

1Lt Roger A. Ludwig

Location - East-MC: R17, C1

Roger A. Ludwig

OSHKOSH - The most beloved Roger A. Ludwig passed away on June 17, 2023. Roger was born in Oshkosh, Wisconsin—a city he loved and lived in all his life. He was the youngest of the five sons of Harry and Marie Ludwig, parents who he cherished along with his band of brothers.



Roger graduated from Oshkosh High School and thereafter enlisted in the Marines where he became a First Lieutenant. Roger served for six years, initially on active duty, coming close to combat once in the Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba, and then participated in the reserves. Roger attended the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, but after two years was drawn to his true vocation as a salesman. Although Roger would identify himself as a peddler; others donned him the Sales Ambassador. Roger worked over fifty years as a sales manager in the dairy industry, most notably for Hydrite Chemical Inc. where he worked for over thirty years, and Hercules, Inc., where he became a million-dollar salesman in the 1970s. Loving his job, Roger did not retire until his late seventies, particularly because he became dear friends with many of his Hydrite colleagues and customers. His retirement was short-lived because he soon was recruited to resume his sales career again at 80.

For Roger, family was everything to him; he was an extraordinary husband and father. He and his wife, Carol (fondly known as Fuzzy), were married fifty-two years and they were a match made in heaven. They loved each other unconditionally, and their life together was filled with fun and laughter from the moment they met. They rarely spent time apart. Roger's children, Stacy and William absolutely adored him and for them, one of life's greatest blessings was having him as a Dad.

Roger was especially happy when he was with Fuzzy, Stacy, and William, whatever they did together. He enjoyed traveling with them throughout Wisconsin and the country and for many years visiting Stacy and William in Washington D.C. The four of them cherished being together, which they tried to be as much as possible.

Roger had other blessings in his life. One was when his family expanded to include his daughter-in-law Dawn, his two step granddaughters Lauren and Emma, and a step great grandson Atley. He enjoyed many memorable times with them in Minnesota and elsewhere.

Another blessing in Roger's life was to become re-acquainted with Paula Beloit Kitz, his fiancé, who loved him dearly and brought him great and unexpected happiness after the loss of his beloved Fuzzy. Roger and Paula were high school classmates who saw each other again at a class reunion. They had an instant spark, and became high school sweethearts, albeit later in life. They particularly enjoyed spending summers together in Oshkosh and Minocqua and in and around San Francisco where Paula lives.

Roger had many nephews and nieces who loved and adored their uncle. He was akin to a second father or grandfather to many of them. His times with them were significant and always memorable.

Roger was an avid collector and appraiser of old wooden duck decoys and related folk art. His life-long passion for this art form is best described in his forward to the book, *Decoys of the Winnebago Lakes*: "It was December 1967, with the thoughts of the duck season in mind, I ventured into the Paine Art Center and Arboretum for an exhibit of William J. Mackey's

decoy collection. As my eyes gazed on these handcrafted blocks of wood, my heartbeat began to accelerate; I had fallen in love. My devoted search for these masterpieces in wood had begun."

Roger actively participated in the decoy community of collectors and carvers, many of whom were close friends. For 30 years, he hosted a Decoy and Sporting Collectibles Show for fellow collectors, carvers and waterfowl enthusiasts and regularly attended the show of the Midwest Decoy Collectors, an organization for which he served as the Vice-President and one of its Board of Directors. His family enthusiastically supported his hobby and participated in these events with him. His decoy collection was featured in numerous publications and displayed at various venues, including the Oshkosh Public Library, Oshkosh Public Museum and at decoy shows. Roger was an enthusiastic member of Ducks Unlimited and served as the local President of the organization. Although decoys were Roger's most treasured collection, he loved hunting for antiques and had numerous other unique collections, but, by far, what Roger collected most of were friends.

Duck hunting on the island Roger owned with friends on Lake Winnebago also was a great source of joy for him. He hunted on Lake Winnebago for over 60 years. "Big Gun" as he was fondly known by his fellow hunters, taught many of his beloved nephews, grand nephews, and friends' children the sport of duck hunting. Although Roger reveled in the hunt, he relished even more sharing stories and laughter in the duck blind and the duck "shack" with his nephews and friends, being on the lake, and watching from the duck blind as "big red" appeared in the early morning sky.

A passionate sports fan, Roger took great pleasure in attending and watching football and basketball games with family and friends and going to the Wisconsin State High School Basketball Tournament for nearly 30 consecutive years with his son, brother Ken and many of his and his son's friends. He was a classic movie buff and especially savored films featuring John Wayne, which he saw many times over.

Roger was larger than life. A true gentleman, Roger had a sartorial flare, which started when, in high school, he began working at the fine men's clothing store, The Wardrobe. He rarely was seen without a perfectly starched button-down shirt and well-shined Allen Edmonds dress shoes. Charisma personified, Roger was fun loving and had a warm and engaging personality, making everyone feel special in his presence. He had a wicked wit and a marvelous sense of humor. Spending time with him always was a fun-filled occasion. Described as a sweet man, Roger had a huge heart and was thoughtful, kind, and exceedingly generous. His passing has left a hole in many hearts. Everyone who knew Roger loved him. He was simply the best.

Roger's parents, Harry and Marie, his wife Fuzzy, his brothers Eugene, Dick, Don, Ken, his stepbrother, Jerry (and his much-loved dog, Shags) preceded him in death. His children, Stacy and William (Dawn), fiancé Paula, step granddaughters Lauren (Kyle), and Emma, and step great-grandson Atley survive him.

A mass celebrating Roger's life will be held at St. Raphael's Catholic Church on June 30, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. with a visitation immediately preceding the service from 11:00 to 1:00. There will be a private interment, and a memorial is being established in Roger's name. His family graciously requests that in lieu of sending flowers you contribute to his memorial.

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Pfc. Roger A. Ludwig, 9 Ida St., and Pvt. Gary D. Miller, 616 Ashland Ave., have transferred from the direct enlistment to the six-months training program in the Marine Corps Reserve, it was announced today. Both are seniors in high school. Upon graduation, they will be required to complete six months of active duty.

