



## James Peter Rector "Pete"

June 20, 1947 - January 5, 2024

James Peter Rector, "Pete" was born in Syracuse NY - his birthday June 20, 1947. He lived in Manlius NY until 1959 when the family moved to Winter Park, Florida. Peter graduated from Winter Park High School (1965), University of South Florida (1971). Peter's professional career was a Construction Estimator at Dittmer Architectural Aluminum, Winter Springs, Florida.

### Special Memories by Nicholas Peter (Son)

Dad liked having a hobby farm. On this he enjoyed raising Landrace pigs - His favorite was Boss Hog who was 7 feet long. . Also building things and tinkering on cars. Racing was a favorite thing for him to watch and see in person.

When we would go to the hunting camp sometimes we would stop and get a snack from a convenience store. He would always pick out a pastry called bear claws. He also enjoyed talking on the CB radio a lot while driving. Would look to get the best CB radio and antenna for the truck. Would get really involved in talking the CB lingo with truckers and other people on the radio. Even had a bit different persona on it and liked using the handle The Undertaker.

His favorite restaurant was a pizza place called Sir Pizza. As a family we went there several times in winter park until it eventually went out of business. Some of the people involved with the restaurant bought the equipment and

opened it under Pizza Palace which we would go to until it also went out of business. When Pizza Palace went out of business they gave Pete the table, benches where he always sat. We now use the table and benches.

Special Memories by Rhonda Annette (daughter)

Dad coming back from the hunting camp Sunday evenings and me running out to get the venison, gravy and green beans and dad saying “nice to see you, too” and me with a full mouth saying, “ Hi dad and thank you”.

Our family selecting a Christmas tree on our land and Dad cutting it down. We had family game night playing Clue.... Dad’s first turn would be a guess.

Special Memories by Joshua Alexander (Grandson)

Grandfather and I went the sports store where he bought me a tackle box, a rod and reel and lots of tackle. We went fishing together. For my birthday (2019) we went fishing out of Haulover Canal.

Special Memories by Joy (wife)

Pete and Joy met as teachers at Sligh Junior High School, Tampa in 1971. Most of the dating was on the week days because Pete would return to Winter Park to help his father(“Dutch”) with weekly maintenance at the family business, Imperial Laundry. We were married June 23, 1973 in Florida at Temple Terrace Presbyterian Church. Pete and Joy’s first home was Mead Garden Apartments. 1976 Pete and Joy moved to Seminole County, FL. - where they enjoyed raising their two children, working on their land, and building their home. On November 2006 they moved into the house which Pete referred to as “Joy’s Castle” . Pete and Joy were married for 50 wonderful years.

Peter is survived by his wife Eloise Joy (Ziegler) Rector, two children Nicholas Peter Rector and Rhonda Annette Rector, grandson Joshua Alexander Rector and sister Linda Lane (Rector) Kulmann. His parents were Earl Byron Rector

and Dorothy (Lane) Rector.

In Lieu of flowers the family graciously requests donations be made to the charity of your choice in Pete's name.

# Tribute Wall

RY

“ I met Pete on August 8, 1999—my first day working at Pizza Palace in Longwood, Florida. That day marked the beginning of a friendship that would shape my life in ways I never expected. Pete was a big personality, full of character and charm, and wonderfully set in his ways. Every day, he sat at the same table, enjoying his sweet tea and steak and cheese sub. That table became our meeting place, where stories were shared and laughter echoed.

Pete quickly became more than just a regular customer—he became a friend. I looked forward to our conversations, especially the ones about “Joy’s Castle,” which always came with a sparkle in his eye. When Pizza Palace shut down and moved, Pete followed. At first, I thought he was chasing the food, but I came to realize he was following me. That simple act spoke volumes about the kind of person Pete was—loyal, thoughtful, and deeply caring.

When I moved on to Jerry’s Pizza, Pete showed up again. His presence was constant, his support unwavering. He gave me guidance I didn’t even know I needed. He encouraged me to be the best version of myself, always reminding me that I was capable of more. With his encouragement, I finished school and earned my college degree. Eventually, I left the restaurant world for an office job, but Pete never stopped checking in. Every August 8th, he’d call to catch up, share updates, and keep pushing me forward.

Pete loved his family fiercely. He spoke often and proudly of his grandson Josh, and through his stories, I came to feel like part of that family too. His warmth and pride were contagious.

The day my phone rang and I saw Pete’s name, I smiled—until I heard Joy’s voice. In that moment, I knew. My heart broke.

Pete, thank you for your friendship, your wisdom, and your unwavering belief in me. I will forever miss our talks, your kind face, and your gentle encouragement. You were a gift in my life, and I will cherish our bond always.

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Rachel Yates - October 07, 2025 at 11:06 AM

FR

“ I have so many wonderful memories of Pete that I hardly know where to start. When Joy and I spoke on the phone, Pete would always get on towards the end and he would talk about things usually way over my head. He loved to talk about the work he had done at Ditmer, some of the favorite jobs he had worked on. I knew nothing about that stuff, but I learned a lot!! He had an amazing mind. He loved his family and always took such great care of them. He loved Joy so much! Pete and I liked to “argue,” especially in the last few days. When Joy said, “Pete, I’m on the phone with Fran.” I heard Pete’s loud groan, “Oh, no!” Jerry and Pete would always sit in the corner at parties and talk tractors. I rode down to Marco Island with Pete to bring Joy’s mom back to their home. What a fun ride! There are just so many memories I will always cherish. It was hard to find Pete without a cigar in his mouth. He even tried to convince me the last day I saw him that it would be so easy to wheel him out to the garage to smoke. Sorry now that I said, “no.”  
Rest in Peace, my friend.

*With much love and deep respect, Fran Riggins*

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**Fran Riggins** - January 08, 2024 at 05:15 PM

RR

*Thank you for sharing those memories and all you and Jerry did for my dad!!!*

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**Rhonda Rector** - January 08, 2024 at 07:36 PM

NO

*Guy was a horrible guy and the world is better off without him*

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**No One** - April 21, 2025 at 08:25 PM