



## Jack Kenna Gates

February 5, 1930 - February 6, 2024

Jack grew up in Charleston, WV during the Great Depression. After graduating from high school in 1948, he enlisted in the army and was sent to Trieste, Italy, where he remained for the duration of his tour of duty. He had enlisted for 3 years, but due to the Korean war, his tour was extended an extra year. While in Trieste, he travelled extensively and learned to speak Italian. After the army, Jack attended WV University under the GI Bill of Rights. He earned a B.S. in geology and accepted a job with Mobile Oil Company as an exploration geologist. Mobile sent him to Tripoli Libya, where he did three-week rotations into the field. On one expedition, his Land Rover hit a land mine left over from WW II. He was seriously injured and had to be air lifted to Wheelus Air Force Base, where he fully recovered under the care of a German physician.

In Tripoli, he met and married Lucia, who was of Italian descent. They were married on August 6, 1960, and subsequently moved to the United States where they had two children together, Jeffrey and Michael.

In 1961, they moved to East Lansing, Michigan, where Jack enrolled as a graduate student at Michigan State University. He received an M.A. in economics and went on to work as an economist for the Governor's office in West Virginia. and then for the Office of Planning and Budget in Georgia. In 1978, he relocated to South Florida where he finished his career with Florida Power and Light, working in the Systems Planning Department.

He retired from Florida Power and Light in 1988 and subsequently travelled

extensively, living for a time in Chico, CA, Slidell, LA, Prague, Czech Republic and La Ceiba, Honduras. He eventually relocated back to South Florida and spent the last 15 years in Hollywood.

Besides travel, Jack liked photography and had a few photos published in magazines. He enjoyed living in downtown Hollywood and stepped out most evenings to listen to music, dance, watch karaoke and shoot pool with friends. He also enjoyed teaching economics and continued to take part-time teaching jobs even long after he retired.

In July of 2023, at age 93, he relocated to a nursing home in Sarasota, FL to be closer to family. He passed away peacefully the morning of Tuesday, February 6th, the day after his 94th birthday.

Jack was an intrepid soul and an adventurer with an admirable enthusiasm for life. He was always ready with a quip or a funny expression, and he loved nothing better than camaraderie with friends and family. We will miss him dearly but will cherish his memory and his example of "a life well- lived."

There will be a Shelter Service with Military Honors on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 2:00 pm at Sarasota National Cemetery, 9810 SR 72, Sarasota, Florida 34241.

Memorial contributions may be made in Jack's honor to Trustbridge Hospice at <https://trustbridge.com/give/> or The American Legion: <https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Donate>

# Cemetery Details

## Sarasota National Cemetery

9810 State Road 72  
Sarasota, FL 34241

# Previous Events

## Graveside Service with Military Honors

FEB **15**. 2:00 PM (ET)

Sarasota National Cemetery  
9810 State Road 72  
Sarasota, FL 34241

# Tribute Wall



“ Jeffrey G. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jack Kenna Gates.

Jeffrey G. - February 13, 2024 at 01:45 PM



“ Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Jack Kenna Gates.



February 13, 2024 at 01:45 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Jack Kenna Gates.



February 13, 2024 at 11:19 AM



“ Barbara P. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jack Kenna Gates.

Barbara P. - February 13, 2024 at 12:41 AM



“ Barbara P. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jack Kenna Gates.

Barbara P. - February 13, 2024 at 12:41 AM