



Richard Charles Bendel Jr.

October 25, 1944 - July 30, 2020

With a rare combination of traits like no other, Dick was tall, strong, handsome, loving, generous, adventurous, and kind. In the last 5 days people have remembered his humility, his wonderfully shy sense of humor, his endless helpfulness, his love of football, and his love of chocolate...

Born to Richard and Mildred Bendel in Middletown OH, Dick was a 4th generation contractor with his own small business for over 40 years. His son, Daniel Bendel, worked first with him, and now has his own business in Oklahoma City as a 5th generation contractor. Ever industrious, Dick never stopped building, fixing, and creating both at home and for friends.

He and his wife, Melinda Novinger Bendel, an ESL teacher originally from Chicago, married on 8/19/89 and had nearly 32 unforgettable years together. They adored traveling in the last 20 years both on European land tours and on nearly 60 cruises, being fortunate enough to visit over 50 countries. They built and/or remodeled 3 homes together and were an utterly devoted, loving couple who loved to laugh, dance, have parties, and spend time with dear family and friends.

After 40+ years in San Diego, where they met when he remodeled her house, they moved to Carpinteria CA, both to downsize and to be close to daughter Dana and 3 of their grandchildren. A wonderful father, in addition to his wife, he leaves behind children Daniel Bendel, Beth Rice, and Kristie Reden; step-children Carson Green, Dana Zertuche, and Ramsey Green; the children's spouses; 9 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren; brothers Fred, Joe, and

John Bendel, and sister Ginny Draa.

In the Army, Dick was sent to Vietnam where he served as a surveyor. There he was exposed to Agent Orange, which, as it did for many others, later led to Parkinson's Disease. He endured that for nearly 12 years. He spent his last 7 1/2 weeks in a "safe" senior facility where COVID-19 managed to creep in and was more than he could survive.

His deeply saddened wife and family will never forget his loyal, supportive, uncomplicated, heroic and loving self, and, of course, his unending love for chocolate.... He will leave this earth with 3 of his favorite chocolate bars in one hand, and with a construction pencil and an American flag in the other. Donations in his honor may be made to the Michael J Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, JDRF (Juvenile Diabetes), Special Olympics, or the Wounded Warrior Project. Due to the pandemic, a celebration of his life will be held at a later date.