



Dale Richard Rushneck

January 5, 1938 - September 4, 2021

Dale Richard Rushneck, born in Pittsburgh in 1938, died on September 4th, 2021, at his home in Fort Collins, CO. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Janice Kay Rushneck (nee Carroll) (80), his son David Scott Rushneck (50), and his daughter Jennifer Ann Rushneck (45) and her spouse Amy and grandchildren Tae and Zyah.

Dale graduated from Thiel College in 1959 with a degree in mathematics and physics. Following his work with Barber Colman Labs in Rockford, IL, where he met Jan, the couple moved to Pasadena, CA, where Dale worked at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratories. JPL became part of the original Mission to Mars and Dale followed that work to Houston and the Cape as the Principal Technical Manager for the gas chromatography-mass spectrometry apparatus (GCMS). The GCMS was part of the first Viking lander on Mars to determine whether there had been water or life on another planet and the model is housed in the Smithsonian. As a history-making scientist who is credited with finding krypton and xenon present on Mars, Dale was awarded the American Association for the Advancement of Science 1977 Newcomb Cleveland Prize for an Outstanding Contribution to Science. As NASA moved forward into other projects, Dale became a subcontracted chemist with the Environmental Protection Agency, involved with writing ASTM standards we still use for mercury levels in water, emissions standards for coal-fired power plants, methods for concentrations of PCB contaminants at hazardous waste sites,

and the monitoring and mitigation of cryptosporidium. His contributions to water chemistry methods changed the field of environmental protections.

Dale loved nothing better than to take long mountain hikes with a cucumber in hand for hydration, and to travel the world with Jan, with endless stories of Icelandic fjords, Swiss Alps, Irish moors, New Zealand coasts, and his favorite Molokai beaches. He remembered every detail from every restaurant they visited, from what was on the menu to what art was on the walls to how to get there, specializing in hole-in-the-walls. His recommendations carried more weight for his friends than any travel guide. The family extends deep thanks to Gary and family at Bohlender Funeral Chapel for handling Dale's final wishes. Dad, we did everything on your terms, following exactly the method you wrote for yourself. To honor this incredible mind, doting husband, loving dad, educative Poppi, and aficionado of a great happy hour with friends, please raise a bottle of Moosehead to Mars tonight.

Tribute Wall

GM

“ I worked on various projects with Dale when I was with the City of Fort Collins handling water quality, watershed, and regulatory issues. I also bumped into him at the occasional local theatre production. He was a fascinating, brilliant man, but never condescending. Always friendly and full of interesting stories. I appreciate all the work he did on water quality test methods among other things. What a life! Condolences to the family.

Gale McGaha Miller - September 15, 2021 at 12:17 PM

BM

“ Dear Jan and family,
We were saddened to learn of Dale's passing. May your wonderful memories comfort you during this time of grief.
Larry and Bev Moline

Bev Moline - September 13, 2021 at 02:49 PM

RT

“ Seeing Dale and his family at our Viking 40th reunion in CO was special, because Viking WAS a family. My Father worked with Dale, and having the opportunity to get to know him as an adult, was special as memories from childhood were pieced together by stories Dale shared. His levity and deep knowledge with his sense of humor, really brought everything to life. Dale left a legacy that will not be forgotten, and we are honored to be able to help keep his stories alive!

Rachel Tillman - September 13, 2021 at 02:56 AM

PJ

“ *Jan and family, I'm so very sorry for your loss. I've always enjoyed hearing about your travels and adventures around the world. Sending loving thoughts to you all. ❤️*

Patty Tomlinson Johnson

Patty Tomlinson Johnson - September 12, 2021 at 04:59 PM

CM

A good man is gone to a better place we have fun memories of Dale and Jan and their pig roast also his expertise with our business at LNG. Our thoughts and prayers of sympathy are with Jan and their family. Donna and Charlie Musgrave

Charlie Musgrave - September 14, 2021 at 12:38 PM

JT

“ *Hi Jan, David and Jennifer. I'm so sorry to read about Dale's passing. He was an amazing man in so many ways, including being a great listener and communicator. I was privileged to know him, and you, and regret that I won't see him again.*
Joe Tomlinson

Joe Tomlinson - September 12, 2021 at 04:25 PM

NH

“ *Jan and family, As we raise a Moose in honor of Dale it is with mixed emotions. First is the sadness of your family's losses, second is the loss of a friend and confidant. I could almost hear his chuckle in the background as our micro cul-du-sac toasts were made in his honor. May you be comforted by the good memories. Love to all,*
Nancy and Scott Hollmaier

nancy hollmaier - September 11, 2021 at 01:38 PM

AR

Thanks for getting that Moose in the air! Dad would be so pleased and I know he is joining you. Those cul-de-sac hoists were the best. Thinking of you fondly.

Amy and Jenn Rushneck - September 13, 2021 at 10:53 PM

NH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



nancy hollmaier - September 11, 2021 at 01:24 PM

JN

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Jeanne & Roger Nasci - September 11, 2021 at 01:13 PM

AR

We can't tell if those stars are artificially enhanced or the real thing, but who cares, because this is the best picture ever. We see dad up there smiling at those green bottles!

Amy and Jenn Rushneck - September 13, 2021 at 10:50 PM

KS

“ Dear Jan, David, Jen, Amy, Tae and Zyah,
We share in your sadness over the loss of Dale. He was kind, witty, smart, a good listener and always had interesting stories to share. We have wonderful memories of the many cul de sac shenanigans throughout the years. We did have fun!
Bill and I send love and healing thoughts your way.
Love,
Bill and Katie Schrader



Katie Schrader - September 11, 2021 at 12:43 PM

AR

Looks like a beautiful night to raise the Moose. Thanks for the follow-through on an important hoist dad would have loved. Miss you both!

Amy and Jenn Rushneck - September 13, 2021 at 10:48 PM

GC

“ My Dad and Dale were friends when I was growing up in Fort Collins and one of my favorite childhood memories was when he shared with me and my brothers the latest stereo (3-D) images which he had just received from the Mars landing mission back in the 1970s. It was fantastic growing up and having a family friend who was so accomplished and interesting.

Deepest condolences to the entire Rushneck family.
Grant Cannon

Grant Cannon - September 11, 2021 at 01:45 AM

BR

“ Dale was my nextdoor neighbor and friend for close to 40 years. He and Jan were the best neighbors one could possibly have. We had many cul-de-sac meetings over the years, including some real doozies. His margaritas were history making. Their annual pig roast was a truly special occasion. The two things I will miss most are his helpfulness and his sense of humor. I'd hear hammering going on and I'd go out and find him working on our common fence, when I wasn't even aware there was a problem. My sympathies go to the entire family.

Bruce Rodean - September 10, 2021 at 06:06 PM

BR

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Bruce - September 10, 2021 at 05:46 PM

AR

Lots of tears over this image, Bruce. That was a whole lot of time in the front yard with you. He loved being your neighbor and always having the proverbial chats over the fence. I know they missed being next door to you over the past year. See you soon.

Amy and Jenn Rushneck - September 13, 2021 at 09:11 AM

AK

“ Dear Jan, Jen, and David,
I am so very sorry for your loss. I remember being so inspired by Dale. The word that is running through my head is "authentic." He was a genuine soul, through and through.

Jen - I was thinking about the time we went to Red Rocks to see Harry Connick Jr. and his joy watching the performance. I am not sure I have ever enjoyed a concert more than that.

Sending you all my love,
Alissa Kendall

Alissa Kendall - September 10, 2021 at 03:28 PM

AR

Dad loved his music and so happy that you got to experience it live with him. So many concerts and festivals, and he always was tapping his foot!

Amy and Jenn Rushneck - September 13, 2021 at 09:09 AM

DA

“ My best wishes and thoughts to all of Dale's family. My friendship with Dale came from our early mornings together at CSU's Adult Fitness Program. Shower & Locker-room talk if you will. It was easy to recognize what an intelligent man Dale was, but after reading his obituary I wish I'd spent more time with him to hear more. I will compare notes and learn more from my brother Rex Anderson who was Dale's barber and friend. We will all miss his smile and friendship. Don Anderson.

Don Anderson - September 09, 2021 at 01:45 PM

RA

To the Rushneck Family I send my condolences always enjoyed having Dale and the rest of you come for haircuts I will miss him. Rex the barber

Rex Anderson - September 09, 2021 at 03:02 PM

AR

Thanks, Rex - Dad always loved a great cut and the conversations with you. Lots of great stories were told over those scissors!

Amy and Jenn Rushneck - September 13, 2021 at 09:08 AM

AR

“ 9 files added to the album Memories Album



Amy Rushneck - September 08, 2021 at 09:17 PM