



Manfred H. Driesner

June 11, 1942 - May 17, 2024

Manfred Hartwin Driesner, age 81 of Highland, IL, died Friday, May 17, 2024, at his home in Highland, IL.

Manfred, known by his family and friends as Manni, was born in Linde, East Prussia, on the 11th of June, 1942, right in the middle of World War II. He was the seventh child and second son of Hermann and Lydia Driesner.

The first two years of his life were spent living a typical life on the family farm. Then, as the war was coming to a close, his father and mother had to uproot their family in the dead of winter to flee from the invading Russian army, leaving behind all their possessions except those most essential to sustaining their lives.

After a harrowing trek through ice and snow, filled with danger and deprivation which lasted for weeks, they finally reached safety in the northwestern corner of Germany called East Frisia, first living in a small town called Neuburg, then later moving to a rental farm in Aurich. It was in that area that Manni attended school and helped work the farm until, at the age of 16, he and his family sought a new and more prosperous life in the United States, sponsored by the members of the First Baptist Church of Highland to whom they were eternally grateful for this new beginning.

Manni finished his public school education at Highland High School, graduating in 1960. Eventually, he attended Greenville College for two years, majoring in history. Then, after a two year stint in the US Army where he

served as an MP both stateside and in the Dominican Republic. He was also a member of the Army's prestigious pistol team. He continued his higher education at SIU Edwardsville, majoring in German and History. He received his BA degree in 1970 and took additional classes towards an MS in Education degree over the next few years. It was while studying at SIUE that he met and married his wife, Linda. That happy union of 54 years eventually produced four children Kristina, Stefan, Kurt and Katrin and 12 grandchildren. Manni had an innate knowledge of things mechanical. There was no task he was afraid to undertake, no challenge he was unwilling to face. He could do carpentry, electrical work, plumbing, construction of all kinds, gardening, landscaping, you name it! He had encyclopedia knowledge of history and geography and an enviable understanding of the political and social forces at work all over the globe. He was also very knowledgeable about the Bible and Bible History, and loved sharing what he knew with those in his Sunday school class, which he taught for over years 50 years.

Never one to be idle, shortly after moving to Highland from Germany, Manni found summer employment on the local farms; then later worked at Broadway Battery and Tire in the auto repair shop. He also worked for a time at Basler Electric where he quickly rose through the ranks, eventually becoming a soldering instructor. He taught German, Illinois History, and Latin American History at Weslin high school and middle school from 1971-1976; then sought more lucrative employment, first at Mid-America Printing Company and later at the Post Dispatch, working in the mailroom where he often put in 7 to 8 shifts a week to support his growing family. In the 50's, he took on a second part-time job at Wick's Organ Company where he made organ pipes for over 12 years before retiring in 2008.

Manni was a loving and devoted son, husband, father, brother and uncle. He was also an avid sports enthusiast. In his younger years, he played intramural soccer at SIUE, and later indoor soccer with his brother, Arnold and Horst. Manni loved to play chess with his father-in-law Howard and his sons; as well as golf, especially in recent years with his brothers, and nephew-in-law Pat

McMullen. After retirement he joined a senior bowling league along with his wife and members of her family plus his niece Karin and her husband Pat. He was an active and vital member of the First Baptist Church in Highland, teaching the previous mentioned adult Sunday School class for more than 50 years, singing in the choir, serving as a hardworking and reliable Trustee who help with maintenance of the building, grounds, and landscape, and doing any other necessary repair jobs or tasks he was asked to do.

Manni often had a stern countenance, which intimidated those who did not know him well. But under that stern exterior lay the heart, soul and mind of an incredible loving and supportive man whose unwavering faith in God gave him cause to rejoice in his and his loved ones' successes as well as the strength to deal with life's setbacks and disappointments with equanimity. He was his wife's and his children's greatest supporter and inspiration, and his passing leaves a hole in each of their hearts that will never completely close.

He was a member of First Baptist Church, Highland (Trustee for many years), VFW Post #5694-Highland, American Legion Post #439-Highland, Communication Workers of America.

Survivors include:

Linda M. Driesner nee Whitten, Highland, IL
Married, Friday, December 19, 1969, at Granite City, IL.

Daughter - Kristina M. (Michael) Kuhl, Aviston, IL
Son - Stefan H. (Jeanette) Driesner, Edwards, IL
Son - Kurt H. Driesner, Glen Carbon, IL
Daughter - Katrin M. (Christopher) Niebur, Normal, IL
Grandchild - Brendan M. Kuhl, Swansea, IL
Grandchild - Tanner I. Kuhl, Aviston, IL
Grandchild - Micah H. Driesner, Edwards, IL

Grandchild - Abigail B. Driesner, Edwards, IL
Grandchild - Emma E. Driesner, Edwards, IL
Grandchild - Sophia M. Driesner, Edwards, IL
Grandchild - Vega D. Driesner, Glen Carbon, IL
Grandchild - Oskar R. Driesner, Glen Carbon, IL
Grandchild - Claire A. Niebur, Normal, IL
Grandchild - Anneliese V. Niebur, Normal, IL
Grandchild - Oliver L. Niebur, Normal, IL
Grandchild - Jane E. Niebur, Normal, IL
Sister - Hildegard M. Ullmann, Rowland Heights, CA
Brother - Arnold J. (Cindy) Driesner, Edwardsville, IL
Brother - Horst L. (Barbara) Driesner, Edwardsville, IL.

He was preceded in death by:

Father - Hermann G. Driesner - Died 12/23/1976
Mother - Lydia Driesner, nee Lemke - Died 6/07/2001
Sister - Margit R. Lange
Sister - Inge S. Lawrenz
Sister - Renate I. Mikoleit
Brother - Egon H. Driesner
Sister - Dorothea R. Thiems
Sister - Therese C. Boyd.

Arrangements are being handled by Spengel-Boulanger Funeral Home in Highland, IL.

Visitation will be held from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM on Monday, May 20, 2024, at First Baptist Church in Highland, IL.

Funeral Service will be at 11:00 AM on Monday, May 20, 2024, at First Baptist Church in Highland, IL, with Rev. Cody D. Knapik, Pastor, officiating.

Interment will be at Highland City Cemetery in Highland, IL.

Memorial contributions may be made to First Baptist Church or Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

Cemetery Details

Highland City Cemetery

12301 Koepfli Lane
Highland, IL 62249

Tribute Wall

MH

“Manny was such a joy to work with during my years at Wicks Organ Co. He always had a smile and a story to share. He was such a bright intelligent man but also friendly and kind. I'm sorry to hear that he is gone. Prayers are being said for his soul to find eternal rest in heaven. - Mary (Wick) Haberer



Mary Haberer - June 06, 2024 at 01:57 PM



“Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Manfred H. Driesner.



May 19, 2024 at 10:24 AM

TL

“The Landers planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Manfred H. Driesner.

The Landers - May 19, 2024 at 10:24 AM



“Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Manfred H. Driesner.



May 18, 2024 at 01:18 PM

FD

“ From Rob and Cheri Duncan planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Manfred H. Driesner.

From Rob and Cheri Duncan - May 18, 2024 at 01:18 PM