



George O'Donnel III

1941-2022

George Thomas O'Donnel III, age 81, died on September 21, 2022, just moments after flirting with his attractive young nurse and a mere month after creating a bit of consternation at a bar trying to procure a beer for his 20-year-old grandson. He was a dynamic, charismatic and curious man who left an indelible impression on most people he met.

“Georgie”, as he was affectionately referred to by a former Columbus, Ohio mayor, was short in stature but lived a big life defined by his eccentric style and a curiosity that fueled many interesting adventures.

Born and raised in Erie, PA, he trained homing pigeons as a youth to carry messages to his friends. When he wasn't training pigeons, he was impeccably dressed and was honored as “Best Dressed” at East Lake High School. While attending Gannon University, he sharpened his charismatic skills as a member of the Alpha Pi Kappa fraternity and met Kathryn Jane Lynch of Athens, PA, who became his wife in 1963. Upon his graduation, the young couple moved to Columbus, where George explored a career in car sales. This career path ended in spectacular style when he decided to test the limits of a Jaguar XKE. That joy ride resulted in a speeding ticket for driving 132 mph—a record that made the local papers and was only recently broken.

Fortunately, most of his passions, resulted in making this world a better place through his deep commitment to others, his community, and his love of nature and animals. He is most proud of his four children and 5 grandchildren. He is survived by his children Colleen O'Donnel (Millersport, OH), George O'Donnel (Kalamazoo, MI), Sheilah O'Donnel and her husband Matt Stearns (Chevy Chase, MD and her three children, Lauren Eisel, Ryan Eisel and Sarah Eisel) and Bridget O'Donnel and her husband Eric Roverud (New Albany, OH and her two children, Anna Whetzel and Elizabeth Roverud). He was pre-deceased by his wife of 42 years, Kathryn. Beyond his children, his life was defined by the sheer joy he took in it, with his love of nature the greatest among his many passions and hobbies. As a committed naturalist, he spent many years kayaking and studying Buckeye Lake water quality and it was through this that he met the love of his life and partner, Karen Fell, who also survives him

During his nearly 60 years in Central Ohio, he created an extensive, eclectic community, from his early love of running and the many clubs that he threw himself into: Shamrock Club, Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow, and Bike Buckeye Lake. Most recently, he was deeply involved in restoring Historic Air Terminal for the Ohio Air and Space Hall of Fame and Learning Center. As an original board member, his

morrclubs and working as a commercial real estate broker, he was a devoted athlete. He ran the inaugural Columbus Marathon in 1978 and many more, including Erie Presque Isle Marathon and the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, DC. Almost everything he did was defined by his desire to be physically fit and his love of perpetual movement.

George's final wish was to donate his body to the Ohio State University for research and a celebration of life for friends, family and acquaintances will be held on October 15, 2022, from 2-5pm at Buckeye Lake Yacht Club, 5019 North Bank Rd., Buckeye Lake, Ohio. Bring stories and memories to share.

Anyone so inclined should feel welcome to make donations in George's memory to Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow at buckeyelakefortomorrow.org.