



# Gene Kern Fong

FEB 10, 1928 - AUG 30, 2010



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## Gene Kern Fong

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Gene was born in San Francisco Chinatown on February 10, 1928 to Louie Ngan Ying and Fong Bing Seen. When Gene was fourteen, his father died from tuberculosis so he became the father figure for his younger siblings, Mildred, Dan, Sylvia, and Jennie. His sisters remember that he would draw pictures on a long sheet of paper, place it in a box, and roll it out like a movie to keep them and the next-door neighbor kids entertained. Growing up in Chinatown, there weren't many places to hang out, but the Chinatown YMCA was somewhere he could be with friends and keep out of trouble. Gene graduated from Galileo High School in 1946, and when he was only 18, he signed up to join the United States Air Force. He served his country for 3½ years and was stationed in Europe after World War II. While overseas, Gene corresponded regularly with his sister, Jennie, and both he and the family looked forward to receiving each other's news from home and afar. After being discharged and starting college, the Korean War broke out and he was called back into service for another year. Boy, was he upset! According to sister, Sylvia, Gene was a hard studying student, so he had reason to be upset. It was during his recall where he learned drafting, which prepared him for his future career in engineering. Gene started at Caltrans as a Junior Engineering Aide in 1951, and spent the next 37 years of his career employed there. In 1988, he retired as an assistant transportation engineer. Gene met Joyce on a blind date in 1954 and they married a year later. After living in San Francisco for a year (and not being able to find parking), they moved to Oakland to raise their family. At home, he could either be found in his workshop, working in the yard, making home improvements, or tuning up the family car. Though he lived in Oakland, he enjoyed cheering on his hometown teams: the 49ers and the Warriors. His father-in-law would admonish him for not rooting for the Oakland teams since he now lived on the east side of the Bay. His post-retirement routine consisted of driving to the local coffee shop to read the newspaper, meet up with a



## Obituary

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buddy or two, and having a doughnut with coffee. Why not, he earned it. Gene passed away peacefully at home on August 30th, 2010 at the age of 82, after a short battle with lung cancer and many years of emphysema. Gene is survived by his wife of 54 years, Joyce, his daughter, Vicky (husband Stan), his sons, Larry (wife Lydia) and Mitch (wife Judy), and his six grandchildren, Randy, Amy, Matt, Michelle, Kaitlyn and Lindsay; his Uncle Jimmie Fong, his sisters, Mildred Quan, Sylvia Fong and Jennie Fong; and sister-in-law Florence Fong. Gene's brother, Daniel Fong, preceded him in death. A memorial service will be held on Friday, Sept. 17, 2010 at 1:00 pm at Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Avenue, Oakland. In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Gene Fong can be made either to Chinese Presbyterian Church, 265 - 8th Street, Oakland, CA 94607 or Chinatown YMCA (SCC), 855 Sacramento Street, San Francisco, CA 94108.



## Tribute Wall

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**Michelle Fong** posted:

He was the best grandpa ever. I miss him so much. I love u Gung-Gung.

September 19 at 7:41 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

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