



Steven Pickelner

August 18, 2021

Steven Roger Pickelner, passed away peacefully at home in Fort Collins on August 18, 2021, surrounded by his loving family, after a courageous, 16-month battle with neuroendocrine cancer. His exceptionally youthful outlook and many physical pursuits belied his age throughout his seventy-nine years of life.

Steven was born on February 4, 1942 to William “Bill” and Sara (Finkelstein) Pickelner in Williamsport, PA, home of Little League Baseball. He grew up with his older brother, David, and cousins, Paul and Jerry Sykes. Like his father, Steven was an athletic young man and enjoyed the competition of team sports. Steven graduated from Williamsport HS in 1959, and left home to pursue his degree in Mechanical Engineering, starting at Cornell University, and eventually following his brother to Colorado where he completed his degree at Colorado State University.

The two brothers were inseparable during those years, working on their degrees, then higher degrees, while also running a business promoting bands and music concerts in Fort Collins. A highlight was bringing in The Rolling Stones to Moby Arena in 1969. During those years they were infamous for their long flowing hair and legendary, rocking Fourth of July parties on Stuart St.

In 1971, Steven and his brother David established Benzav Trading Co. What started as a cottage industry-style business, evolved into a Native American Fine Arts wholesale and dealer business. Steven's passion and love for the people with whom he worked and the materials and artists in the trade, made it impossible for him to retire - this year marks the 50th anniversary of his company.

Steven had a gentle, generous, and giving heart, and loved sharing with and learning from others. He loved food and enjoyed making those around him feel at home through his passion for cooking. He was equally passionate about exercise and athletic pursuits. Skiing, cycling, and hiking, were a few of his favorite things. For Steven there was never a bad day on the slopes. He was also very committed to the Fort Collins community: serving on the board of The Taste for many years (a fundraising entity for the Food Bank of Larimer County), and as a founding member of Congregation Har Shalom.

The pinnacle of Steven's life was becoming a father. He and Tracy were devoted to their children Aaron and Sophie, sharing their passions for the outdoors, their cultural backgrounds, and the love of learning. Camping, skiing, cooking, cottage time in Ontario, coaching soccer, proudly watching skating competitions and other sporting events, talent shows and recitals, dinner parties with family and friends, movies and traveling are just a few of the many things he loved to do with the family. And in the end, the family was inspired by Steven's silent grit and determination, humor and grace, to make the most out of each and every day, throughout his journey with cancer.

Steven was preceded in death by his brother David, his parents Sara and William "Bill" Pickelner, and cousin Paul Sykes. He is survived by his loving family, Aaron David Pickelner, Sophie Mae Pascale Pickelner, and Tracy Tostowaryk; in-laws Wally and Joan Tostowaryk; cousins Bobby Pickelner (Beverly), Jerry Sykes (Ilene), and Paula Kohl; cousin-in-law Bonnie Sykes, as

well as their extended families.

The family is grateful for the family, friends, and caregivers who surrounded Steven, Tracy, and their children with love, care, and support. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to the Food Bank of Larimer County, Pathways Hospice of Northern Colorado, or a charity of your choice. Funeral services were held at Congregation Har Shalom on August 20, 2021. Burial followed at Roselawn Cemetery in Fort Collins, CO.

Previous Events

Funeral Service

AUG **20**. 10:00 AM (MT)

Congregation Har Shalom
725 W Drake Road
Fort Collins, CO

Interment

AUG **20** (MT)

Roselawn Cemetery
2718 East Mulberry Street
Fort Collins, CO 80524
<http://www.fcgov.com/parks/roselawn.php>

Tribute Wall

AE

“ Broken hearted to about Steven’s passing. He was a great friend and first rate man.

alan edison - June 15 at 09:46 PM



“ Steven Pickelner

October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM

AM

“ i am just hearing this sad news, and i don't think i have met anyone who has posted here....but, of course, i knew steve and david (butch) and sara and bill....and as a kid, i was always in awe of both pickelner boys....steve and butch and i all moved away from Williamsport because people move on....but, it appears, we always looked back fondly at the place we grew up. I send my condolences to family and friends.

anthony markman - April 26, 2022 at 08:25 PM

JM

“ Tracy and family, I am so deeply sorry and sad to learn of Steven's passing. I have thought of him often over the years and today I was trying to track him down and came across his obituary. This picture so depicts his gentle spirit, his warmth and genuine kindness. He was a dear friend and a dear soul and I'm saddened to have lost touch with him. It appears his life was full and happy (no surprise) and I hope there is peace for you and your children. He was a remarkable person. My love and thoughts go out to you.
Jude (Jansen) Murphy 12/15/21

Judy Murphy - December 15, 2021 at 02:45 PM

GS

“ I am so sorry to hear about Steven's passing. I know that he will truly be missed. You are not alone as he will always be in your heart and may the wonderful memories bring you comfort.

Gaile Sweeney - October 01, 2021 at 03:14 PM

JS

“ I was so heartbroken to hear of the passing of Steve. He was a wonderful guy. My grandparents- Ethel and Jay Kaplan were the closest of friends with Uncle Billy and Aunt Sara in Williamsport. That relationship continued with my mother Judy Sarett sharing a special friendship with "the boys." I remember how eagerly we anticipated their arrival in Williamsport at the Holidays. Uncle Billy and Aunt Sara would have a huge Xmas Eve Dinner for all their Jewish friends and we would do a Secret Santa. Steven and David brought the best gifts and all the fun! They were the coolest dudes. I recently connected with Steven a few years ago after my mother passed. He shared such great memories. I am so sorry for your loss. May his memory be a blessing.

Josh Sarett - September 21, 2021 at 09:11 PM

DE

“ So saddened to learn of Steve's death. I, too, was graduated from WHS Class of 1960 where Steven R. Pickelner served as our Class Treasurer. He was a very active and involved student. He served in class business, entertainment, athletics and so much, much more. Although he often worked behind the scenes, Steven was known as a person who was dependable and unbiased. He certainly was in a class greater than most.

Peace by yours, Steven R. Pickelner.

Diane (Reifsnyder) Ellis,..Jr. & Sr. High School ClassMate

Diane R. Ellis - September 10, 2021 at 01:37 PM

JR

“ I'm sorry to learn of Steve's passing. We grew up together, we were next door neighbors.
His mother and father were wonderful people. He was just like his dad. Steve was a "giver" and a humble man. With sympathy, Julian Ross

Julian Ross - September 04, 2021 at 11:27 AM

ME

“ My deepest condolences to Steven's family members, relatives and friends. I am very sorry to hear of Steven's passing. My family lived two doors down from the Pickelners in Williamsport, PA, back in the day and I would always say hello to Mrs. Pickelner. Steven and David were about ten years older than me and I had never seen them before. One day, Mrs. Pickelner said that the boys were coming back from Colorado. It was either the late 60's or early 70's. I finally saw them out front of their house and walked over to meet them. It made a memorable impression on me: Two educated, good-looking, entrepreneurial guys with the longest hair that I'd ever seen in Billtown. We hit it off and talked about their jewelry business and music and Ithaca, NY, where I was going to school. They were two of the nicest, coolest people that I have ever met.
Sincerely,
Mark Edwards

Mark Edwards - September 04, 2021 at 09:30 AM

LK

“ Our deepest condolences to Tracey, Aaron and Sophie. Whether picking up his children from preschool, volunteering for a non-profit or hosting a gathering, Steven brought the same genuine smile, warmth and passion with him. We hold you all close in our hearts and value the memories of your husband and father.
Les and Lee Kaplan

Lee Kaplan - September 01, 2021 at 01:16 PM

TB

“ I didn't know Steven very well, but I did know Sophie quite well from when she was a student in my Japanese classes at Dunn Elementary School. I remember you with fond memories. My heart goes out to all of you. Please accept my sincere condolences. I will be thinking of you.

Tim Beecken (Beecken-sensei)

Tim Beecken - August 29, 2021 at 09:24 AM

JM

“ Dear Tracy, Aaron & Sophie - I know I speak for many in the community of antique Native American art dealers when I say that Steven will be missed by all who knew him for his kind spirit, easy going nature and fair mindedness in business. When the children were younger, Steven and I shared many stories about our amazing children! I know he took particular delight in his family which gave him a joy not previously known. May his gentle soul rest in peace

John Molloy

John Molloy - August 24, 2021 at 10:21 AM

TW

“ Tracy, Aaron, and Sophie, Claudia and I extend our condolences to all of you, Steven was a long time friend and such a good man. We looked forward every year to his visits to Jackson and many great meals were shared together, he had endless energy and never failed to amaze us with his physical ability. A good friend gone to soon.

Terry and Claudia Winchell

Terry Winchell - August 23, 2021 at 02:58 PM

AB

“ I am so terribly sorry to learn of Steven's passing. Such a kind, gentle man, always warm and welcoming.
My thoughts and love are with you, Tracy. And Aaron and Sophie.
Ann Wojtowick Beck

Ann Beck - August 23, 2021 at 09:51 AM

MD

“ Dear Tracy, Aaron, Sophie: so sad to hear of your loss. Thinking of you during this difficult time, sending my caring hugs & prayers.
Mary Lynn Dalton

Mary Lynn Dalton - August 22, 2021 at 01:29 PM

JC

“ Dear Tracey, Aaron and Sophie,
We are so very sad to hear of Stevens passing. We have many fond, funny and cherished memories. He was a great man with passion and heart, and he will be deeply missed. With loving thoughts to you all.
Melissa and Jim Corr

jim corr - August 21, 2021 at 06:04 PM

JE

“ Dear Tracy, Aaron, and Sophie:
I am so sorry to hear of Steven's passing and send you comfort and strength in this difficult time.
Jessica Davis
(Maya and Peter Swanson's mom from Dunn days)

Jessica - August 21, 2021 at 12:07 PM

KE

“ *I'm so sorry for your loss. Please know that you are all in my thoughts.*

Kathy Englund - August 21, 2021 at 07:59 AM

JW

“ *Dear Sophie, Tracy and Aaron,
My sympathies and healing thoughts to the family. What a kind, gentle soul. It was evident how invested he was in his family and how many truly valuable things he taught Sophie from the time I had her as a student at Poudre. The compassion, persistence and kindness he showed will always be within you. With heartfelt sympathies,
Judy Whitman*

Judy Whitman - August 20, 2021 at 05:38 PM

DO

“ Dear Tracy, Aaron and Sophie,
We are so sad to hear that Stephen has passed away. We have many fond memories of his passionate cheering at the boys' soccer games. His love and pride in his family was ever-present. He was never afraid to let the ref know if s/he made a poor call. At the end of every game he ensured that the boys and their parents knew what a great job they had done.

Stephen always had a smile on his face and a great story to tell. When we were preparing to go to Boston he spent 20 minutes giving us detailed instructions about how to find Legal Seafood and what to order. Thanks to his great advice, we went almost as soon as we arrived and visited there often.

We are fortunate that we got to know Stephen and your family. We are celebrating the life of such a kind person and mourning his passing with you.

Love,
Tim, Danna, Anthony and Zach Ortiz

Danna Ortiz - August 20, 2021 at 12:49 PM

RF

“ Condolences to Aaron, Sophie and Tracy we will light a candle at Cristie Lake for Steven.

Rick Fish and family

Rick Fish - August 20, 2021 at 11:26 AM

AR

“ *My heart goes out to Sophie, Aaron, Tracy, and the rest of Steven's family at this time of loss and sadness. Steven was an incredibly generous and kind man. He will be greatly missed.*



Anita Rehner - August 20, 2021 at 09:43 AM

SP

“ *When I think of Steven I think of his greatest accomplishment, his kids. He was a devoted and amazing father. He was also a charming, engaging, and generous human being. We were lucky to know him. All of our love to Tracy, Aaron, and Sophie.*

The Paulsens.

Selena Paulsen - August 20, 2021 at 12:12 AM

CC

“ *I did not know Steve well but I knew him for a very long time. Marvelous guy. I will miss him a great deal. He brought a modicum of stability to the local Jewish community.*

My condolences to those who also miss him.

Charlie Calisher

Charlie Calisher - August 19, 2021 at 12:56 PM