

David Lowden Parkinson

David L. Parkinson, 78, passed away suddenly on December 17, 2016 in Palm Desert, California.

Dave was born in East Orange, New Jersey to William and Elizabeth Parkinson. He moved to Mesa, Arizona as a child with his mother and maternal grandmother. They later relocated to Bisbee, Arizona where Dave attended Bisbee High School. During his senior year, he received his appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy. Following graduation from Annapolis in 1960, he served in the U.S. Navy as a nuclear submariner on the USS Permit and USS Guardfish until 1966.

After the navy, Dave directed Western Operations for NUS Corporation's San Diego regional office for six years until 1972, when he started WESTEC Services, Inc. The San Diego, California-based firm provided engineering and consulting services nationwide to a wide variety of clients. Activities included operating ten geothermal power plants in the Imperial Valley. In 1986, he became group president after selling the organization to ERC International Inc., later an Ogden Corporation affiliate.

Dave's childhood love was trains. As a young boy, his life goal was to have his own railroad. That dream came true in May 1991 with the Arizona & California Railroad based in Parker, Arizona. Over the next 12 years, Dave acquired the California Northern Railroad, Napa, California, in 1993; and Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad, Elma, Washington, in 1997. The three railroads were sold in 2002 to Rail America, Inc. Not ready to give railroading a rest, a year later in 2003, Dave acquired from RailAmerica the San Pedro & Southwestern Railroad, Benson, Arizona. In 2012, RailAmerica itself was bought by Genesee & Wyoming Inc.

Dave became a director of Evraz Oregon Steel Mills Inc. in 2001. He also served on the board of directors for Napa Landmarks, California Short Line Railroad Association, and the Foundation of Intermodal Research.

Dave was known and loved by many people in all facets of his life. Everywhere he went, he left a mark on people's lives. He was a brilliant entrepreneur and businessman.

But most important, Dave was a loyal husband to his wife, Sancy M. Parkinson; father to son Scott L. Parkinson (Maura), and daughter Christel P. Turkiewicz; stepdaughters, Sarah M. Randall, and Hannah M. Roebuck (Jason); and "Grandpops" to Andres R. and Diego Z. Parkinson (Scott); Tristan Y., Trafford A. and Blythe I. Turkiewicz (Christel); Antonio C. Moreno (Sarah); and Larson M. and Harrison T. Roebuck (Hannah).

Tulocay Funeral Home