



Richard Francis Messenger Sr

June 17, 2026

In Loving Memory of Richard Francis Messenger, Sr. 1936–2026

The world grew a little quieter on June 18, 2026, when Richard (Dick) Francis Messenger, Sr. completed his remarkable journey at the age of 89. Born in Hartford and rooted deeply in Connecticut history, Dick carried with him the pride of being a descendant of The Barkhamsted Lighthouse Tribe — a heritage he honored and shared with his family.

Dick's life was shaped by service, hard work, and devotion. After graduating from Bulkley High School and Santa Monica Junior College, he served in the Air Force, an experience that instilled discipline and purpose. His long railroad career — with the NY, NH & Hartford Railway, Amtrak, and Conrail — reflected his steady reliability and commitment to keeping people connected. He was preceded in death by his wife and partner in all things, Margeurite (Cooch) Gorry Messenger. Together they raised a family that became Dick's greatest joy. He leaves his children — Nancy Messenger, Margaurite (Peggy) Simmons, Richard Messenger Jr., Carol Poehnert and husband Jeffrey, and Edward Messenger and wife Caroline — his grandchildren Robert Simmons, Michael Simmons, Matthew Poehnert, Emma Messenger, and Jack Messenger, who will carry forward his stories, humor, and quiet strength. His beloved great grandchildren — Tyler Simmons, Lucas Simmons, Leo Simmons, and Zamaraline Poehnert — will continue the legacy he built with love and devotion. Additionally he is survived by his sister Susan Messenger and was predeceased by his brother Robert Messenger.

Dick's life was anchored in family, heritage, and the deep pride he took in a job done well. Those who loved him will continue to be guided by his example. He was also a committed Democrat, honored as Democrat of the Year for his decades of service, working on every presidential campaign from JFK to Obama. His dedication to supporting small businesses helped him forge countless friendships throughout the community, friendships that blossomed into an extended family over the years.

The family offers deep gratitude to Shanta Reghmi and the Bikakis family, whose kindness, care, and support meant so much to our father and to all of us.

A private burial will be held. Those wishing to honor Richard may donate to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.