



Leroy Hayden Kennedy

February 10, 2025

Leroy Hayden Kennedy (96), a devoted husband to Lillian for 72 years, father to Michael and Coleen (Eric), grandfather and great-grandfather, passed away peacefully, leaving behind a legacy of love, faith, and service. Born in Mounds, Oklahoma to Ollie and William Kennedy, Leroy was the second to the youngest of nine siblings and the last surviving member of the Kennedy family.

During the hardships of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl, Leroy's family relocated to California in search of a better life, eventually settling in Turlock. There, he was raised with the values of faith, hard work, and the importance of family-principles that guided him throughout his life. He attended Lowell Elementary and Turlock High School before being drafted into the U.S. Army during the Korean War. As a medic, he bravely served his country, sustaining injuries that earned him a Purple Heart.

After returning home, Leroy pursued higher education, earning a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1957, along with an additional year of business administration studies. He then embarked on a distinguished career that spanned nearly four decades. From 1957-1960, he worked for the California State Department of Water Resources as an assistant engineer, contributing to the design of dams, bridges, and canals. In 1960, he earned his Civil Engineering license and took on the role of City Engineer and Public Works Director for the City of Turlock.

From 1960 to 1963, he oversaw all city infrastructure, including streets, sewers, water systems, parks, street lighting, and storm drainage.

In 1963, Leroy joined the Turlock Irrigation District (TID), where he dedicated over 30 years of service. For most of his tenure, he was the Irrigation Department Manager, overseeing all aspects of irrigation operations with a department of more than 200 employees. In his final five years before retiring in 1994, he served as the Water Resources Administrator, responsible for working with federal, state, and local agencies on water rights and resource management projects. His contributions helped shape Turlock's infrastructure and water systems for generations to come.

Even in retirement, Leroy remained committed to his community, serving on the Turlock Memorial Cemetery Board and playing an instrumental role in many local projects. He also enjoyed golfing at the Turlock Country Club, traveling with his beloved wife, Lil, and spending cherished time with his family. Leroy was a man of wisdom, kindness, and humor--always ready with encouragement, advice, or a spirited debate. He believed in honoring God, treasuring family, and committing wholeheartedly to the work before him.

Above all, Leroy's greatest joy was his family. As a father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, he poured his heart into those he loved, leaving behind a legacy of faith, strength, and generosity. He now rests in the arms of Jesus, reunited with his beloved son, Michael.

Leroy's life was one well lived, and though he will be deeply missed, his memory will be carried forward with gratitude and love. His faith assured him of the life beyond this one, and his family finds comfort in knowing they will one day be reunited.

A Celebration of Leroy's life will be held at Turlock Funeral Home on Saturday,

March 1, 2025 at 10:15 a.m., 425 N. Soderquist Rd., Turlock, CA 95380. A private family burial will be held prior to the services.

Donations can be made in his honor to Westside Ministries, 950 Columbia Ave., Turlock, CA 95380.

Cemetery Details

Turlock Memorial Park

575 N. Soderquist Rd.
Turlock, CA 95380
(209) 632-9111
<http://turlockmemorialpark.com>

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAR 1. 10:15 AM (PT)

Turlock Funeral Home
425 North Soderquist Road
Turlock, CA 95381
(209) 632-9111
<https://turlockfuneralhome.com>

Tribute Wall

BH

“ *Leroy was a wonderful man of God. He was always so friendly at church. I know he will be missed. Praise God this isn't a final good-bye but just see you later. Prayers & thoughts are with you, Lillian & Colleen, at this time. (Sorry I am not able to make his Celebration of Life service.)*

Bonnie Haarstad - February 28, 2025 at 11:22 AM



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Leroy Hayden Kennedy.*



February 26, 2025 at 09:02 AM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Leroy Hayden Kennedy.*

February 26, 2025 at 09:02 AM

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“ *The Balswick Family purchased the Pretty Please for the family of Leroy Hayden Kennedy.*



The Balswick Family - February 24, 2025 at 12:25 PM