



## Vincent Gerard Murphy

July 30, 1943 - March 13, 2022

Fort Collins lost an undersized chieftain Sunday when Vincent “Vince” Murphy died after a three-year battle with congestive heart failure. He was 78.

Murphy was born on July 30, 1943, in Brooklyn, New York. A bright student but much too short to ever play for the Brooklyn Dodgers, he focused on academics and was one of few in his neighborhood to attend college. That step dramatically changed the course of his life, and it was a fact that he never forgot.

After receiving his bachelor’s degree from Manhattan College in 1965 he was working toward his doctorate at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst when he met Kathleen Kelley, an undergraduate who was the life of every party. He had strong ideas about the right way to do most things and she knew just how to show him up. They were good for each other and they knew it, though admitting so would violate their rules of engagement.

The couple and their son, Christopher, came to Fort Collins in 1977 when Murphy accepted an offer to join the newly formed Department of Agricultural and Chemical Engineering at Colorado State University. He was noted for research in the use of agricultural byproducts to create fuel and he eventually became the head of that department, but what he treasured about his 28-year career at CSU was his time with undergraduates. He won one of the university’s Best Teacher Awards in 2005 and his files at home (he filed

everything) are filled with grateful testimonials from former students who described his intolerance for laziness but eagerness to help those who wanted to learn, often over a beer (or two).

Murphy loved traveling, cycling, and doo-wop music from his 1950s youth. He loved craft beer from before that phrase existed and he loved CSU sports, even when they didn't love him back, which was more often than not.

Most of all, he loved his friends and family.

He never forgot a birthday and often traveled great distances in his retirement to see old friends and attend family reunions. And he was generous — stunningly so. Among the many nonprofits he supported were the Colorado State University Foundation, through which he created scholarships in the names of five of his former colleagues. He also established the funding for the Kathy Murphy Speaker Series, now known as Clearview Reads, for the Clearview Library District, of which Kathy was director until 1999.

Murphy was preceded in death by his parents, James and Rita Murphy, and by his wife, Kathy.

He is survived by his son, Christopher (Amy Rountree) and their children Helen and Rowan Murphy; by his brother, Donald (Kelly) Murphy and their daughters Annie and Maggie; and by Donald's daughters Kerry (Tony) Zostant and Kiera (Daniel) Murphy-Regnerus.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests contributions be made to nonprofits that support higher education.

Bohlender Funeral Chapel is handling arrangements. A celebration of life service will take place at 4 p.m. Friday, March 18, in the Cherokee Park room, Lory Student Center, Colorado State University, Fort Collins. The event will be

livestreamed. Contact CSU's Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering at [cbe@engr.colostate.edu](mailto:cbe@engr.colostate.edu) for information.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life Service

MAR 18. 4:00 PM.

Cherokee Park room

# Tribute Wall

SA

“ I had the pleasure of working with Vince on the CSU UG Curriculum Committee during the LONG years of revamping the UG Core. Thank heavens Vince was at all these Friday afternoon meetings being the sound of reasonableness as we debated whether math should be required. Do English majors need to understand algebra? I'm quite sure we all should have been sharing a beer on Friday but Vince kept us on track and made those meetings bearable. He was a great guy who clearly cared about the UG's in his life.

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**Susan Athey** - March 17, 2022 at 12:11 PM

SI

“ Chris, I will miss your Dad terribly. He was a special friend and a great boss. He was kind and considerate. Over the years, he and I spent some time comparing race horse data and, perhaps, a trip to the track. We also shared some interest in gambling...he tried to teach me to shoot craps in Vegas (to no avail). We remained friends after I retired--phone calls, cards, lunch, football games, etc. Every so often a postcard would arrive from some exotic place, and it would be from him! When I lost Gene, he showed up in Greeley, and we shared memories of our loved ones (and perhaps a beer or two). He gave me some great advice for handling matters following Gene's passing. I will always hold him close in my heart as a really good friend. You are in my thoughts and prayers, Chris. Thank you for sharing your Dad with all of us.

*Sharon Heiden Inloes*

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**Sharon Heiden Inloes** - March 16, 2022 at 07:14 PM

“ Murph

*In the fall of 1968, I arrived at UMASS Amherst with my wife and four month old daughter to start grad school at the new Chem Eng department. I had been a lieutenant in the US Army for two years and then worked three years for DuPont in Buffalo and Ohio before starting this venture.*

*One of the first fellow student I met was a short guy with a big smile. He also had black hair down his back and a full black beard. It was the 60's, remember. After a few conversations we realized the politics, etc. was out of bounds, but we did have intense common interests in intermural sports and beer.*

*Murph was our leader; organizing, planning, playing, coaching, and occasionally chewing out his crew. We played softball – Murph was a good pitcher and batted like one. We tried soccer and watched the rest of the world run rings around us. In basketball Murph was a playmaker and passer, but height handicapped when it came to shooting.*

*But touch football, ahh, football...We were actually good. Murph was quarterback and had a good arm. I was receiver. I would run out and make a break, look back and see a bunch of large guys obscuring the place the quarterback was usually located, and then the ball would come floating out for me to catch. It happened a lot! Some compared the Murph to Tony connection with Unitas to Berry. Of course, those same people were the tosser and catcher. And of course, after the games we would repair to one of the many places Murph knew to savor a brew or two. Amherst had some interesting establishments and the equally interesting denizens thereof.*

*But we had to graduate some time. Murph went first – no way into industry- and I entered the real world in 1972. We kept in infrequent contact, sometimes at technical meetings, such as AIChE. or when Murph made a pilgrimage to the in-laws in Mass and stopped over for a night. Then I got a work assignment that had me coming to CU Boulder once a year or so and I would incorporate a road trip to Ft Collins to spend the night and talk about life in general and eventually we would console each other on the loss of our wives to cancer.*

*After I retired. Murph was at our home and asked if I would be interested in going to Spain for bike tour. I knew he had done many of these and they sounded great. Upon approval by the chief executrix (I had remarried) I got in shape and had the adventure of my life.*

*This last year I knew Murph was fading, but he still was Murph. We exchanged cards and had a call around the end of the year. I was hoping to have at least one more talk, but it wasn't to be.*

*Vincent Murphy was a kind and generous person. He was intelligent, had a broad range of interests and an awesome work ethic. I doubt anyone who met hm didn't like him immediately.*

*Talking to him about his work at CSU, I know he put his all into educating his students. They were lucky to have him.*

*And I was lucky to have him as a friend for over 50 years.*

*Tony Allegrezza*

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**Tony Allegrezza** - March 16, 2022 at 06:15 PM