



Steven J. Puttmann

September 11, 2024

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the sudden passing of Steven James Puttmann. Steve was a beloved dad, husband, brother, uncle, friend, and mentor who touched the lives of many with his generosity and love for his family. His unexpected departure leaves a deep void in our hearts.

Born in 1949 in Sioux City, Iowa, his family moved to Lakewood, Colorado in the early 1950s. He played baseball, ran track, and was Vice President at Lakewood High. In 1961, he met his future wife, Mickey, by first befriending her brother, Tom Jr., in 7th grade. Steve and Mickey began dating in 1967. After graduating high school, Steve accomplished his goal of attending Colorado State University (CSU), working day and night at the college butcher shop to pay his tuition. Steve and Mickey married in 1970 and thus began their adventure through life together. Steve graduated CSU with a BS in Fisheries Biology (1971) and an MS in Fishery and Wildlife Biology (1973). His first job out of school led him to the unlikely state of Georgia. After a year working as a consultant in Atlanta, he accepted a job with the Colorado Division of Wildlife (now Colorado Parks and Wildlife [CPW]) at the Rifle Falls Fish Hatchery. It is with CPW where he spent the next 30+ years, moving back to Fort Collins in 1976, and retiring in 2004 as Senior Aquatic Biologist of the Northeast Region.

In 1984, his dream of becoming a father was achieved when he and Mickey

adopted Rachel and Sarah, with Aaron joining the family in 1987. He spent the next several years expertly performing fatherly duties including: carpooling for school and sporting events, coaching soccer, attending piano concerts, skiing, fishing, camping, and coming to terms with all the grey hair his kids gave him with their antics. He taught Rachel, Sarah, and Aaron numerous life lessons that they will carry with them forever. His appreciation for the outdoors, dedication to achieving success, and commitment to family have been passed down from him to his kids.

After retiring, he kept himself busy with consulting gigs, house and yardwork, golf, cheering on the Rams (especially football, basketball, and volleyball), traveling, hunting, and of course – fishing. One of his favorite places in the world was on the water at Lake McConaughy fishing with his brother, Ken. Lately, he liked to test his luck in Blackhawk with Mickey and their lifelong friends Bob and Mary. In 2014, he became a Papa with the birth of his granddaughter, Madeline Rose. Madi was the light of his life and the two shared a deep bond, often discussing the best parts of their days over massive bowls of ice cream. Recent health issues had kept him off his feet, but he was on the mend and looking forward to upcoming trips with friends and family.

Steve is survived by his wife of 53 years, Mickey, daughters Rachel, Sarah Ronkoske (Jeff), son Aaron, granddaughter Madi, brother Ken (Christy), sister Karin, brother-in-law Tom Schreivogel, Jr. (Sandi), and many nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his mother Antje, brothers Tom and Billy, and in-laws Tom Sr., and Betty Schreivogel.

Steve had a profound impact on many people and will be fondly remembered for so many things. His lifelong passion for fishing –always prepared to get out on the water in his happy place. His cooking – serving several years as “head chef” of Elk Camp. His appreciation of music – listening to Madi play the

classics on piano and violin. His skill at hunting – teaching the family bird dogs to be excellent retrievers but better companions, with Mugs truly being man’s best friend. His wisdom – having a deep understanding on life and all its ups and downs. His kindness – willing to drop anything to be there for anyone in a time of need. His unwavering support for his family – especially devoting his whole life to his wife and kids.

A Celebration of Life will be scheduled at a later date. Details will be announced once arrangements have been made. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made in Steve Puttmann’s name to:

Colorado State University Foundation at P.O. Box 1870, Fort Collins, CO
80522

Please include Steve Puttmann and CSU, Warner College of Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Biology in the check memo line or in the space provided on the online form.

Or

St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital

Tribute Wall

SC

“ I consider myself special that I was invited by Rachel to check out Dino's Italian in Lakewood, CO with both her parents. It was the first time I met Steve and for years I heard about the great fish biologist that worked his way up at Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), a Ram grad, and the Horsetooth Reservoir boat adventures Rachel shared with me.

Looking back after that dinner at Dino's, Steve sent me an email Sept. 2019 (right around the time I was getting ready to moved back to Colorado), to share with me the best aspen spots. "Another really good one is Dunckly Pass through the Flattops Wilderness area. Road leaves pavement just north of Yampa and runs west about 60 miles west to Buford. Hunted elk over there for 20 years. It might be turning soon...really a good aspen drive and again all kinds of camping."

Five years later as I'm driving through Routt County roads I'm thinking of you, Steve! I've been Rachel's friend for 10-years and I never get tired of hearing about Rachel's badass dad!

Sam Cooke - October 22, 2024 at 08:04 PM

LP

“ "Get on your horse, Bubs!!!!" I feel like I can still here Steve yelling from the sidelines that I needed to really go to track down a long ball. I think the years playing on the Blue team with Steve were really my favorite soccer memories. He was always enthusiastic and supportive, and I loved playing with the team. I'm grateful you all shared him with us girls and that he volunteered his time to support us all. I am so sorry for your loss, sending love and hugs to you all.

Lauren (Brooks) Prentiss

Lauren Prentiss - October 01, 2024 at 03:07 PM

JK

“ Mickey and family,
I am so sorry for your loss of a wonderful husband, father and Grandpa to Madi. He expressed his love for all of you often when we would talk in the office at the DOW.



I worked with Steve for 12 years and enjoyed his humor, sassiness and everything about him. He was a hard working man and loved what he did. He had so much knowledge and shared it with many people in his working career. He could be the jokester and keep a straight face all the time.

The most cherished thing I remember is when I retired from the DOW, he and Mickey welcomed me and my children to their home, along with my co-workers and friends to celebrate my retirement. They were gracious hosts and we had a wonderful time, laughing, crying, telling jokes and just being with each other. It was a wonderful day and I will never forget that and most of all his friendship.

Steve, you left this world too soon and you will be missed by many. Rest in Peace my friend and know that you are loved by many.
Sincerely,
Julia M Koepsell

Julia Koepsell - September 25, 2024 at 09:55 PM

LS

“ There are so many memories of the times I spent with Steve at walleye spawns, stream rehabilitations, stream stockings, countless meetings regarding aquatic issues. I consider Steve someone I could always count on to learn information about aquatic issues. Though I was not an aquatic biologist, I consider Steve a teacher and a Quality friend.

Larry Strohl - budget analyst and willing volunteer.

Larry Strohl - September 24, 2024 at 01:58 PM

BC

“ Absolutely gutted by the loss of my best friend, classmate, and confidant. We graduated together and started our careers together. We had rekindled our deep friendship a few years ago and chatted or texted several times per week. I'm unable to adequately express my condolences to Mickey, Rachel, Sarah, Aaron, and Madi. I will always have a special place for Steve, Mickey, and family in my heart of hearts.

Oh the stories I could tell. Steve was a standup guy and always had your back. In my time of need he offered to get on the next plane. That's the kind of man he was.

Steve, I miss you buddy. I always will.

Bill "Salmo" Clark - September 24, 2024 at 11:16 AM

GG

“ I don't have the right words to express how deeply saddened I am by the loss of my best friend's dad. He felt like a second dad to me, and his passing has left a profound void in my heart. Although I didn't get to see him as often as I would have liked to, every visit to the 'Puttmann house' felt like coming home. He was incredibly hospitable, and his love and care made us all feel so welcome and cherished. He always shared his favorite stories from the past, bringing back memories of the good times with Sarah. I can still picture his warm smile and hear his laughter, a true testament to the love he had for his family.

It's hard to believe that he's gone too soon. I was looking forward to visiting him, but now he's watching over us from above. Please know that my family and I deeply mourn his loss. To Sarah, Rachel, Madi, Mickey, and Aaron, I can't imagine the pain you're going through. If there's anything I can do to help, please don't hesitate to reach out. 'Madi, know that you now have your own personal guardian angel' is what my mom would have said.

My heart goes out to all of you. Love and strength to your family. - Geneva and family

Geneva de Geus - September 23, 2024 at 06:56 PM

DF

“ Admired Steve for his passion at work, his determination to get things done, and as a professional colleague in the Fort Collins office of CDOW. Dave Freddy, Mammals Research.

Dave Freddy - September 23, 2024 at 02:42 PM

RA

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Rachel - September 23, 2024 at 12:17 PM

SR

“ There are so many moments and memories to choose- happy, proud, funny (too many to count of these) as he seemed to always find a way to get a smile or laugh out of anyone.

It is impossible to put into words losing the greatest blessing of my life, my Dad.

He loved unconditionally as a father, was committed to family, compassionate to others, and meaningfully driven- someone he did not have to be but was.

I could not be grateful for the blessings I have today if it wasn't for him. I will miss him everyday.

He is loved beyond measure and may his soul forever Rest In Peace.

Sarah



Sarah Ronkoske - September 22, 2024 at 10:40 AM

JO

“ 1 file added to the album Steve



John - September 20, 2024 at 05:52 PM