



Stephen Arthur Ulrich

October 6, 1953 - November 26, 2024

STEPHEN ARTHUR ULRICH (1953-2024)

During this season of gratitude, we'd like to honor and appreciate the spectacular life of Stephen Arthur Ulrich, who passed away peacefully on November 26th, 2024. His wife and daughters were by his side as he moved on from this life and into his next adventure. While he will be sorely missed by all who know him, there is comfort in knowing that the strength of his spirit endures.

Steve was an exceptionally intelligent man who knew so much about the world. He was an intellectually curious man who never stopped learning. He was an artistic man who, apart from being a naturally gifted musician, also loved creative writing, stained glass artwork, and photography.

Steve was a family man whose kin, departed and living alike, were the epicenter of his life. A loyal son, husband, dedicated father, father-in-law, half-brother, uncle, and grandfather. Steve's extended family spanned state lines and generations, and he worked to keep them all close to him.

Though sometimes a tough exterior, Steve was a tender man who was in touch with his feelings, was never afraid to cry, and was committed to continued self-improvement. He was a decent man who stood up for the underdog, often quietly helping someone who was in need, and advocated fiercely for just causes. He was a vibrant man whose smile was infectious, and whose sense of humor could be disarming.

Steve was born in Oakland, California in 1953 to parents Francis Stephen

Ulrich and Gladys Arlene Rasmussen, both now deceased. Growing up, Steve's curiosity led him to master a multitude of diverse skills from horseback riding, marksmanship to flower arranging and knitting. Steve was a bold and independent child who expanded his worldview while traveling abroad with his parents.

On one occasion on a family trip to London, the family retired to their hotel room for an afternoon nap. Steve, about 6 at the time, woke up early and decided to embark on an adventure of his own. He donned his suit and tie, descended to the hotel's lobby, and asked to be seated for high tea.

Surprised, the staff found him a table where, unaccompanied, he enjoyed tea and crumpets until his parents awoke and discovered his absence. Even at such a young age, Steve was bold in his pursuit of life experience, and never shied away from taking matters into his own hands.

Steve later attended Carlmont High School in San Carlos, California and graduated in 1971. He then spent time at Sacramento State University studying journalism and interning on the floor of the California State Capitol. He also kept an active social life with his Sigma Pi Epsilon fraternity brothers and spent time rafting on the American River. His daughter, Kayla, would later settle in Sacramento and take walks with her daughter along this same river. Steve loved music and was a child of the SF Bay Area scene in the 60's and 70's. At one point, he was invited to join a tour with the Marshall Tucker Band as their photographer, and even joined them onstage one night at the Los Angeles Forum playing flute to "Can't You See". He amassed an impressive collection of backstage concert photos throughout his life, proud to have once been thrown off-stage by the one and only Bill Graham.

Steve returned to his studies at the University of California at Santa Barbara where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Environmental Studies in 1977. A true California boy, Steve was an avid beach volleyball player who rarely wore shoes. When he wasn't at the beach, he was exploring the Santa Ynez mountains and taking in the live music at his favorite local haunt, Cold Spring Tavern. His youngest daughter, Kelsey, followed in his footsteps and

became a Gaucho herself, also enjoying time at the very same tavern. After graduating, Steve moved back to the Bay Area where he would remain rooted for the better part of four decades. He married former wife, Kippy Haefner, and raised two daughters, Kayla and Kelsey, who were the pride of his life. Steve had learned a lot from his father about business and furthered his knowledge in a post-graduate MBA program at Santa Clara University, which he later applied to his career in sales and marketing.

Steve continued his passion for music, entertaining his children with his ability to pick up any instrument and play it by ear. Their home was rarely quiet, and his children would develop their own appreciation for music - especially the Grateful Dead, the Eagles, and Stevie Ray Vaughan.

Steve encouraged his daughters to explore a wide range of interests and talents. He and Kippy enrolled them in Spanish immersion school where they became bi-lingual, and he cheered them on for years as they pursued their black-belts in karate, an achievement Steve would brag about until his passing. The family also spent every summer in the Plumas National Forest where they would camp for two weeks at a time, learning to water ski, play horseshoes, and commune with nature. Though Steve's marriage to Kippy ended in 2004, the two remained great friends, raising their daughters in close partnership.

Steve met Mary Pace in 2005, and she quickly captured his heart, respect and adoration. Ever like their father, Steve's daughters also fell in love with Mary, and the pair eventually wed in 2009 in Sonoma, California with both girls by their sides. Their love and devotion to one another persisted, never waning in magnitude, until his death.

Together, Steve and Mary played music and even formed a garage band with a few close friends. Steve played guitar, bass, flute and keyboard, while Mary sang, and they had a vast collection of songs in their repertoire. Never wanting to waste a captive audience, and much to Mary's apprehension, Steve even convinced the group to perform as their wedding band, further

proof of Mary's devotion to him.

Steve and Mary also shared a love for animals and soon became parents to their cherished black labrador, Lexie. With daughters well into their early adulthood, Steve and Mary uprooted in 2016 and, with Lexie in tow, moved to Washington to be closer to Mary's beloved parents and siblings.

The California-boy traded his flip-flops for galoshes and fell in love with the beauty and grandeur of the Pacific Northwest. In the home they built, Steve and Mary hosted family gatherings, cultivated lasting friendships, and accumulated more dogs, Maggie and Sophie, who already miss him dearly. Steve, an ardent fan of the San Francisco 49ers, even developed an appreciation for the Seattle Seahawks as his "second favorite team".

As a corporate travel professional, Mary's passion for exploring the world matched Steve's. Throughout the years, the traveling duo left their mark all over North America, South America, Europe and Asia. Always with a camera around his neck to document their travels, Steve sought out live music, great food and beautiful scenery wherever he went. As he encouraged Mary to be bold in advancing her career, Steve did the same, establishing his own internet marketing firm in his late fifties. After several years of helping small business owners achieve their goals, Steve retired in his early sixties.

In 2022, Steve had the honor of walking both of his daughters down the aisle as they each married their best friends. Kelsey wed to James Michaud in May in Santa Rosa, California, and Kayla married Daniel Madrigal in December in Cancun, Mexico. Steve loved both his sons in law and was so grateful that his girls had found two "very good men", welcoming them into the family and knowing they would be great partners to his girls.

In January 2024, Steve and Mary welcomed their first grandchild to the world, born to Steve's eldest daughter, Kayla and husband Daniel. Steve excitedly took on his role as grandfather, immediately enveloping Elise in his love and protection. In his short time with her, he made several trips to visit her in California, and worked hard to imbue upon her the belief that she can do anything. His love for this new life was felt by all, and Steve left this world

beaming with pride and anticipation for the next generation of his family.

Steve was a deep and eclectically spiritual man who sought truth wherever he could find it. Meditation was an important part of his daily life, and, through it, he fortified his profound understanding of the "Godiverse". He believed in the interconnectedness of all things, and in the soul's continuation beyond earthly life. While Steve's family are heartbroken at losing him much too soon, he will live on in music, nature, laughter, and in our hearts always.

(Services to be held in both WA and CA. Reach out to family members for further details).

Suggested donations in lieu of flowers: <https://everloved.com/life-of/stephen-ulrich/donate/?flow=203>

Tribute Wall



“ *Evergreen Memorial Gardens created a Tribute Video in memory of Stephen Arthur Ulrich*



Evergreen Memorial Gardens - November 26, 2024 at 12:00 AM

FO

“ *Stephen Arthur Ulrich*

Funeral Home Owner - December 06, 2024 at 12:00 AM

AU

“ *We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ Evergreen Memorial Gardens Cemetery, Funeral Chapel and Crematory*

A Memorial Tree was planted for Stephen Arthur Ulrich - December 01, 2024 at 12:00 AM