



David West Peterson

September 3, 1940 - November 3, 2025

Princeton - David West Peterson passed away on Monday, November 3, 2025, at OSF St Francis Hospital in Peoria, IL. He was born on September 3, 1940, in Schenectady, New York, the second of three children of Marion F. and Harold A. Peterson. The parents of his bride-to-be lived nearby then, and were friends with Marion and Harold.

The family moved to Madison, Wisconsin in 1946, where David grew up. He attended Madison West High School and the University of Wisconsin program in Electrical Engineering from which he graduated in 1962. David went on to obtain MS and PhD degrees in EE in 1963 and 1965, respectively, from Stanford University. He had married his best friend, Judith Schnaitter, at the end of 1961, and their son Eric was born at the time David finished at Stanford.

David joined the United States Army as a Second Lieutenant in 1967 and was assigned to the Signal Corps at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, working at the Institute for Exploratory Research. David and Judith's second child Karl, born at the Fort Monmouth Hospital. After two years of service, David transitioned from Army Captain to private citizen and joined the faculty at the Northwestern Graduate School of Business in Evanston, Illinois.

In 1971 David, Judith and family moved for a year to West Berlin, West

Germany, for David to accept an appointment at a German sponsored management research institute based there.

A year after returning to Northwestern, David accepted a professorship at Duke University, which was starting a graduate program in management, so the Petersons moved again, this time to Durham, North Carolina. While at Duke, David transitioned from the Business School to the Statistics Department. He also started a consulting firm to help meet the needs of attorneys engaged in litigation who had discovered a need for statistical assistance. David eventually left Duke to run this firm full time. It was working on attorneys' projects within this firm that David derived his greatest professional satisfaction.

Eventually, David sold his firm and retired. For a few years thereafter, he and Judith ran a tree farm in rural North Carolina growing loblolly pines. Then they discovered and acquired the unoccupied and derelict Austin Bryant house a few miles south of Princeton, Illinois, and Judith set about overseeing its repair. Ultimately the house was so attractive that David and she moved there. Austin Bryant, who built the house, was David's third great grandfather. David was interested in the Bryants' story and became active in the Bureau County Genealogical Society. His interests spread to the Princeton Theater Group and the Bureau County Historical Society.

David leaves his wife of 63 years, Judith Schnaitter Peterson; son Eric West Peterson of Chapel Hill, NC, son Karl David Peterson, his wife Sophia Tsanos, and their dog Stormy of New York City, NY; Eric's son Caspar Joyce Hadek Peterson, his wife Milica Vulin, and their infant son Julian Aleksandar Peterson of Vienna, Austria. In addition, David leaves a brother, Gilbert Moseley Peterson of Madison, WI.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, December 6, 2025 from 1:00-

3:00 pm at Norberg's Memorial Home, Inc. All are invited to share their memories of David.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to the Second Story Teen Center, Princeton, IL.

Online condolences may be directed to www.norbergfh.com

Arrangements have been entrusted to Norberg Memorial Home, Inc. & Monuments.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

DEC 6. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Norberg Memorial Home, Inc.
701 E. Thompson Street
Princeton, IL 61356

Tribute Wall

CP

“ I have known and David from days when they lived in Evanston, across the street from me and then just east on Central street. The friendship continued over the years . We had the chance to share a lovely meal in Paris ,France about 7 years ago. I realize from reading and talking with David when we met I again in the Princeton home,what an archivist David was. Holding on to the past while designing for the present and the future. He is missed for many reasons- his humor ,his love of making things work and love of history. My condolences to Judith,Eric,Karl and the rest of the family. I plan to plant a tree in his memory. With love, Connie Porteous

Constance Porteous - December 04, 2025 at 04:20 PM

CP

I meant to say Judith and David I first sentence.

Constance Porteous - December 04, 2025 at 04:22 PM

BG

“ I worked with David and appreciated his rigorous methodological approach to solving problems and his clear communication style. David gave me those practices to carry through my career. Beyond doing good work to solve important questions, David created a work environment where staff members trusted and supported each other. He set that caring tone. After he and I stopped working together, our work relationship evolved into a friendship. I am so fortunate to have learned from him and to have had him as part of my life for many years.

Beth Glennie - December 03, 2025 at 03:38 PM

BM

“ Big hugs, The Mintons planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David West Peterson.

Big hugs, The Mintons - December 02, 2025 at 05:26 PM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of David West Peterson.



December 02, 2025 at 05:26 PM

CO

“ *“Dr. Pete”, as I always called him, was a genuine, unique man and a great mentor for me. From thought processes to data management, quality control and ethics, I still use his teachings in my work today. He put up with my bald jokes, and had a quiet, nerdy sense of humor. And the hats...oh the hats! What a good collection he had! I am so fortunate that Dr. Pete was a part of my life.*

Claire Osgood - November 17, 2025 at 09:49 PM

CO

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Claire Osgood - November 17, 2025 at 09:40 PM



“ Princeton Illinois is where I (Virginia) met David on our trip from California in 2025. He, and his wife Judith, made a special trip to visit me at the Bureau County Historical Society while I was researching there on Saturday. They had, “heard I was in town.” He was my fifth cousin (through Austin Bryant) and a lovely man. I am glad I got a chance to spend some time chatting with him. My heart goes out to all who will miss him.

Footprint Howard Mullan - November 15, 2025 at 05:04 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Photos of David



Footprint Howard Mullan - November 15, 2025 at 05:03 PM



“ 3 files added to the album Photos of David



Karl Peterson - November 15, 2025 at 02:09 PM