



Steven N. Koeckeritz

September 2, 2022

Steven Neil Koeckeritz passed away in Denver, CO on September 2, 2022, after a brief but fierce battle with myocarditis. It is a challenge to write an obituary about someone who never wanted anything to be about them. Steve was totally dedicated to creating a meaningful and happy life for those around him, which continued up until the time of his death. Steve was fortunate to be born to Walter Wilbert Koeckeritz and Evelyn Luverne Haukos on November 16, 1946, in Madison, MN. His love of nature began during his childhood years while visiting the various family farms . His family moved to New Ulm, MN where he completed high school. He then went on to graduate from St Olaf College in Northfield, MN. While at St Olaf, Steve traveled to Thailand for a semester abroad. The friendships and travel experiences from those early years remained central throughout his life.

Steve entered the Air Force through the ROTC program at St Olaf. He volunteered for Viet Nam but was put into the missile program and sent to Wyoming. He served four years as a missile launch officer at FE Warren AFB in Cheyenne. Fortunately, he said yes to a blind date with a University of Wyoming nursing student in April of 1969. He and Jane Elizabeth Large were married in Missoula, MT on January 25, 1970, and returned to Cheyenne where they began their 52 years of marriage. Stacy Lee was born at the AFB hospital in 1972. After completing his AF service, Steve began law school at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Bradley Steven was born in Boulder in

1974. While serving on the Law Review at CU, Steve developed friendships that remained strong until his death.

Steve practiced law in Brighton, CO until he and Jane saw the “Adventures of the Wilderness Family”. They packed up their belongings and moved to the Crystal Lakes Subdivision in Red Feather Lakes, CO. Crystal Lakes captured Steve’s heart and he spent the remainder of his life helping others reach the same dreams that had led him there. Steve started Lone Pine Realty in 1983 and was still selling real estate in the Red Feather Lakes area at the time of his death. He remained active with the governing bodies in Crystal Lakes and is recognized for his many achievements. Steve was happiest when he was outdoors and immersed in nature.

Becoming Grandpa Steve was the best thing that ever happened to him. Suni, Naya, Alex and Jack brought him immense joy. He was most joyful when he was playing with them. They all loved ATV rides, bon fires, camping, hiking, fishing, sledding, biking, skiing, floating, diving, traveling, baseball and most of all laughing. Every day was a “Zippity-Doo-Dah” day. Steve believed that travel has the unique ability to promote peace between and among peoples everywhere. He leaves behind the love of travel in his children and grandchildren. The friendships formed through travel enriched his life and were comforting at the end.

Steve’s sense of humor and playful nature were keenest when surrounded by his friends. He picked friends that had “good” energy. Not always appropriate, but “good”. The annual fishing trips to Metionga, Ontario, Canada as well as the annual Ironman Triathlons (eating, drinking and golf) were top on his list of getaways. Fortunately, his closest friends shared his passion for the great outdoors, sports, travel, and humor.

Steve is survived by his wife Jane, daughter Stacy (Suni and Naya) of Fort

Collins, son Brad and daughter-in-law Elizabeth Cunningham Koeckeritz (Alex and Jack) of Boise, ID. He also leaves behind his brother Bill (Chris) Koeckeritz of Spicer, MN as well as a large and loving extended family and close friends. Steve was happy to leave parts of himself behind to benefit others through the Colorado Donor Alliance.

In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to a charity of your choice. Steve's choices are Doctors Without Borders (<https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org>) and "Education for a Bright Future-Tanzania", P.O. Box 741, Spicer, MN 56288. A celebration of Steve's life will begin at 2:00 p.m. on October 2, 2022, at Beaver Meadows Resort Ranch, Red Feather Lakes, CO.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

OCT 2. 2:00 PM (MT)

Beaver Meadows Resort Ranch
100 Beaver Meadows Place
Red Feather Lakes, CO 80545

Tribute Wall



“ *Steven N. Koeckeritz*

October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM

RS

“ It is with deep regret that Cathy and I are unable to attend Steve's Memorial Service but rest assured we will be there in spirit with fond memories. Of my forty first cousins Steve was probably closest in terms of gender, age (one year), education (grade school in Madison and three years together at Saint Olaf), and outlook on many things so his unexpected passing was supremely saddening. Steve and Bill's mom and dad met when they were staying at our farm when he was working for my parents and she was teaching at our country school so, in some ways, the connection goes back to even before we were born

Heartwarming are the memories of Currier & Ives Christmas Eves spent together with all the cousins and uncles and aunts at Grandma Koeckeritz' farm. Staying there with Steve & Bill (and other cousins) included activities which are forever etched in my mind.. We would ice skate and go exploring on the river, play basketball in the haybarn, and learn to play whist from some very cunning and unforgiving uncles. Steve and I became fairly decent baseball players, and we can both thank Bill for strengthening our throwing arms by being the target of the dried cowpies thrown at him in the pasture.

Staying overnight in Madison at Walt and Eve's electively, or on snow days when it was a necessity, was always a treat.

Our friendship continued at Saint Olaf where he was a good source of advice as an upperclassmen and friend.

Cathy and I remember well our visit with Steve and Jane, the newlyweds, in Cheyenne in June of 1970 when we were driving back home to MN from the Tetons where we honeymooned. All of us had truly "just begun." Our paths diverged over the years so we didn't visit as much as we might have but I have always felt a bond. Steve's last communication with us was last Christmas when he wrote "Hope we'll have a chance to connect in 2022." Sadly, that didn't happen. I do know that I am a better person as a result of my association with Steve! Our best to Jane, Bill & Chris, and the rest of the family.

Raymond L Struck - September 30, 2022 at 12:47 AM

JM

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Jill Miller - September 18, 2022 at 12:31 PM

MD

“ *The years spent teaching at Red Feather were greatly enhanced because of the friendship of the Koeckeritz family. So sorry to hear of Steve's passing. Please know we share in your grief. You are thought of with love.*

Mary Jean and Leonard Dickey

Mary Dickey - September 17, 2022 at 12:12 PM

JK

“ *What an exceptional human being he was. We all benefited from our association with Steve.*

Jim Kubichek - September 12, 2022 at 07:46 PM

CM

“ So sorry to hear about Steve's passing. Years of memories but the best is when my son fell off the 50 ft rock and Steve brought him home to us and guided me how to get him to the hospital his wife Jane was at the hospital a nurse. Shane is 43 now and doing well I am sure all the angels are there to greet Steve as he seem to be an angel that Dec evening. He was our blessing and never will be forgotten. ~John & Colleen Milner



colleen sue milner - September 09, 2022 at 03:42 PM

LC

“ All blessings to Jane and family members. Steve was a wonderful and kind man, and we will miss him.

Lesli and Rich Cohan - September 08, 2022 at 06:17 PM



We were shocked to hear of Steve's passing! He helped us with purchasing our lot and selling a different lot. He was honest and full of integrity and we always depended upon his knowledge of Crystal Lakes to make our decisions regarding real estate. Jane, we enjoyed our time spent with you two last summer when you showed us the beautiful house you had purchased and updated for someone to enjoy. We can only imagine your grief and we pray that God gives you the strength and persistence to get through these rough days! We send our caring love to you and yours! Greg and Cheryl Todd, Beartrap Road.

Cheryl Todd - September 08, 2022 at 07:46 PM

LC

“ *Lesli And Rich Cohan lit a candle in memory of Steven N. Koeckeritz*



Lesli and Rich Cohan - September 08, 2022 at 06:15 PM

DR

“ *Steve was a mentor to me when I agreed to be appointed to the Crystal Lakes Water and Sewer Board of Directors. All I knew about a W&S association at that time was that water runs down hill. Serving on the W&S board, lead by Steve, was an education and an honor. His leadership through a wren of issues, highlighted by the expansion of the lower Lone Pine dam and reservoir, to me, are unprecedented examples of wisdom, determination, and dedication to a community he loved.*

One of my cherrished memories of Steve comes from the first W&S meeting I chaired as president of the board. It was early in summer, and I wore the baseball cap of my favorite team--the SF Giants--I am also a Rockies fan--to the meeting. W&S meetings at that time always ended with "around the room" input from each boardmember. Steve was sitting as a regular boardmember instead of as president of the board for the first time in 31 years. When it came time for Steve's input, he made a motion that no member of the board, and especially the board president, should be allowed to wear a non-Rockies hat to an open public meeting held in the state of Colorado. I don't remember if the motion got a second, but I can say I wore my Rockies hat to the next meeting. So did Steve.

Doug Race

Doug Race - September 07, 2022 at 09:00 PM

RW

“ We were fortunate to share a memorable day with Steve during the solar eclipse five years ago. Steve drove us in his new RV to a spot he knew in Nebraska from his days stationed there as a missile launch officer in the Air Force. It was right on the path of the eclipse, a perfect place to see this once in a lifetime event. We will never forget that day. And we will never forget Steve's kind, gentle, easygoing nature.

Roger Wolfe & Deborah Bayliss



Roger Wolfe - September 07, 2022 at 07:30 PM

MW

We are so saddened of hearing of Steve's passing. We first met Steve in the early '80's, when we bought our first piece of property at Crystal Lakes. My first impression was what a quiet and gentle soul he was. Always so soft spoken and a gentle soul! Although, our times of seeing Steve were mainly limited during our purchasing the different properties we have owned over the years. He was a compassionate and caring person, and always so helpful. Crystal Lakes and the community would not be what it is today without Steve Koeckeritz. What a treasure his family and all of us have lost.

Our sincere condolences go out to Jane and his entire family. Be blessed with God's comfort and loving care, as you work your way through this next journey without Steve by your side.

Butch and Ann Warren

Marshel (Butch) and Ann Warren - September 09, 2022 at 09:53 AM



“ I was blessed to have initially met Steve early in my adult life's journey. He and I were stationed at the same time in fall 1968 to serve as missile launch officers at F. E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming. I'd gotten to the base a couple weeks before Steve and had moved into my apartment. I hadn't be told who my roommate would be.

Then one afternoon, as I was departing the apartment, I noticed a man unloading his white VW bug behind the building. I introduced myself and learned that his name was Steve Koeckeritz and that he was from Minnesota. I also realized that he and I were to be roommates. It was one of the most fortunate days of my life since it was also the beginning of our special 54-year friendship.

I won't go into all the ways that Steve and I found connections, but they were many. I was also fortunate to be rooming with Steve when he met Jane and I followed the development of their relationship-- somewhat--although Steve kept it pretty close to his vest for a while. In the meantime, I'd met another Cheyenne girl, Mary Ann Wiggins, and Steve and Jane ended up marrying six months ahead of us.

Steve's obituary makes reference to his sense of humor. I can certainly attest to the truth of that. For example, I've attached here a photo showing one of our reunions about twenty-plus years ago in Ft. Collins. I had been attending a professional conference in Denver and I drove up to Ft. Collins meet Steve and Jane for a reunion at a favorite restaurant from our earlier days. When I arrived at the restaurant, I looked around but didn't see Steve and Jane anywhere. Then the greeter pointed me towards a table in the corner at which two suitably-attired "hippies" were seated! I was stunned. I recall saying something like, "And THIS is the former ICBM missile launch officer with whom I roomed thirty years ago? What is the world coming to!" :-)

Later Steve and I staged a photo alongside the Koeckeritz classic VW bus. I guess it does kinda fit--because as we used to say during

our Air Force time:

"PEACE is our profession!"

I want to express Mary Ann's and my deepest condolences to Jane and her and Steve's beautiful family. I still can't grasp the reality of Steve's passing. I loved him like a brother.



Steve Simmons - September 07, 2022 at 06:54 PM

RR

“ I remember Steve as a gentle, humble man...who happened also to be one of the wisest and smart people I've ever had the pleasure of knowing. Steve was a walking encyclopedia of everything Crystal Lakes. He was the selling agent when we purchased lots in 2001, completed the legal work for our lot consolidations, recommended the builder we selected for our cabin build and always supported me when I worked for the local community associations. Steve had incredible knowledge of Crystal Lakes, providing invaluable leadership for Water & Sewer and Road & Recreation. As a member of the CLWSA Board over 4 years, I came to understand just how much valuable work he did over the years, including leading the Jenny Creek land acquisition and plans for fulfilling the requirements of our Water Augmentation Plan by leading the Lower Lone Pine dam expansion planning...just a couple of his many selfless contributions over many years.

Steve, I appreciate everything you did over the years, all with a gentle, knowledgeable, influencing, confrontation free approach. We can all take lessons from the man in terms of teamwork, volunteering and a friendly approach to problem solving. A great man who will be sorely missed. My condolences to Jane and family on his loss.

Randall Roberts - September 07, 2022 at 04:43 PM