



## Henry William "Bill" Knauz

July 25, 1928 - January 29, 2026

Henry William "Bill" Knauz, a cherished husband, father, grandfather, and brother, passed away peacefully on January 29, 2026, at the age of 97 at his home in Lake Forest, Illinois. Bill's life was marked by his intelligence, adventurous spirit, and friendly demeanor, which endeared him to all who knew him.

Bill was born in Kenosha, Wisconsin to Karl and Emmy Knauz on July 25th, 1928. The family re-located to Lake Forest where his father established a Chrysler/DeSoto dealership in the early 1930's. A proud graduate of Lake Forest High School, he quickly demonstrated his knack for mechanics which would become the cornerstone of his professional life.

Bill was a veteran and served in the Korean war as a mechanic in the U.S. Army. Upon his return from the service, he spent six months in Europe following the motorcycle racing circuit. It was during this sojourn that he became enamored with European cars and, upon his return, began to add them to the family business.

His career in the automotive industry began humbly as a mechanic during his high school years, but his hard work and dedication saw him rise to become a manager and eventually the General Manager of the foreign car division, Knauz Continental Autos. In 1971, he became owner/operator of the entire

company upon the death of his father Karl. After relocating the entire business to Lake Bluff, he handed the reins to his son-in-law William Madden in 2000. He continued to serve on the board of directors and went to the office almost every day until his passing.

In addition to cars, Bill was passionate about flying, and spent hours with his planes at Waukegan airport, and later Kenosha airport. In Kenosha, Bill had several hangars, one even nick-named, "Bill's Sandbox." He regularly flew throughout the area, going to events such as fly-in breakfasts and the Oshkosh Air Show. Later in life he was part of a group of mature pilots calling themselves the "Lunch-waffe". They would choose a location and fly there for lunch.

Beyond his professional and personal pursuits, Bill was deeply involved in his community and industry. He was a member of many domestic and foreign auto clubs, even dabbling briefly in the world of auto racing. His faith was an important aspect of his life, and he was a devoted member of the Winnetka Bible Church.

Bill's life was enriched by his beloved family. He is survived by his loving wife of almost 71 years, Inge, his children, Kim (William) Madden and David (Kitty) Knauz; his grandchildren, Will Madden, Katie (Brenden) Cerney, Alex (Sara) Knauz, and Julia Knauz; and his sister, Inge R. Knauz. He was predeceased by his son, the late Karl (Sydney) Knauz. Each family member carries forward a piece of Bill's legacy through their own lives and accomplishments.

Bill Knauz lived a full and vibrant life, touching the hearts of many and leaving behind a legacy of innovation, service, and community involvement.

A Visitation will be held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 from 4:00 to 8:00PM at Wenban Lake Forest Funeral Home, 320 Vine Avenue, Lake Forest, IL. A

Memorial Service will be held on Thursday, February 5, 2026 at 1:30pm at Winnetka Bible Church, 555 Birch Street, Winnetka, IL. Interment will be private.

\*\* Special Parking Instructions for Winnetka Bible Church are available at <https://www.wbc.org/>

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made online to the Winnetka Bible Church at <https://www.wbc.org/give>

Funeral arrangements are entrusted to Reuland & Turnbough Funeral Directors of Lake Forest and Wenban Lake Forest Funeral Home – (847) 234-9649.

# Cemetery Details

## Lake Forest Cemetery

1525 North Lake Road  
Lake Forest, IL 60045

# Previous Events

## Visitation

FEB 4. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Wenban Funeral Home  
320 Vine Avenue  
Lake Forest, IL 60045

## Memorial Service

FEB 5. 1:30 PM (CT)

Winnetka Bible Church  
555 Birch Street  
Winnetka, IL 60093

# Tribute Wall

KF

“ Thank you for the gifts and the wonderful memories you have shared. They have given us strength during this difficult time.

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**Knauz and Madden Families** - March 18 at 05:38 PM

GB

“ Mr. Knauz was a Legendary man. He will be deeply missed and remembered by all of us who had a privilege of knowing him. Please accept my deepest condolences to the family. Respectfully, Gary Bogart.

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**Gary Bogart** - February 04 at 05:37 PM

TR

“ I have worked at Knauz Motors for 13 years and was very inspired by Mr. Knauz. He was at work everyday, and had a happy spirit, singing as he was walking down the hall and saying hi and bye to me by name each day. He will be truly missed...  
Traci

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**Traci** - February 04 at 02:19 PM

AS

“ Alfredo S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Henry William "Bill" Knauz.

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**Alfredo S.** - February 04 at 10:00 AM



“ Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Henry William "Bill" Knauz.



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February 03 at 04:45 PM



“ Barbara B. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Henry William "Bill" Knauz.

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**Barbara B.** - February 03 at 04:37 PM



“ Steve Chase purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Henry William "Bill" Knauz.



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**Steve Chase** - February 03 at 02:43 PM



“ Steve Chase planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Henry William "Bill" Knauz.

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**Steve Chase** - February 03 at 02:43 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Henry William "Bill" Knauz.



February 02 at 03:56 PM



“ From Mercedes-Benz USA planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Henry William "Bill" Knauz.

From Mercedes-Benz USA - February 02 at 03:56 PM



“ I have worked at Knauz for 15 years, and I will never forget the first time I met Mr. Knauz. He was an incredible man whose impact will not be forgotten. He will be deeply missed. My sincerest condolences to the family, and may he rest in peace. Eddie Baeza



eddie - February 02 at 12:44 PM