



## Henry Thomas Knittel Jr.

March 4, 1943 - October 14, 2023

“And at night, you will look up at the stars. It’s too small, where I live, for me to show you where my star is. It’s better that way. My star will be one of the stars for you. So, you’ll like looking at all of them. They’ll all be your friends. When you look up at the night, I’ll be living on one of them, I’ll be laughing on one of them. For you, it’ll be as if all the stars are laughing. You’ll have stars that can laugh!” Antione de Saint-Exupery, *The Little Prince*

Henry Thomas (Bud) Knittel, Jr., beloved son, husband, brother, father, grandfather, uncle, friend, golf partner, high-school guidance counselor, and coach, took his final breath on Saturday evening, October 14.

Bud was born on March 4, 1943, in Astoria, Queens, NY. He was the first-born child of Victoria (Vickie) and Henry (also known as Bud) Knittel. Bud’s father served in the European theater during WW2 while his mother was carrying him. Family lore has it that Vickie sent a letter to Bud while he was at war, inquiring about what she should name their child if they had a boy. Bud’s response was, “Anything but Henry!” And so, of course, Vickie gave birth to a boy whom she named Henry. Vickie’s response to Bud was that it was the only name he had mentioned! Bud met his father for the first time on his second birthday, and they shared a deep bond with one another for their entire lives.

Bud and his sister, Jackie, and his brother Richard, enjoyed very happy childhoods in Franklin Square, Long Island, NY. His parents created a home

filled with laughter, ever-present card games, wildly competitive ping-pong games, and many meals with a wide circle of friends.

Bud was an extraordinary athlete and a fierce competitor, and he earned a basketball scholarship to St. John's Prep in NYC. While in high school, he was named to the 1961 All-New-York-City Basketball Team. Bud accepted a basketball scholarship at Holy Cross, where he was a two-sport athlete in both basketball as well as baseball.. While at Holy Cross, Bud pitched in the famed summer Cape Cod Baseball League, and was reputed to have pitched balls at 95 miles an hour. Bud earned a BA in English from Holy Cross and then was drafted by the Chicago Cubs, where he pitched a in the minor leagues for one year.

When his oldest child was born, he left the Cubs to start a long career that included his love for sports, coaching, teaching, and counseling. Bud took a role as a high school English teacher and basketball coach at LaSalle Military Academy on Long Island. He and his first wife, Janice then moved to Fairfield, Connecticut where they raised their four children – Christie, Robin, Marcelle, and Gary. Bud worked as a guidance counselor and basketball coach at Bassick High School in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and he led his team to win the MBIAC Basketball Championship in 1976. Bud then took a role as a guidance counselor and basketball coach at Andrew Warde / Fairfield Warde High School in Fairfield where he finished out the rest of his career. A true life-long learner, Bud earned three graduate degrees over the course of his long career including Masters degrees in English, Counseling, and Special Education.

Bud was a kind, thoughtful, and deeply empathetic counselor to generations of Warde students, and he was passionate about helping students to find their best fit in college and in life. Many of his former students hold fond memories of Bud, and they appreciated his ability to listen deeply (this was one of his super powers) and his genuine desire to help them. Bud, affectionately known as Poppy or Pops, took his children to tour many of the colleges in New England and on the east coast. He loved nothing more than to walk on a

college campus, and he would encourage his children, much to their eye-rolling chagrin, to check out each campus and to “smell the roses!” Needless to say, all four of his children earned college degrees!

Bud parlayed his athletic talents and deeply competitive spirit into the game of golf, and it became one of his greatest joys. He was a scratch golfer for much of his adult life, and a two-time club champion at H. Smith Richardson Golf Course in Fairfield. Bud looked for any opportunity to be at the golf course, and many people have fond memories of picking up range balls with him. Bud and his son, Gary, shared a deep love for the sport, and they treasured their time together on the course.

Bud and Kathy Kenny were married in 1996, and they enjoyed many happy years together entertaining family and friends, shopping up and down the East Coast, and visiting Bud’s parents in Florida. Bud and Kathy retired to Pawleys Island, SC, in 2004. They loved Pawleys Island, and they viewed it as a truly magical place. While in SC, Bud got his long-awaited golden retriever, a wonderful and soulful dog named Harvey. Bud and Harvey had many long, happy walks together, and his time with Harvey was truly precious to him. Some of Bud’s other great joys included lingering over long meals with family and friends, lasagna (he perfected his own recipe, and made it every single week!), red wine, chocolate of any kind, a good cup of coffee, reading every newspaper he could find, watching golf on television, buying golf clubs on eBay, and quoting whole passages from Shakespeare (Hamlet was his favorite). Ever the English teacher, nothing delighted Bud more than to learn a new word or concept and to share it with others. A devout, life-long Catholic, Bud found a lot of meaning and comfort in his Catholic faith.

Bud is survived by his wife, Kathy; his sister, Jackie (Chuck); his brother, Richard; his children Christie (Charles), Robin (Howard), Marcelle, and Gary; his six grandchildren, Jack (Ivy), Matthew, Kate, Max, Tucker, and Isabella; and his nieces, Kim, Kristen, Casey, and Katie.

Bud’s funeral mass will be on Saturday, November 11th, at 11:00 a.m. at

Precious Blood of Christ Catholic Church in Pawleys Island, SC. Bud fought a long and courageous battle with Parkinson's Disease. If you would like to make a contribution in his memory to The Parkinson's Foundation or to Precious Blood of Christ Catholic Church in Pawleys Island, SC, this would be genuinely appreciated.

Goldfinch Funeral Home, Beach Chapel is assisting the family.

"Goodnight, sweet prince. And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."

Shakespeare, William. Hamlet.

We love you, Dad.

# Previous Events

## Funeral Mass

NOV **11**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Precious Blood Catholic Church  
1633 Waverly Rd  
Pawleys Island, SC 29585  
(843) 237-3428

# Tribute Wall

JK

“ *Great basketball teammate & competitor Joe Kelly H C'64*

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**Joe Kelly** - October 25, 2023 at 06:41 PM

LL

“ *I loved working in the office next to Bud at Fairfield High and listening to his golfing stories. He was a wonderful golf lover and lover of his students. He is missed. Linda Love*

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**Linda Love** - October 21, 2023 at 04:14 PM

MS

“ *A real gentleman who was a model to students and faculty. Gentle and kind. I enjoyed working with Bud. RIP.*

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**Mel Senator** - October 20, 2023 at 12:14 PM

JR

“ *Sad news. We had many fun rounds of golf at Smith Richardson in CT. Hugs to Kathy and the family. Jeff Renzulli*

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**Jeffrey J Renzulli** - October 19, 2023 at 08:41 AM