



Ray Brock

April 23, 1934 - May 23, 2025

Paul Raymond Brock “Ray” was born on April 23, 1934 in Kansas City, Kansas, where his family lived until he was 6 years old. In 1940, his parents, Paul & Margaret Brock, drove a 1933 Plymouth, towing a 24 foot trailer, from Kansas to San Diego, where his father started working for Convair, earning 50 cents an hour. Being an only child, their many moves back and forth from Kansas to San Diego were challenging but he learned to excel in school and make friends. At 12 years old, his talent playing musical instruments led to an invitation to form a trio and play in venues all over San Diego. He was too young to enter through the front door of some venues, so his parents escorted him through the back door and on stage with permission from the band leader. He played guitar and sang along with bluegrass, gospel, and classic country music. While in high school, he took every shop class offered. He worked at a grocery store where he was mentored by the owner learning business skills that would carry forward to his career. He was proud to graduate a semester early from San Diego High School, Class of 1952.

After high school, and just shy of his 18th birthday, his parents announced a move to Lancaster, CA. He rented their home on Beech St in San Diego and joked that he never moved out, his parents moved out from him. While working for Western Lange and Motor Hardware & Equipment machine shop, he became a journeyman machinist and also learned customer service, inventory control, purchasing, and sales.

His love of cars and speed drew him to drag racing until he got bored and moved into circle track racing at Balboa Stadium. A pre-race accident led to a hospital stay and leg surgery. The following Saturday night, his buddies kidnapped him from the hospital and took him by ambulance back to the track. After his discharge, he convinced his nurse, Dorothy Walstrom, to go on a date to make up for her having a missing patient for several hours.

They married 3 months later, October 23, 1954, and just before their first anniversary, their daughter, Wendy, was born. Whenever one job didn't pay the bills, he got a second job, and flipped cars to make extra money. In 1957, he began working at Art & Joe's, an auto shop at 25 W. 11th St, National City, CA, which was eventually bought by Art Butler. Their daughter, Vicki, was born the following year and they bought their first home.

In 1960, with a loan from his in-laws and dear family friends, they bought the shop business and renamed it Ray Brock Auto Service. He pursued his passion for cars, racing, and engine building, growing Ray Brock Auto Service & Sales into a thriving business, buying cars at the LA auction and surplus Navy trucks to refurbish and sell. He repaid the loan with interest, bought the shop property, and the adjacent corner property. He took many courses and received certifications from Automotive Tech trade schools as the industry advanced. He was one of the first 4 people to pass the ASE automotive certification test when they started the program. Only 4 passed the first testing. This is still the certification looked for in qualified mechanics. As hard as he worked, he always came home for family dinner although he often went back to the shop to complete jobs for pick up the next day. It has been said, all his life, "He worked like a guy with his hair on fire."

He joined Independent Garage Owners, IGO, and met many lifelong friends as he served in leadership positions locally and at the state level. He was

active in National City Rotary and served as Treasurer at United Methodist Church National City. When he moved to Windsor View in Chula Vista, he got involved in the HOA and was proud of its solid standing. As an active member of the San Diego Early Ford V8 Club, Ray promoted buying and wearing club logo apparel to car shows and tours.

The Brock racing gene was passed to the next generation when their son, Kenny, was born in 1964. A few years later, while racing the #65 car at Cajon Speedway, a big crash made him decide to stop circle track racing and build dune buggies for off-roading at Ocotillo Wells. The family took road trips to Michigan, Wisconsin, Kansas, and in 1968, a month-long road trip up the dirt Al-Can Highway and down the inland passage by ferry. They convinced 3 other families to join the caravan with campers, trailers, and CB radios, roundtrip from San Diego to Fairbanks, Alaska, 8,000 miles.

In the spirit of trying it all, he took a performance driving course at Bondurant Racing School. He learned to fly and got certified in 12 types of aircraft. His biggest flying lesson was often shared "Get Home Syndrome", don't fly or drive when conditions are bad or you're too sleepy. He got his real estate license, took up tennis for the health benefits and competition, and bought a boat and jet ski for family fun.

While in high school, Kenny started circle track racing, and soon after, he and Kenny built an off-road car to race. He worked as Kenny's head crew chief and assembled an expert pit crew. Kenny was named 1982 Pro Stock Rookie of the Year at South Bay Speedway 117. With his dad's support, Kenny raced his way to 1987 IVMRA Sportsman Class Champion. Kenny won the Parker 400 in his class and ran Baja 500 off-road races.

Ray became a grandfather when Jason was born in 1983, just before his 50th

birthday. Granddaughter, Lauren, was born in 1985. His grandson, Brian, and granddaughter, Brittany, were born in June 1989 and his grandson, Cricker, was born in 1993. He was proud of each one, he enjoyed their visits, and shared his life stories freely. As they grew older, he shared financial investment advice too. There's a remnant of Grandpa Ray in all of them as they pursue business careers, off-roading, track racing, music, and travel. His love of history and travel prompted him to host a family trip to Germany sharing historical sites he had visited in Berlin and Munich. Hofbräu beer and bratwurst were his favorite! Many a stein of German beer was raised with a shout of "Prost"!

He married Joyce Benefield on January 11, 1986 and joined McMillin Racing, building racing engines and going on off-road adventures in Mexico, pre-running and supporting Corky's teams. He and Joyce traveled to China, Hong Kong, and all over Europe. He went with the Roger Mears team to the Pikes Peak race, attended Nascar and Formula 1 races in the US and Europe, and went to Indy Car races throughout the country. Years later, he got the thrill of cheering his buddy's many land-speed records at Bonneville salt flats.

After 40 years running the shop, in 1998, he sold the business, Ray Brock Auto Service, but soon realized he wasn't ready to retire. He always said he was lucky to have his hobby as a career so working was never a chore. He opened Ray Brock Racing / Brock Racing Engine Development, an engine machine shop, right next door. In 2007, he received a patent after working with Rancho Drivetrain Engineering on a racing transaxle that would stand up to 800 HP motors running on the rough terrain of Baja 1000 races. In 2009, he sold the shop property and in 2012, he didn't renew his business license and began operating as a hobby, full circle. He was the go-to guy for family and friends with an engine question and his cellphone "uga horn" ringtone was a common sound. He loved a challenge and could troubleshoot, diagnose, and solve mechanical problems especially focusing on flathead motors for classic

Fords. He learned to scout obsolete parts on the internet and was savvy on eBay. He loved books and reading and seemed to retain everything he learned. He was a volunteer at the San Diego Auto Museum Restoration Shop in National City and the San Diego Auto Museum in Balboa Park where he donated funds to install an ADA-compliant lift to provide access for all.

In 2014, while on a caravan trip with the Early Ford V8 Club, he was introduced to Judy Grobbel. They were both widowed, had lived parallel lives, and couldn't believe all they had in common. At 76 and 80, they became partners, sharing 11 years together. They had a shared passion for classic cars and the expansion of the San Diego Automotive Museum. When they met, he owned two 34 Fords, one original and one restored into a modern car with a classic body. Her favorite was the one with the rumble seat. After selling them, he bought the 51 Ford Victoria, fondly called the "Root Beer Float Car" because of the paint colors, bronze with a cream top. He and Judy enjoyed touring with the Early Ford V8 Club where they made memories along the many miles they traveled with amazing friends and family. They were season ticket holders at Lamb's Players Theater and the Rady Shell. He enjoyed following the Padre games. In his mid 80s, during Covid, he took up breadmaking and cooking. He loved anything with cherries and enjoyed red wine served in a glass full of ice.

He was proud of creating the Southwestern College Ray Brock Automotive Scholarship. He established it as an endowed scholarship fund for students pursuing a career in Automotive Technology to support their efforts, provide starter Snap-on tool sets, and affirm his lasting legacy in the automotive industry. In 2022, Ray was honored at the Southwestern College Foundation annual Jaguar Awards Luncheon for making a difference in the community.

To honor Ray Brock's legacy, in lieu of flowers, considering his passion for cars, restoration, and future careers in Automotive Technology, please make

donations, with a note honoring Ray Brock, to:

San Diego Automotive Museum:

<https://engage.sdautomuseum.org/donate>

Southwestern College Ray Brock Automotive Scholarship:

http://weblink.donorperfect.com/Ray_Brock_Automotive_Scholarship

Ray Brock Celebration of Life, Monday, July 21, 2025, at Bonita Golf Course in Sunnyside. 5540 Sweetwater Rd, Bonita, CA 91902

Doors Open: 11:30 am

Buffet Lunch: 12:00 - 1:00 pm

Sharing & Video: Begins at 1:00 pm

Dessert after Sharing

You're welcome to join us in wearing Ray's favorite color, BLUE, and driving classic cars.

Ray is survived by his partner; Judy Grobbel, daughters; Wendy Armstrong (Rick) and Vicki Dosedall (Charlie), grandchildren; Jason Armstrong (Elisa Rivas), Lauren Armstrong, Brian Armstrong (Emili Hsu), and Brittany Dosedall. He was predeceased by his parents; Paul and Margaret Brock, son; Kenny Brock, and grandson; Christopher (Crickler) Dosedall.

Tribute Wall

PS

“ Pete & Sonny planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ray Brock.

Pete & Sonny - July 21, 2025 at 11:25 AM

TS

“ Tony Selva purchased the Simply Elegant Spathi
phyllum for the family of Ray Brock.



Tony Selva - July 19, 2025 at 02:45 PM

TS

“ Tony Selva planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ray Brock.

Tony Selva - July 19, 2025 at 02:45 PM