

Dennis Kelly Sullivan Obituary

Dennis Kelly Sullivan, 84, of Elmhurst, IL passed away peacefully, surrounded by his family on the 4th of October, 2026, at Elmhurst Hospital. Kelly was a loving husband, father, and grandfather known for his kindness, his intelligence, and his patience. He generously shared his time, knowledge, and talents with his family, friends, colleagues, and community.

Kelly was born on September 24, 1942 in Evanston, IL to his late parents James J. Sullivan and Charlotte Elizabeth Sullivan (nee Rauen). He was raised in Evanston, IL. His family were active members of St. Margaret Mary Parish in Chicago, IL, where he attended school. He graduated from Loyola Academy in Wilmette, IL in 1960.

Kelly earned his Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering from the University of Detroit in 1965. He worked at International Harvester (IH) for a few years as a test engineer, then earned his Juris Doctor degree in 1969 at the DePaul University Law School. He worked briefly at IIT Research and Institute as a patent advisor, then returned to IH as a patent attorney. Kelly stayed with International Truck & Engine when it was spun off from IH and became Navistar International, and he eventually retired as Senior Counsel for Patent and Trademark Law after 42 total years at IH and International. Kelly is a named co-inventor on three registered patents.

Kelly was an avid card player, especially duplicate bridge, and was a Bronze Life Master through the American Contract Bridge League. He and his wife of 50 years, Loretta, were regular attendees at the opera, classical music, and theatrical performances. Kelly also enjoyed crossword puzzles, sailing and racquetball, watching sports, and being a Grandpa. He could, and would, repair all manner of objects from cars to appliances to home remodeling. Kelly and Lor were frequent campers, evolving over the years from tent camping with their children to driving an RV around the country in retirement, often stopping to attend regional bridge tournaments. He participated in the YMCA Indian Princesses and Guides programs for 13 years with all of his children and was a volunteer for many years with the Elmhurst American Youth Soccer Organization and at Visitation Parish. In recent years, Kelly and Lor spent their winters at the Sunflower RV Resort in Surprise, AZ, where most evenings he could be found listening to live music at the poolside tiki bar.

Kelly is survived by his wife Loretta (nee Jachim), his daughter Patricia Sullivan, and his sons Paul (Catherine) Sullivan, Mark Sullivan, Robert (Jennifer) Sullivan, and Thomas "TJ" Sullivan.

Kelly is also survived by his grandchildren James, Brian, and Rhett; by his siblings James (Maureen) Sullivan, Gina (Jeff) Schmitt, and Kevin (Ysraelia) Sullivan; and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews. Kelly will be remembered in our hearts always.

A visitation will be held on Monday, October 12, 2026 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Ahlgrim Funeral Home, 567 South Spring Road in Elmhurst, Illinois. The funeral mass will be held on Tuesday, October 13, 2026 at 10 a.m. at Visitation Catholic Church, 779 S. York Street in Elmhurst, Illinois. Interment will be at Resurrection Cemetery in Justice, Illinois.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the **Mercy Home for Boys and Girls** or to **Lurie Children's Hospital** (both in Chicago, IL).