

Half Staff – Paul J. McNiff

October 3, 2019



Rockport – Paul J. McNiff, age 68, passed away peacefully on October 3rd at the Kaplan Family Hospice House in Danvers, he died of brain cancer. Following his diagnosis in April, Paul responded with acceptance and a positive attitude. Throughout the treatment and recovery, he was aided by a tremendous and dedicated support group of friends and family with much love.

Paul graduated St. Johns Prep in Danvers in 1969 and his brotherhood of friends from there sustained each other since including involvement in the planning of their recent 50th reunion. He graduated Goddard College in Plainfield, Vt with a BS in Education. He became a teacher passionate about making an engaging and appealing classroom environment and trying his best to guide many children in more than 35 years in the Beverly public school system. Throughout his career he took continuing education classes and used sabbatical time to gain a Master's in Education from Cambridge College in Boston. He

referred to teaching as the family business since many of his aunts and uncles were teachers, and they shared their thoughts on education regularly at family gatherings.

Paul enjoyed sailing especially cruising along the coast of Maine which he did during most of his summers. He also ran the Gloucester sailing program for many years – combining his two main passions. Paul was lucky enough to log sailing adventures all over the world for sometimes months at a time in New Zealand, the Caribbean, the Panama Canal, the Adriatic, Norway, South America and the Irish coast.

He forged many friendships through his love of golf and cycling. It was common for Paul to bike 50 miles in the morning, play 18 holes of golf in the afternoon and enjoy a sunset sail somewhere on Cape Ann in the evening – always surrounded by companions. He had an appetite for adventure, an acute appreciation for the moment and a genuine interest in others. He was a friend of Bill W. for almost 30 years, and he was always grateful for that friendship and support.

Paul is survived by his sister Kathleen McNiff Bull and her husband Webster Bull of Beverly, brother Michael McNiff and his wife Robin McNiff of Beverly, brother, Brian McNiff and his wife, Heather McCargo of Portland, Maine, sister, Theresa McNiff Hamer and her husband Douglas Hamer of Stratham, NH. Paul leaves 11 nieces and nephews who were all close to his heart. As well as, an extensive network of friends and family. He was predeceased by his father, Eugene J. McNiff, his mother, Ruth O'Neil McNiff, his brother, Kevin McNiff, and his sister, Ellen McNiff.

It can be challenging to determine the influence of one person on our lives, but during his treatment, hospital and recovery periods Paul had dozens of volunteer caregivers lining up to help out daily and more than a hundred well-wishers that provided support and love. That

giveback shows the measure of this man and his life well lived. Paul was a good man. We are fortunate he was in our lives. We will miss him.

A reception will be held for family and friends to remember and celebrate Paul's life this Sunday, October 13, 2019 from 12 to 4 p.m. at the Bass Rocks Golf Club in Gloucester, MA where he was a member. In lieu of flowers or cards, the family wishes you to please find a friend, spend that money on some lobster rolls, take a bike or a boat to a beach and eat the rolls thinking of Paul. Information, directions, and condolences at www.campbellfuneral.com