



Clifford Joseph Reilly

July 14, 1947 - November 26, 2021

Cliff Reilly died Friday, November 26, 2021 in Charlotte after a stroke. He had a code that he lived his life by, and never failed to enjoy that life.

He grew up in Oak Park, MI., a child of the '60s, where he had an enthusiasm for sports, camped with the Boy Scouts and served as an altar boy. He graduated from the University of Detroit High School and Michigan State University, where he developed a love for Henry David Thoreau and the writer's simple life. Perhaps it was this that made him a peacekeeper all his life.

He met his wife in 1969 in Washington, D.C., at the largest U.S. anti-war rally in history. He worked for many years for PanAm Airways in LAX where he combined a love of aviation - as he always wanted to be a pilot - and travel. He and Denise visited Russia, Greece, Fijian Islands, London and Amsterdam among other places. Later, the couple lived in Iran – barely missing the 1978 revolution there – and Saudi Arabia, where he helped open flights into Dhahran. He traveled because he valued the common humanity in the people he met as well as their differences, while enjoying a beer with them.

After PanAm folded, Cliff worked in human relations for Goodman Manufacturing in Houston, TX., and later Sunbelt Rentals in Charlotte, along with local recruiting firms. The perfect jobs for someone who believed that everyone has a story worth listening to. Moving to North Carolina helped Cliff become bicoastal: he enjoyed both the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans. He looked forward every year to a trip to Ocracoke Island.

His childhood enthusiasm for sports – exemplified by the green MSU flag flying over his front door - morphed into a passion for golf that was infectious. He loved the game no matter how he played; which was good because some days a good walk is spoiled. He used the sport to bond with his family, often taking his daughter, Heather, to Topgolf, and his grand-niece Daly to putt-putt, witnessing her first hole-in-one. Cliff's passion for golf blossomed with his son, Darren, creating a bond of friendship, and helping his son become a PGA member. The two played together and traveled together to many

tournaments. They completed the patron grand slam of golf in 2019 when they attended the 148th Open at Royal Portrush in Northern Ireland.

Cliff volunteered with his son and later worked at The First Tee of Greater Charlotte where he was the site director of the Charles T. Myers Golf Course, teaching life skills while his son taught golf skills. Cliff used his life experiences and the discipline of golf to help young people build character. One of his friends described him as someone who exemplified the core values of The First Tee.

In college, Cliff had become attached to the prose poem *Desiderata*, and kept a copy on a wall in his home. Its ending is fitting: "With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world."

Cliff is survived by his wife Denise, daughter Heather and son Darren, all of Charlotte; two sisters, Carolyn Nelford and Nancy Wiley, both of California; and hundreds of cousins and friends. Cliff was preceded in death by his parents, Jack and June Reilly.

Services will be held on Thursday, December 9, 2021 at 2:00PM at Heritage Funeral and Cremation Services in Indian Trail, N.C. The service can be viewed on the funeral home website for those who want to attend remotely. A reception will be held immediately after the memorial at 19th Hole at Edge City Brewery.

In lieu of flowers, please send contributions to The First Tee of Greater Charlotte or the Carolinas Golf Association's Youth on Course.

<http://www.goodgood.golf/cliffreilly>

Events

DEC **memorial service** 02:00PM

9

Heritage Funeral Home - Indian Trail Chapel
4431 Old Monroe Road, Indian Trail, NC, US, 28079

DEC **Gathering of Family & Friends** 03:00PM

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Edge City Brewery
6209 Old Post Road Suite 109, Charlotte, NC, US, 28212

Comments



“ A webcast video has been added.



Heritage Funeral and Cremation Services - December 09, 2021 at 10:03 AM



“ I knew Cliff thru the PAA family in Los Angeles. Then when I was on vacation in Monte Carlo our paths crossed and he was instrumental in myself and husband moving to Saudi Arabia. You could always tell Cliff was a great family man, a gentile soul, and filled with kindness. I'm glad I shared a short part of knowing Cliff and Denise. B.J. Vance.

barbara vance - December 09, 2021 at 02:45 PM



“ Very Very Loving and heart warming. So glad I could share this time, you are all in my prayers. Love Pat

PAT KNOBLOCH - December 09, 2021 at 02:58 PM



“ Beautiful, cathartic, heart breaking, and a moving, well deserved tribute honoring my kind, gentle, fun loving brother, whose smile and love has a warm forever home in my heart. Deepest appreciation to all who were able to be there today to honor Cliff and provide such loving support to the family. I pray his dear son, wife and daughter will find strength in the days ahead. It is the gentle, kind souls that leave the deepest impression. As it should be.

Carolyn - December 09, 2021 at 03:04 PM



“ Hugs to the family through the miles. Love from your Alaskan cousins. We really enjoyed talking to Cliff and Darren at the Vegas W. family reunion. Such genuine warmth and love emanate d from son and father .We will all be reunited again

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Delores Gillson - December 09, 2021 at 08:39 PM



“ Joe Domanski purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Clifford Joseph Reilly.



Joe Domanski - December 09, 2021 at 09:45 AM