



## Karl Josef Springer, P.E.

April 14, 1935 - February 23, 2025

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A caring husband, father, and uncle, native San Antonian Karl J. Springer passed away peacefully at home on February 23, 2025. Born in 1935 at Nix Hospital on the banks of the San Antonio River, he was the youngest of eight brothers and graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School in 1953. In 1957, he received a B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering from Texas A&M and was a distinguished Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps graduate. But the major highlight of 1957 was his marriage to Ann Andrews in Fort Worth. After a year at San Antonio's Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) as a Project Engineer, Karl reported for active duty as a Second Lieutenant assigned to Wright Patterson Air Force Base's Propulsion Lab in Dayton, Ohio. In 1962, he accepted an engineering position with DuPont in Wilmington, Delaware, transferred to Air Force Reserve Duty, and was later promoted to Captain in the Air Force. In 1970, he resigned from the Air Force Reserve.

A new opportunity at SwRI lured him back to his beloved hometown of San Antonio in 1963 which led to a remarkable career in air pollution research. Karl established a Vehicle Emissions Research Lab, leading to many projects for the EPA. His research focused on measuring and controlling pollutants

from gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles. Karl's pioneering efforts for the EPA led to significant air pollution reductions. While at SwRI, Karl earned a master's degree in physics from Trinity University in 1966 and taught classes in engineering at San Antonio College.

Karl authored and presented over 35 peer-reviewed papers and publications to share his knowledge of pollution and energy topics. As a fellow member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) and former chairman of the ASME's Internal Combustion Engine Division, he became an honorary member in 2003. Karl was also a member of many professional associations including the Society of Automotive Engineers, Texas A&M's Academy of Distinguished Mechanical Engineer graduates, the National Academy of Engineering, the Engineering Honor Society Tau Beta Pi, and the Texas Academy of Medicine, Engineering, Science & Technology. Karl received many awards, medals, and honors throughout his career.

He retired from SwRI in 1998 after 36 years of leading the Automotive Products and Emissions Research Division, known as Division 8. July 28 was deemed Karl Springer Day, and many of his 587 employees celebrated as Karl happily called his tenure, "One heck of a ride." After retiring, he participated in National Research Council studies and wrote several automotive research histories. Karl made presentations at UTSA's Mechanical Engineering Department and other schools. A lifelong learner and educator, he taught and attended many courses at the Academy of Learning in Retirement.

Travel was his greatest passion. Karl and Ann visited over 200 countries on five continents, often including the family. He wrote numerous travel articles about their adventures, and some were published by International Travel News. Karl is survived by his wife Ann of 67 years; daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Michael Stensgaard of Fernandina Beach, Florida; and two sons:

Erik Springer of San Antonio, and Kurt Springer of Lytle, Texas. Numerous nieces and nephews are spread throughout the USA, including Marianne Miller and Paul Springer, Jr. in San Antonio.

A gravesite memorial and internment of ashes ceremony will be held at 1 pm on April 14, 2025, which would have been his 90th birthday. He will join his parents in the Springer family plot at Mission Burial Park South in San Antonio. In lieu of flowers, consider donating to your favorite charity.

# Cemetery Details

## Mission Burial Park South

1700 SE Military Dr.  
San Antonio, TX 78214  
<http://www.missionparks.com>

# Previous Events

## Inurnment

**APR 14.** 1:00 PM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels South, Cemeteries & Crematories  
1700 SE Military Dr  
San Antonio, TX 78214  
(210) 924-4242  
<https://www.missionparks.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Karl Josef Springer, P.E..*



April 11, 2025 at 09:03 AM



“ *Ann-- My condolences. I have very pleasant memories of having lunch with Karl at SwRI and seeing him at ALIR.*

*Gerald Leverant*

**GERALD R LEVERANT** - March 11, 2025 at 11:49 AM



“ *8 files added to the album Springer Family Reunions 1986-2003*



**Karen Stensgaard** - March 10, 2025 at 06:21 PM

AS

“ I lost my husband of 67 years. Many adventures during those years and lots of wonderful memories. Rest in peace. Ann Springer

Ann Springer - March 07, 2025 at 09:19 PM

TS

So sorry to hear about Karl. He was such a sweet man. I know how hard it is to lose a loved one. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

Teri Springer - April 07, 2025 at 12:35 PM

KS

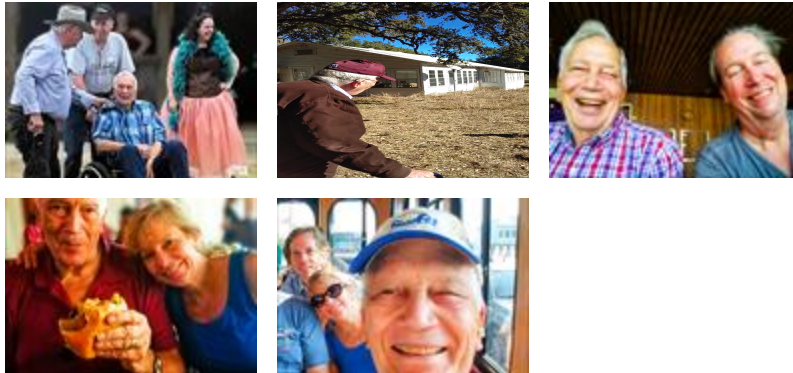
“ 2 files added to the album Work Related



Karen Stensgaard - March 07, 2025 at 06:28 PM

ES

“ 28 files added to the album Travels



Erik Springer - March 05, 2025 at 02:10 PM

ES

“ 1 file added to the album *Work Related*



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**Erik Springer** - March 05, 2025 at 01:20 PM

KS

“ 8 files added to the album *Special songs for the ceremony*



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**Karen Stensgaard** - March 03, 2025 at 01:58 PM

MS

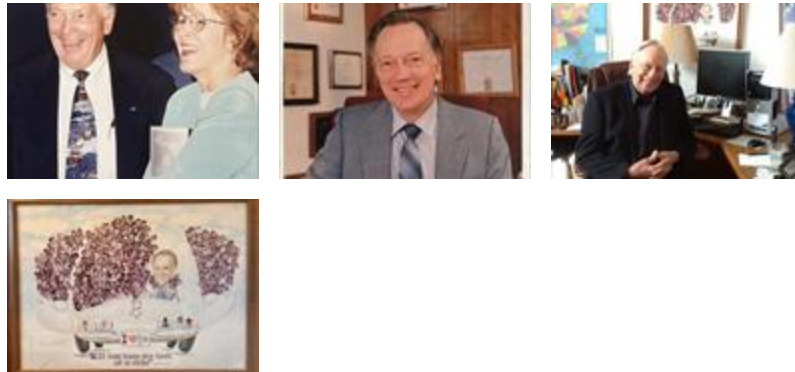
“ Being Karl Springer’s son-in-law for close to 40 years, I have enjoyed many travel experiences and conversations with him. One that especially comes to mind is when Karl and Ann invited Karen and me on a trip to South Africa. We rented a car and saw spectacular scenery and wildlife and enjoyed great wine. I’ll always remember your generosity and company fondly.  
Love, Michael



Michael Stensgaard - March 02, 2025 at 04:05 PM

KS

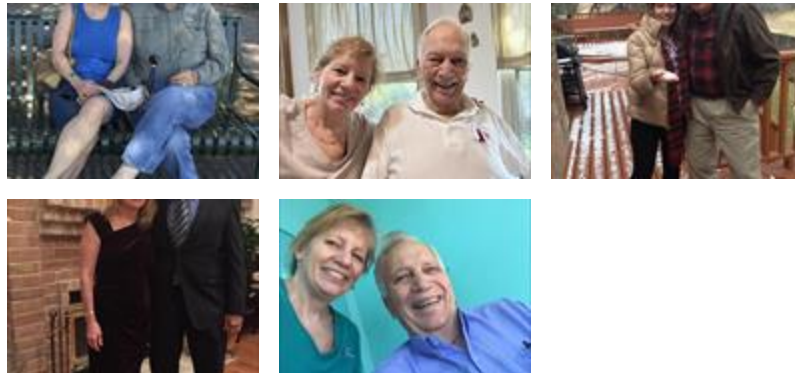
“ 4 files added to the album Work Related



Karen Stensgaard - March 01, 2025 at 06:49 PM

KS

“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Karen Stensgaard - March 01, 2025 at 06:37 PM

KS

“ Dear Dad,

*It's heartbreaking that the dreaded day came all too soon when we would lose you. As it must eventually arrive for all of us. Sometimes my chest tightens, and it becomes hard to breathe. But when I imagine your look of concern, it eases up. I'm trying to move from despair to appreciation for the 66 years we had on Planet Earth together. At 89 years "young", you pushed yourself to stay with us and outlived so many of your friends and family members, so I thank you for that. As I often said over the past few years, "Every day with Dad is an extra day!" Thank you for being there not just as my father, but as a trusted friend. I will always treasure our adventures and fun times together, both at home and abroad. After you passed, I read some congratulatory letters from your colleagues for your retirement. They mentioned your catchphrase, "If not now, when?" which I don't recall hearing. Your saying pushes me to do more in the time I have left. Maybe some of it, still to be determined, would have made you proud or at least smile. Love always from your oldest child who got your initials and will keep them forever! 🥹*

💔 🤔 Karen J. Stensgaard

Karen Stensgaard - March 01, 2025 at 06:28 PM