



Fred "Derf" Collier, II

June 1, 2009

Fred "Derf" Clark Davis Collier II, 29, of Poudre Canyon, died June 1, 2009. He was born July 29, 1947 in Norton, VA to Dr. Fred CD and Rosalie Tortorici Collier. He attended Friends Central elementary school in Philadelphia. He graduated high school in 1965 from Tenafly High, NJ. After a year of college at Milliken University he became a Vista Volunteer. He worked as a machinist for many companies including Pratt & Whitney, Woodward Governor, and Esab Heath. Derf's CB handle was the Wagonmeister since he drove VW buses. He ran Turkey Tours, a regular non-scheduled service to anywhere. He ran successfully and served two terms as mayor of Rustic, Colorado. In 1988 he copyrighted the phrase "Thank You For Smoking". He was a smoker's rights advocate and traveled to Smoker's Rights Congresses in Helsinki and Copenhagen as well as the United States. He was a lifelong model airplane builder and flyer. His premier delight was the De Havilland Beaver. He has been especially active in the Beaver string of the R C Flyer Forum. He will be remembered by family and friends as Derf who was 29 forever. He was a Jack Benny fan. He was filled with a lust for life and delighted in slap stick behavior to make people laugh. He cared for Charlie the peach cockatiel at Mishawaka where he introduced Charlie to the children. Some people knew him as the scooter man since he could be seen riding his red Honda Helix daily in the Poudre Canyon. He is survived by his wife Ann, ex-wife Johanna Kopcik, son Fred III, daughter Cathy Fox, brother Wade, and sister-in-law Carol Collier, sister Rosalie Samantha Brown, aunt Jeannette Moller, nephew & niece

Stephen and Lauren Brown, cousins John, Chris, Billy, and Larry Carrozzella, grandchildren Leanne, JJ and Joey Muniz, great-grandson Austin Knorr, and grand-nieces & grand-nephews. A memorial service will be held, Monday, 2:00 p.m. at Bohlender Funeral Chapel.

Tribute Wall

DW

“ Sorry to just now find out on Derfs' passing. My sincere condolences to you and yours. He was a good friend. May he R.I.P.

Don Wagoner - May 01, 2013 at 12:00 AM

LB

“ Thought about my Uncle Freddie today, miss you so much and I know you are watching over me :

Lauren B. - April 28, 2012 at 12:00 AM

EC

“ I only knew "Derf" through the RCGroups forum on the internet. I hadn't posted in a while & was greatly saddened by the sad news of his passing. He was one of a kind & I will miss his fantastic sense of humor & wit. My thoughts & prayers go out to his family & friends! I'm sure there are many. I'm sure he's up there flying his Beloved "Beaver" & looking down, checking our COG & paint jobs. Erle Coutts WERLEC

Erle Coutts - September 20, 2009 at 12:00 AM

BC

“ Freddie; I will miss you. The memories of my trips to Colorado are with me forever. I greatly enjoyed that we were able to spend that time together and it was nice to find a real connection. Too bad our lives kept us physically so far away from each other. Your presence in my childhood memory is etched there permanently as well. You were the cool cousin who came to live with us and taught us all the neat stuff. I will always miss not having you there in Colorado where I knew I was always welcome. Your free approach to life is an approach I admired. The world could use more like you!

Bill Carrozzella - July 29, 2009 at 12:00 AM

DB

“ I wish I could have been there to join in the celebration of Derf's life. I'm sad I couldn't have shared more of his life while still on this earth. Hearing the voices of those who knew him just confirms that what I knew of him was all true and sincere. I, however, feel very fortunate in that I was able to speak to him just the night before he passed away. Some wierd thing occured to me to call him out of the blue....I hadn't spoken to him in a few years. I'm so glad I did.
Dianne Smaling Bradley

Dianne Bradley - July 24, 2009 at 12:00 AM

ST

“ Annie, I was saddened and surprised to hear of Derf's passing when Jerry told me. I was unable to make the Memorial Service, but had you in my thoughts. I have always had fond memories of Derf. It has been many years since my old roommate Smilie introduced us. I loved going up to your house & "Joe's Place" and hearing an earful of hilarious stories.....some true, others I still wonder about. He was a great human being and I feel privileged to have known him. Annie, my thoughts and prayers are with you.

Shari Taddune - July 07, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MC

“ Though I have not seen Derf much in the last few years, I was saddened when Robin MacDonald informed me of his death. Derf was my friend and I always enjoyed our conversations. It wasn't always obvious where arcane knowledge ended and good natured bullshit began but that was the fun part! I'm sorry I'll be out of town during Derf's memorial service, so this note will have to suffice. I'll remember Derf fondly. Mark Charkey

Mark Charkey - June 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM

DH

“ So it must have been midweek sometime in the early 90’s when Forney said we’d need to go up to Tunnel next weekend for the party. Read that “The Party.” My introduction to what became something to look forward to on an annual basis figured largely around Derf. So, we camp that Friday afternoon and amble down to the patio area which looked to me full of old hippies. Well hippies about my age, anyhow. So, there’s this big commotion from the house and Derf busts out just bellowing about this slightly magic vile-looking camo green punch he and Bob have made for everyone. Well that’s all good and well, but all he was wearing was this tiny pair of dark blue very briefs with white piping, and black tennies with black sox. Jimminy, here’s this massive amount of really pale flesh with really minimal portions finding refuge in the haven of some kind of tiny dark blue spandex. And bellowing about the advantages of the vile punch. Who could resist? Later, I told Derf none of this made any sense. Get it – I’m sitting next to a man in dark blue spandex brief briefs telling him it doesn’t make any sense. He gets these squinty eyes and this kind of pointy smile somewhere between a grin and a smirk and says, “Well it doesn’t have to. It just is.” Losing Derf is just that way. It doesn’t make any sense. It just is, and what we do with time he spent with us is our own meaning as well as his legacy of an elegant and consistently outrageous perspective regarding sociopolitical systems. Thanks Derf, for letting me know it doesn’t have to make sense. I’ve learned that maybe it just shouldn’t. We’d laugh more. Ride easy, Derf Dr. Doug

Doug Hirst - June 08, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SF

“ We are so sad to hear about Derf. Derf was a great guy, very friendly to everyone and loved to make you laugh. I know Yo is very sad not to be there to say his good-byes. Derf will always live in our memories.

Silano family - June 08, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ Ann & family. I tried to be at the memorial service, but was unable to attend. My memories of Derf are fully of laughter. The first time I met him almost 30 years ago, he came up to me and offered me a banana. When I looked at him, he said "have a banana, it has appeal." It took me a minute to "get it." Derf was just that way. Happy. He didn't care what color, sex, rich or poor, etc. you were. He loved you and took you for the person you were. Even though I haven't seen you for awhile, I always asked April Moore, my daughter who lives in the Canyon if she had seen or talked to you and how you were doing. I'll miss Derf. MaryAnn 970-568-3308--home; County, yes I'm still here, 970-498-5957; cell 970-231-2289. God bless you. I love you.

MaryAnn Dennon Schmidt - June 08, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ Dear Annie and family, I only knew Derf briefly through our Census work this year but what an unique and positive character he was! It's quite a legacy that the 5 times that I saw him, left me smiling and I know I'll never forget him. I hope he's finally found that perfect fishing hole. The world won't be the same without him. My prayers and thoughts are with you. Sincerely, JoAnne

JoAnne Sears - June 08, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JO

“ Anne, I was so sorry to hear about Derf. You two have been together for such a long time. I know there are no words to make you feel better, but I do send my love and grieve with you. I have lost your phone number and address, but just received the email about Derf, so I have your address again. Take care and know there are so many who love you and wish they could be with you at this sad time. Jeannie

Jeannie Oenning - June 08, 2009 at 12:00 AM

DP

“ Just a few helpful tips about planes and I feel like I knew him and his humor well! What a character.....Hmmmmmm

Dale Pringle - June 08, 2009 at 12:00 AM

DF

“ Hi Annie and Friends, Count me among the many people who will miss Derf and his unique sense of humor. I will miss his retelling of the story about my package burning in the wood stove and the many others he shared. Frommish

Dave Frommish - June 08, 2009 at 12:00 AM

NE

“ Everyone on the RCGroups forums "Beaverdom" new and enjoyed Fred's Derf's contributions and wonderful sense of humour. His favourite sign off was "enjoy flying" a true pearl of wisdom. He is sadly missed and will not be forgotten. My deepest condolences to Annie and family. Rest in peace mate. Neil Emeny Australia

Neil Emeny - June 07, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JQ

“ Ann- I am so sorry to hear of Derf's passing. I remember when I met Derf and you! over 15 years ago. Derf and I had both responded to an ad in the Coloradoan seeking "energetic smokers" for a commercial for filters. It was a cold day and we were there for hours the hourly rate must have ended up to be less than minimum wage, after all was said and done. Derf provided much-appreciated entertainment for those of us the entire cast! who weathered the elements for our nicotine fix. He made it a memorable day. The world is a sadder place today. Please know that you are in my thoughts. ~jmq

Julie Q - June 07, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MG

“ I remember Derf from Tenafly NJ High School. We were in the choir and some classes together; also in the same church choir and youth fellowship. My fondest memory from those times was in 1966 when 9 of us piled into Derf's VW Bug no right front seat and went into NYC to visit a friend in the hospital. Enroute we'd yell and sing "We all live in a red Volkswagon" to the tune of "Yellow Submarine." Later we sang the "Hallelujah Chorus" on the sidewalk in front of the Julliard School of Music. I lost contact with Derf shortly after he went to college. I moved to Fort Collins, and by virtue of a local newstory, I discovered he was living in Poudre Park. I then reconnected with him. My condolences go to Ann and the family, Mary Gilbert

Mary Gilbert - June 07, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CT

“ Ann, The world won't be the same with Derf gone. He was unique. All our love,

Carolyn & Harold Turner - June 07, 2009 at 12:00 AM

KE

“ I knew Derf for a short time as a fellow census worker. He was always dedicated to the job at hand, but made sure the atmosphere was interesting and fun and had a story for every situation. My condolences, Ken Eberhardt

Ken Eberhardt - June 07, 2009 at 12:00 AM

PS

“ Hi Annie, I worked with Derf on this year's Census. I know it was important to him and he did a great job. I had really looked forward to being his friend for a long time and am so sad with his passing. I only knew him for a couple of months that seemed a lot longer. I'll really miss him and his great sense of humor. I'll be at the service to celebrate a unique, wonderful human being. Please consider me your friend, as well, and call should you ever need anything. Paul

Paul Silfven - June 07, 2009 at 12:00 AM