



Werner Josef Kretz

FEB 1, 1939 - APR 7, 2026



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Werner Josef Kretz

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Werner Josef Kretz, age 87, passed away peacefully at his home on April 7, 2026, surrounded by love and with his daughter holding his hand.

Werner was born on February 1, 1939, in Mühlhausen, Germany, to the late Anton and Hedwig Kretz. As the oldest of nine children, he carried a strong sense of responsibility, perseverance, and care for others ~ qualities that defined his life's journey.

In 1955, at just sixteen years old, Werner bravely left his homeland to begin a new life in the United States. His immigration was made possible through the support of his grandmother, Barbara Kretz, who encouraged her son Otto, Werner's uncle, to sponsor him. He arrived in America with little more than a single suitcase and a strong determination to build a better future. While working to support himself, he attended night classes to learn English, laying the foundation for the career and life he would build.

Werner married Judith, and together they adopted and raised their children. He remained steady and dependable throughout his life, consistently providing for and caring for those he loved.

He is survived by his children, Heidi (Manuel) Glynias and Steven (Lori) Kretz. Werner was a loving grandfather to Peter, Anton, Hannah, Sephora, Tehilla, ElChavah, Nevehyah, Naiym, and Logan, and a great-grandfather to Raycer and Keener. He shared a special bond with his grandchildren, who affectionately called him "Opa."

He is also survived by his siblings in Germany: Alex, Klothilde, Gerd, Luzia, Heiner, Hedwig, Theresia, and Rudolf.

From the time he arrived in America at sixteen, Werner was known for his strong work ethic, workmanship, and reliability. He began working at the W.S. Tyler Company, where he painted elevators, and later became a tool and die machinist for several different companies. Alongside his work, he developed a lifelong focus on investing and the stock market, which became a



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primary source of his income and a subject he was passionate about and loved to discuss. His dedication and reliability defined every role he held.

He embraced an active retirement, enjoying time with friends at the Rocky River Library discussing the stock market, swimming at the Rocky River Recreation Center, riding his bicycle through his neighborhood and the Cleveland Metroparks, and helping others in meaningful ways, including providing financial support to many.

Over the past 14 years, he spent his winters in Florida, where he became involved in a German-American organization, attended dances and community events, and built a close circle of friends who remained a source of support throughout his later years.

Werner also found joy in life's simple pleasures. He enjoyed shopping for good deals at Costco and Aldi and never turned down a Wendy's Double Stack paired with a senior coffee. These everyday moments brought him genuine happiness.

A man of deep compassion and principle, Werner wished to help people in need, especially the hungry. In 2011, through the initiative and efforts of his son-in-law, the Kretz Family Foundation was established, funded primarily through Werner's generosity, to carry forward his values and commitment to helping others. Through the foundation, he supported numerous charitable organizations dedicated to caring for those in need. His generosity extended to food banks, soup kitchens, housing initiatives, and children's organizations in Northeast Ohio and Naples, Florida. Werner firmly believed in "helping the needy, not the greedy," and he lived that belief through his actions.

Werner's remarkable strength, independence, and stubborn determination helped him defy all expectations after his pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) diagnosis. Though doctors estimated he might live only 3 to 5 years, he went on to live another 16 years, remaining active and independent in his own home until the very end.

Werner will be remembered as a hard worker, devoted family man, loyal friend, and generous philanthropist. His life reflected courage, humility, and kindness, and his legacy lives on through the many lives he touched and will continue to impact through his foundation.

Visitation will be held at Sunset Funeral Service, 6245 Columbia Road, North Olmsted, Ohio 44070, on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. until the start of the funeral service at 12:00



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p.m., with burial to follow at Sunset Memorial Park, North Olmsted, Ohio.

The funeral service will be livestreamed for those unable to attend in person. Please use this link to join the livestream: <https://together.oneroomstreaming.com/4Y8PAC>

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in Werner's honor to The Kretz Family Foundation, P.O. Box 16694, Rocky River, Ohio 44116.



Events

Werner Josef Kretz

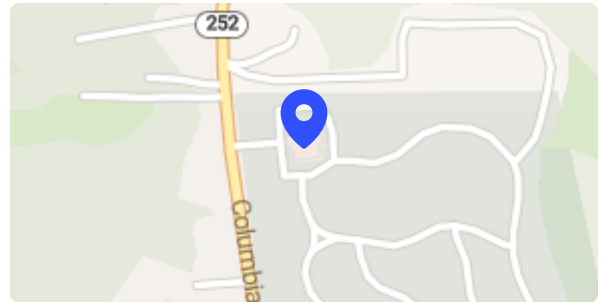
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Visitation

 **Tuesday**, April 28, 2026


 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM ET

 **Sunset Chapel**
6245 Columbia Road, North Olmsted OH 44070

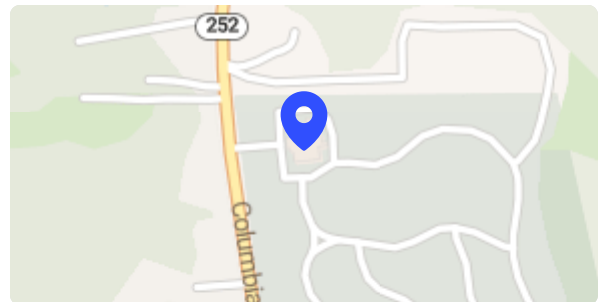


Funeral Service

 **Tuesday**, April 28, 2026

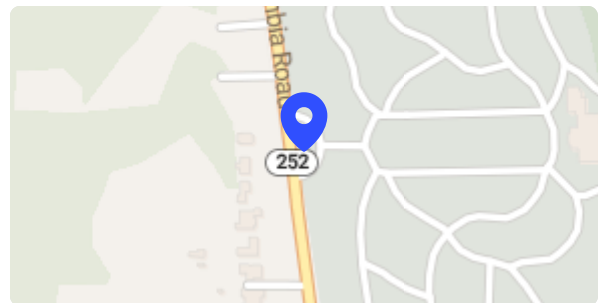
 12:00 PM ET

 **Sunset Chapel**
6245 Columbia Road, North Olmsted OH 44070



Cemetery Details

 **Sunset Memorial Park**
6265 Columbia Road, North Olmsted OH 44070





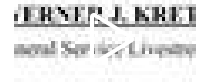
Tribute Wall

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Sunset Funeral, Cremation Services & Cemetery shared a **Webcast Video**.



April 19 at 8:53 AM



Media

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Sunset Funeral, Cremation Services & Cemetery shared a **Webcast Video**.

April 19 at 8:53 AM

WERNER J. KRETZ

Funeral Service Livestream



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Werner by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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