



## Richard C. McKenna

January 17, 1945 - September 9, 2025

Richard Charles McKenna, 80, of West Hartford, passed away peacefully at home on September 9, 2025, surrounded by his loving family. Born in Providence, RI on January 17, 1945, he was the son of the late John T. McKenna and Emily Frances Dzogi Johnson McKenna Smith.

Rich was the beloved husband of 43 years to Cynthia, devoted father to Chris (Shayna) of West Hartford and Nicholas of New Haven, and proud grandfather to Jackson and Luke.

Rich is also survived by his two brothers, John (Marilyn) McKenna of West Warwick, RI along with their daughters Lauren (Dev), and Susan, and Gerry (Linda) McKenna of Rehoboth, MA and their children Colin, Corey (Ian), and Jill; his grand nieces and nephews Rocco, Ryan, Alexander, and Emma; his cousin Jeanne Valenti of Weston, MA and many other dear friends and family.

Drafted during the Vietnam War, Rich served in the U.S. Army serving at the Pentagon. His professional life began with the United Way in Rhode Island and Connecticut, where he worked to strengthen communities, before transitioning to a career as a private financial and insurance advisor, where he continued to serve clients well past retirement. Rich also gave generously of his time, volunteering with numerous organizations, always seeking to make a difference.

Steadfast and reliable, Rich was a man of his word. If he promised to be there, he always was. His communication was direct — sometimes disarming — but grounded in honesty and care. Just as often, his warmth and curiosity shone through; he loved getting to know people, asking thoughtful questions, and learning what made others “tick.” His wit, humor, and gift for conversation left a lasting impression on everyone he met.

Rich was a voracious reader, mostly reading non-fiction and historical fiction books. Stacks of newspapers, New Yorkers, and other publications were always present. He kept up with local, national and world affairs constantly and was always up for a discussion.

Rich valued his health and fitness throughout his life, always finding ways to stay active. In his younger years he enjoyed baseball, alpine skiing, road cycling and running, doing so well into his sixties. For a number of years he rowed on Woodridge Lake, often with his cocker poodle Bailey perched on the bow. Later, he spent time walking, always making sure to maintain his fitness, often half-joking about parking far away, “I do it for exercise.” At least four loyal dogs were his companions over the years, sharing in these pursuits at his side. His most recent beloved companion Bruno will miss him dearly.

He was an adventurous cook, rarely sticking to recipes and often experimenting with unusual finds — hot peppers, unpasteurized milk, or a new vegetable he would bring home and attempt to weave into a family dinner. Even when his taste buds were dulled by treatment, he never lost his love of food and conversation, always asking after a trip, “Did you have any good eats?”

Later in life, Rich discovered a love of travel. His first trip abroad came in 2007, visiting his son Chris in the UK, which sparked a wanderlust that took

him across Europe and around the world to Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and South Korea, visiting Nick during his time abroad. He embraced every journey, eager to experience new cultures, connect with people, and, of course, sample local cuisines.

In 2020, Rich was diagnosed with his first cancer; by 2024, he was living with three different forms of the disease. Through years of treatment and the challenges that followed, he amazed those around him with his strength and grace. Even in the face of pain, he was not one to complain. Instead, he carried on with resilience, humor, and gratitude. During this time, he did suffer but he continued to live. Showing up for his grandchildren's flag football games, and taking a family trip to Italy, Spain and Morocco. With Cynthia always at his side, he fought cancer head on with conviction, and faith he could beat it. He lived beyond every timeline that physicians set over the years, leaving his family wondering if and/or when he'd finally succumb. When he finally ceased treatment, he chose to say he was "living with" cancer rather than fighting it.

Above all, Rich cherished his family. He lived fully, loved deeply, and left everyone who knew him better for it.

Friends and relatives are welcome to join the family for calling hours at Molloy Funeral Home, West Hartford, on Friday, September 19th from 5 to 7pm. A funeral mass will be held at Our Lady of Sorrows, Hartford, on Saturday, September 20th, beginning at 10am.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Richard's memory to the House of Bread, Hartford, CT ([www.hobread.org](http://www.hobread.org)), an organization dedicated to feeding, housing, and educating those most in need.

# Previous Events

## Calling Hours

SEP **19.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Molloy Funeral Home  
906 Farmington Avenue  
West Hartford, CT 06119  
(860) 232-1322

## Funeral Mass

SEP **20.** 10:00 AM (ET)

Our Lady of Sorrows  
79 New Park Ave.  
Hartford, CT  
(860) 233-4425

# Tribute Wall

GK

“ *Hellava good guy, will miss him. Cynthia, Chris & Nick, sorry for you loss. Back before Christmas 2000, I had heart stent put in - advised not to lift anything heavy for a couple of weeks. We had a real Christmas tree sitting on the outside porch - Rich knew I had the operation, saw the tree, came down, carried it in & put it in the stand. Like I said, great guy & fellow Providence grad. George Kennedy*

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**George Kennedy** - September 15, 2025 at 08:01 PM

JP

“ *Cynthia, I am saddened to learn of Richard's passing. May you ever treasure the wonderful times you shared together. Death can never take a good man away, for, in the hearts of the people he inspired, his legacy remains and continuous throughout generations. May his soul find eternal rest.*

*My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.*

*John*

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**John A Perkins** - September 14, 2025 at 06:14 AM