



Jeffrey Robert Hummel

March 4, 2024

To begin at the end: Jeffrey Robert Hummel, beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, son, brother, uncle, and friend, passed away at his home in Fort Collins, Colorado, on 4 March 2024.

Jeff was born in June 1950, in Orange, New Jersey, where he spent much of his early childhood with his parents, Robert Benjamin and Rita Mary (Shields) Hummel, and his sisters, Rita and Kris. It was here that Jeff received what was to become one of his life's most important gifts: his very first camera, a Kodak Brownie. He took this camera with him when he and his family left New Jersey, first for Arizona and finally settling in Grand Junction, Colorado.

In the summer of 1968, Jeff graduated from Central High School and enlisted in the United States Navy. After multiple tours in Vietnam, he returned to Grand Junction and in 1974 married his high school sweetheart, Brenda. He also began studying at Mesa College, where he majored in English and worked as a DJ for the college radio station. After graduating, Jeff and Brenda welcomed their only child into this world: a daughter they named Erin.

After college, Jeff worked a number of jobs, exploring his options, and finally settled on continuing his career in the US Navy, this time as a commissioned officer. This career choice gave his family security and answered Jeff's unending call to explore. As a Naval officer, he was stationed in many places,

including California, Iowa, Rhode Island, Florida, and Sydney. It was in Australia that Jeff began surfing, a hobby he continued for many, many years. His deployments took him all over the globe and he relished his chances to engage with so many cultures and environments. He was proud of his time in the service, and served honorably through his commission until he retired as Lieutenant Commander.

A few years after his retirement, Jeff and Brenda again felt the call of wanderlust and relocated from Florida to Laramie, Wyoming. Here, Jeff truly dove into exploring his life-long interest in photography that began when he was received that Kodak Brownie. Jeff built his own dark room and became an accomplished developer of black and white film. He especially loved to photograph the wilderness of the western United States, including the flora and fauna of the Rocky Mountains. An extension of this, Jeff became a frequent camper, searching for out of the way places to document on film and share with others. Over time, his photographic focus grew again to include digital photography, and he began producing ethereal, fascinating images combining nature and fantasy.

Jeff never lost his love of reading and learning, and while in Laramie decided to apply this towards an additional degree. He enrolled in the University of Wyoming for a Master's degree in Medieval History, focusing on medieval religious philosophy. Despite suffering a cardiac arrest and undergoing a quadruple bypass in December of 2004, he completed this degree in 2005. Throughout his retirement, Jeff and Brenda continued traveling and exploring the world near and far, from the peaks of Colorado's Rocky Mountain National Park to the shores of Canada and the cities of Mexico and England.

While in Laramie, and later in Wheatland and then Fort Collins, Jeff was an integral part of his immediate family's life. He is survived by his partner of nearly half a century, Brenda Kofford (Fort Collins), his daughter Erin and her

husband Michael (Laramie). For Mike, Jeff was a friend and mentor who taught him the most important things about being a partner and father. For Erin, her dad was a lifelong friend, who taught her too many things to count, but most importantly the love of learning and reading, and always demonstrated the power of unconditional love.

He is also survived by his grandchildren Brendan (Janissa), Elizabeth (Eris), and Adrian, as well as his only great-grandchild, Gwendolyn (all of Laramie). For Brendan, Jeff was an unending source of inspiration who never failed to share his vast knowledge related to the things he collected, and who still remains enamored by his grandfather's detailed and humorous stories. For Liz, her grandpa's love of photography has become her own passion, and she treasures the ways he taught her to appreciate the beauty in the world. For Adrian, Jeff was a steadfast friend who never ceased to share laughter and sarcasm, sometimes while fishing on a sandy beach of a reservoir along with Jeff's beloved dog, Enya. For Gwen, Grandpa Jeff was a gentle friend with an ever ready smile of joy at her very existence.

Jeff is also survived by his sisters Rita Stephens (Sheridan) and Kris Hummel (Grand Junction), as well as his nephew Jeff and nieces Kim and Gretchen. He was predeceased by his parents Robert and Rita, as well as numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins, and his many canine companions. Services will be held privately by family and Jeff will be buried at sea. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to a veteran's shelter or to your local non-kill animal shelter.

Tribute Wall

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“ *I could not have asked for or imagined a better dad. Thank you for being mine.*

Erin - March 14, 2024 at 03:31 AM

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“ *The Buckley SFB military Retiree Activities Office (RAO) would like to offer our sincere condolences and our gratitude for LCDR Hummel's service to our country in the Navy. If you would like help with any matters related to casualty assistance, Defense Finance & Accounting Service, Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), Veterans Affairs (VA), etc. you can contact our office on Buckley SFB at 720-847-6693 or raobuckley@gmail.com. The RAO is staffed by volunteers, all military retirees themselves, and our sole purpose is to provide assistance to any military retirees and surviving spouses/family members with anything related to their military service and/or benefits, in particular during difficult times such as this. We are deeply sorry for your loss.*

*Steve Young Lt Col, USAF, Ret
Director, Buckley SFB RAO*

Steve Young - March 13, 2024 at 09:20 AM