aunt Willetta Lundahl and many cousins. Kenny was preceded in death by his mother Lucy Roderfeld and his nephew J. Michael Means.

In lieu of food or flowers, the family requests donations in Kenny's memory be made to IMPACT Center for Independent Living, 2735 E Broadway, Alton, IL 62002; St. Ambrose Catholic Church, 820 W Homer M Adams Pkwy, Godfrey,

IL 62035; or an organization of your choice.

A private funeral service will be held. A celebration of his life will be held in the spring/summer of 2022 and at that time a "Kenny's Shoe Collection" for all ages, male/female, new walking/running shoes, and gently used walking/running shoes. We will then distribute to area organizations to help those in need. Kenny was always about how I can help others! He will be missed but "he is free again"... Run Kenny Run!! Online guestbook and information may be found at www.gentfuneralhome.com.

Tribute Wall



“ *Kenneth Leo Roderfeld*

January 28, 2023 at 10:19 AM



“ *Kenneth Leo Roderfeld*

January 28, 2023 at 08:19 AM



“ *So very sorry for your loss.*



Tim Wentworth - September 15, 2021 at 11:51 AM



“ *Everett Neville lit a candle in memory of
Kenneth Leo Roderfeld*



Everett Neville - September 15, 2021 at 11:32 AM

GG

“ I was very fortunate to be a coworker to Kenny's sister, Shirley. By chance or fate I would run into Shirley many times in public. On one such outing we had one of those fateful encounters. To my good fortune I not only got to see Shirley again, but I was introduced to Slick Roderfeld and Kenny. What an honor to have met these great men. I look forward to seeing Shirley and Slick again and hopefully, if I get to heaven, I will meet Kenny again.

Gary Gray - September 08, 2021 at 10:45 AM

SD

“ I have known Kenny since we were both young kids. As neighbors, we played together, camped together with our families and shared our childhoods. He always had a smile on his face and was a great person to be around. I have always enjoyed seeing him at Fish Frys during Lent or seeing him out with his family. What a positive force he has been to everyone who came in contact with him. I have always admired his & his family's strong, unwavering faith. Kenny isn't just running now, he's flying with the angels! Blessings, Peace & Thanks to God for his life.

Susie Delano - September 06, 2021 at 11:28 PM

DC

“ Please know that I'm thinking of you all. Take care.
Debbie Caulk

deborah caulk - September 04, 2021 at 12:46 PM

MB

“ To the entire Roderfeld family,
What an amazing person Kenny was. You all are such an inspiration! Your family is such a light on how to handle the difficulties that come as well as enjoy the many blessings and milestones in life together. And now what a reunion he will have with your mom!

Love and prayers to all as you gather to celebrate Kenny!

Brad and Marla Bockhorst

Marla Bockhorst - September 04, 2021 at 11:00 AM

ST

“ Dear Al and family,

I didn't know Ken well, but Bill, my husband, worked with him at First National Bank, and I know he was liked and admired by all who knew him!

We are so sorry for the loss for you and your family during this very difficult time!

*Sincerely,
Bill and Sandy Thompson*

Sandy Thompson - September 03, 2021 at 05:08 PM

BG

“ Kenny always set a high bar and was the perfect example for others on how to go thru life. He has always been an inspiration and no other person had the drive as he did. Always with a smile, with some fantastic story or just sitting together in the sun passing the time – he will be missed and leaves an immense void in his passing. What an incredible family. Brad Gentelin & family

Brad Gentelin - September 03, 2021 at 06:45 AM

RH

“ I remember Kenny attending sporting events for his niece, Colleen. He was always so positive and happy. He sure loved an incredible life! I know his Mother was waiting with open arms! Hugs and sympathy to the entire family... especially Joyce ❤️

Robin Hinterser - September 02, 2021 at 11:05 PM

MM

“ Shirley, so sorry for your loss. Knowing it's hard to lose a big brother, you and your family will be in my prayers. I never personally met Kenny but he sounded like a wonderful person and such an inspiration to all of us. My sincere condolences to you and your family.

Mary Ann (Schulz) Morris - September 02, 2021 at 09:00 PM

PK

“ I’ve know this wonderful family since we were kids riding bikes and playing tag.

Kenny was a testament to perseverance, strength and faith. So many memories of before and after his accident. He was so lucky to have three sisters and parents that all supported and watched out for him.

Kenny is watching from above with a healed body with his mother. Xoxoxox

Pam Kuhnline - September 02, 2021 at 08:15 PM

AS

God bless Kenny

Arlin Strader - September 03, 2021 at 04:57 AM

JC

My deepest sympathies to family and friends of Kenny.

Julie Corey - September 03, 2021 at 12:31 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Kenneth Leo Roderfeld.*



September 02, 2021 at 12:38 PM

MC

“ *I knew Kenny and talk to him at St. Ambrose. He always had a smile on his face. My husband, Ed, knew him from the bank. He was an extraordinary man. Everyone loved him. RIP Kenny*

Marce M Corbett - September 02, 2021 at 12:27 PM

PM

“ Pam and I have known this family and Kenny for a number of years. We were always impressed by Kenny's huge smile and optimism in the face of all he had to deal with. Our prayers go out to this loving and caring family.

Pete McFarlane

Pete McFarlane - September 02, 2021 at 11:02 AM

JB

Kenny and I shared a birthday. He is also my inspiration for all the difficult things, things I think are difficult, because he got through so much more difficulty with a smile and a "can do" attitude. He got better grades in college than I did, but my grades were better than they would have been because he showed me that working harder gets results. Rest easy Kenny; now you have wings and a new body. You're with God now.

Judy Budzileni - September 02, 2021 at 12:06 PM

JD

“ Kenny was a kind and loving person. He loved practical jokes. My sister, Rita and I had an on going rival of which is bigger and better (Illinois or Texas). We have many wonderful memories of Kenny.

janet Durand - September 02, 2021 at 09:52 AM

LT

“ Kenny was a happy, kind, caring and friendly person. Whenever I saw him in church or functions, I would always give him a little kiss, he would just smile. Kenny had such great faith. He will be miss by all. Peace, Love and prayers are with the family. Sorry for your loss.

Larry and Judy Thompson

Larry and Judy Thompson - September 02, 2021 at 09:11 AM

DN

Sorry for your loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you Shirley and the rest of the family. Praying God gives you peace and comfort at this difficult time. 🙏🙏

Darrell and June Nash

Darrell and June Nash - September 02, 2021 at 11:29 AM

LD

“ Love, Jim and Jane Dunham purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Kenneth Leo Roderfeld.



Love, Jim and Jane Dunham - September 01, 2021 at 09:19 PM

TI

“ Tina lit a candle in memory of Kenneth Leo Roderfeld



Tina - September 01, 2021 at 07:37 PM

TI

“ I'm very sorry for your loss. I enjoyed my time with and his parents. He had a good sense of humor and a caring heart. He will be missed.

Tina - September 01, 2021 at 07:37 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Kenneth Leo Roderfeld.*



September 01, 2021 at 12:19 PM



“ *Trisha Bedwell lit a candle in memory of Kenneth Leo Roderfeld*



trisha bedwell - September 01, 2021 at 10:32 AM



*I will miss you very much
We had lots of laughs and smile*

trisha bedwell - September 01, 2021 at 10:33 AM

CF

“ I was fortunate to care for Kenny for 10 years!!; We had so many great memories!!! There are if course too many to share but some of my favorite are when I would come in at 10:00 PM and we would always watch Jay Leno headlines before we would get started with our routine. I would lay on the floor and prop my feet up on his bed railings. We would laugh. Then every morning I would turn on the radio when it was time for him to start getting ready and sing whatever country song was playing and I would ask him, " You didn't know I could sing did ya?" And he would laugh and say, " I still don't" I could go on on but I will stop for now.
Kenny had a great sense of humor, he was very caring, thoughtful, and sometimes sad but through it all he kept going!! I will miss him and miss talking to him. Thanks for all the memories my friend! Will always treasure them and you. 💖

Crystal Smith - French - September 01, 2021 at 08:38 AM

MP

This is Pete & Margie Padilla, parents of George Padilla. George was a classmate and was a best friend to J. Michael Means, Kenny's nephew. We met Michael Means' whole family almost 20 years ago, when the boys were in high school at Priory. We remember Kenny as a gentle & loving uncle to Michael and his friends.
I always admired how Kenny was always smiling, positive and happy. He somehow embraced every day as a gift. We hardly got together after the the high school graduation but Michael remains to be in our hearts❤️and now Kenny will always be in our hearts forever as well. Thank you Kenny for always asking how George is doing and for keeping our friendship after all these years.

Margie & Pete Padilla - September 01, 2021 at 10:14 AM

PR

What a beautiful obituary tribute to Kenny. I'm so sorry for your loss. Kenny deserved better for sure. He was a man of faith and it always showed . I had a word from his sister, Shirley, about him now being able to run free. I agree and truly believe he is with his family and friends in Heaven, enjoying his new body and the freedom to run free.

Pat Hagen Russell - September 01, 2021 at 10:19 AM

RR

My daughter Susan Rhoads Bangert drove Kenny back and forth to Mercantile when they both worked there. She always enjoyed being with him and they spoke on the phone after she became disabled. We are so sorry for your loss

Rosemary Rhoads - September 01, 2021 at 05:43 PM

L(

Kenny was a unique and special person. He had a great sense of humor and an easygoing personality, despite many challenges that came his way. He was deeply loved by many family members and caregivers who were like family. Going to see Kenny was always memorable in a very positive way. It could restore your faith in humanity! It was an honor to meet him.

Leah (NP) - September 01, 2021 at 10:01 PM

BT

My wife and I knew Kenny while working for First National Bank. He was well respected and a true pleasure to be around, as well as truly inspiring! So sorry for your loss.

Bill and Robin Theisen - September 02, 2021 at 10:59 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Kenneth Leo Roderfeld.*



August 31, 2021 at 08:50 PM

SS

“ *Kenny was an inspiration to so many. I remember all the years at St Mathews, that he helped sell tickets at the church picnic. My parents, Jack and Audrey Sebold always enjoyed working at church functions with Kenny.*

What a special man! Please know that my thoughts and prayers are with all of you.

Sue (Sebold) Schmidt - August 31, 2021 at 08:32 PM

SA

“ ❤️



Sarah Anderson - August 31, 2021 at 04:22 PM