



Richard "Rick" Allen McGarity

February 8, 1956 - November 11, 2022

Richard 'Rick' Allen McGarity - devoted husband, father, grandfather, son, brother and friend - passed away in his home in Winter Park, Florida on Friday, November 11, 2022.

Rick was born to Richard and June McGarity, a wonderful Irish-Italian couple, on February 8, 1956 in Key West. He grew up in Fort Myers, Florida with his siblings, Karen, Greg and Tracy.

As a teen, Rick not only became an Eagle Scout but loved to sail, play his acoustic guitar, sing, and work on his classic TR-6 British sports car.

He met his high school sweetheart and future wife, Stacy, when they were 15 years old at Fort Myers High School as she was stopped, looking at a Campus Life poster for an event. He invited her to go with him as their first date. As a young couple, they were also very involved with Young Life, where he led worship, singing and playing his Martin acoustic guitar. He would always play that same guitar, which only sounded prettier as it aged.

Rick and Stacy graduated from high school and got married in 1975. They soon welcomed three children. After high school, he went to Toccoa Falls Bible College and graduated in 1979. Then the family moved to Orlando where he worked as a youth minister at a Presbyterian church and missionary

to Haiti helping provide clean water.

A talented musician, Rick played his guitar and sang at a country club restaurant to earn extra money during the holidays. He and Stacy even performed the music at his little sister Tracy's wedding.

He then began his 28-year long career as a Winter Park, Florida paramedic/firefighter, where he retired a lieutenant. A teacher at heart, he founded a nonprofit CPR/ACLS training business and taught classes that were full of his entertaining first-responder stories. His niece MacKenzie Ammann idolized him and became an EMT because of him.

Winter Park is a beautiful town, and he loved driving his old British sports car down Park Avenue and riding around on his Vespa with his adventurous Maltese, Jazzy, in her basket. He enjoyed relaxing with family and friends out on his dock on Lake Killarney. Everyone loved his quirky sense of humor and stories.

With a lifelong love of being out on the water, he sailed his small Hobie Cat catamaran or kayaked on various waterways. He loved launching his boat at the beach in the waves and surf with his children hanging on. Sometimes there were mishaps. Beachgoers would always gather around to watch the spectacle or ask questions and he would often invite a couple of them out on the boat, just to be nice. He was always so friendly to everyone.

Rick decided to become a pilot one day and bought an amphibious airplane. For the last decade of his life, he managed to fly all over Florida (with only a few mishaps), landing at small airports in towns you've never heard of or on crystal clear lakes that can't be reached by car. He made fast friends with other pilots, and they would fly in to meet for lakefront lunches.

After his mother, June, passed away, he moved his elderly father from Fort Myers to live with him and would take him up flying regularly. After a particularly scary storm they flew through, his father said, "For a minute there, I thought I was going to go be with June." Rick told everyone that story.

He loved the mountains. He planned annual snow skiing trips for his family to Colorado, Utah, California, British Columbia and even Taos, New Mexico. He brought his mandolin along to entertain everyone. Every happy birthday song was livened up by his mandolin.

He would frequently visit his son Brendan and wife Kristin in Black Mountain, North Carolina, and the local dogs adored him. To say he was a dog lover would be an understatement. He would light up at the sight of any dog that passed by - or any baby. Needless to say, he totally spoiled his granddogs, Ralph, Addy, Twinkie and Simba.

Concerned about the bee population, he became a beekeeper in his retirement and gave his honey away to family and friends in custom-labeled jars. It was the best honey they had ever tasted.

Rick loved Europe. He once backpacked through Europe with his great friend from the fire department, Byron. He took his parents to Italy, a lifelong dream of his mother's, and brought home beautiful photos of their adventures because he was a talented photographer. His daughter Lindsay took him to Ireland where he got to play the mandolin in a Dublin pub with local musicians while drinking a Guinness. He said he dreamed of going back there for a whole summer someday.

His childhood love for the water never waned. He and Stacy enjoyed going on European or Caribbean cruises where they would see the world, dance, and

make new friends. Just this year, he bought a 33' catamaran, a lifelong dream, and planned to sail to the Dry Tortugas first.

Always driven to help others and give back, he hoped to go back and volunteer in Haiti again soon, this time using his medical and pilot skills to help the needy.

Rick is survived by his wife, Stacy; their children Shane, Brendan (Kristin) and Lindsay (Tony) Ulwick; granddaughters Kasie (Cora) Deter and Tessa; his sisters, Karen Bochette and Tracy (Lee) Haddock; several nieces, nephews, aunts and uncles. He was predeceased by his parents and brother, Greg.

The fire department will be holding a service at the Winter Park Farmer's Market on February 2, 2023 at 10am. His friends and family are invited to come share happy memories and celebrate Rick's life.

Celebration of Rick's Life

Winter Park Farmer's Market

10am on Thursday, February 2, 2023

200 W New England Ave

Winter Park, FL 32789

Tribute Wall

TR

“ *Rest In Peace My prayer of strength of comfort for all who know and loved Rick*



TC Rizzo - February 02, 2023 at 05:53 PM

JM

“ *I only met Rick a few times many years ago when he dated my childhood friend, Stacy. I remember him playing his guitar and saw how happy he and Stacy were. It was truly an honor to attend his service today and see how much he was loved by so many family and friends. His legacy will love on. My prayers will be with Stacy and her family as she moves forward in the next months.*

Julie Martelo

Julie Martelo - February 02, 2023 at 04:35 PM

JW

“ *I am sorry I missed Rick's service. I just saw this notice and could have gone. I just didn't know when and where it was. Rick was an amazing guy. Reading his obit, I learned even more about him that I didn't know. He offered many times to take me flying with him and now I wish I had. He told me that many people had turned him down. The Central Florida community has lost a great teacher of CPR & emergency care, a void that will be hard to fill. My hope is that his legacy will be long lasting in Winter Park and around the world. We pray for you everyday, Stacy.*

Jef Walker - February 02, 2023 at 12:19 PM

BD

“ I met the McGarity family January, 1984. Our children were young and close in age. Rick became a second father to my son. As our children grew so did my friendship with Rick and Stacy. We had some wild adventures during those early years. Rick was a devoted family man, always willing to help, and loved to play the guitar. He was a hard worker. My heart breaks for Stacy, Brenden (and family), and Lindsey (and family). Sending my condolences.

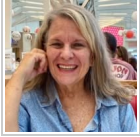
Barbara Downs - January 23, 2023 at 03:22 PM

MC

“ Dear Ones- I had lost touch with my dear cousin, but out of the blue, Rick called me some months before leaving us, and I will always treasure that opportunity to hear his voice again. I have many wonderful memories of the summer weeks he spent with the family in PA every year. I loved being with Rick and family as he grew up. He was always ready with a smile and shared his inner joy all around. There was a lot of fun and I loved his unique, quirky personality. It was obvious he loved and enjoyed us all. This man of integrity will be greatly missed. May God grant peace and comfort you all, Dear Family.
With love, Marilyn



Marilyn Christensen - January 16, 2023 at 10:46 PM



“ *Dear Stacy & Family,
In 2021 for Thanksgiving I was invited to share in a lovely get together dinner with your family. Rick and I talked while most did card games after a wonderful meal. I got to know him a little. He was warmly reflective on his kids and especially Stacy. He was kind and soft spoken. Later the next year I struggled with lawn mower mechanics and he offered his help. I was surprised to see a Triumph in his yard when I arrived at their home. It was dejavu because I spent years in SCCA Racing in the 70's and these were commonly raced. Rick shared his tricks to keeping the mower carburetor operational. I really appreciated his help after spending lots on questionable repairs at a dealer. I am so sorry to see him leave us so soon! Rick was a helping kind individual. I am so sorry for all your losses!*

Susan Hadley - December 30, 2022 at 10:15 PM

DA

“ *Rick was someone that I looked up to growing up. He was fun to be around and incredibly talented. It was easy to see that Rick was very committed and loving to his family and friends. He always tried to help me any time I had a question about anything. I will miss Rick and I look forward to seeing him again in our heavenly home. See you soon Rick!*

Darin Anderson - December 22, 2022 at 06:34 PM



“ I have a perfect memory of Rick sitting in the middle of my grandparents living room, playing his guitar. Rick was one of the 'big kids', older than me, but he sat in my bedroom on the corner of my bed when I was maybe 12 or 13, and we played guitar together. He was a finger pick guy, and I was a flat picker at the time. I looked up to him.... He inspired me. I am so sorry to hear of his loss. Would you play some more music with me when its my time in heaven cuz... I hope you will be waiting for me guitar in hand.

Dana Anderson - December 20, 2022 at 09:00 PM



“ Rick became part of our family when his grandfather and Mom married. Rick joined us and brought June and Richard to Mom's 90 birthday celebration and then joined the siblings and spouse for lunch a few years ago. You will be missed and thought of often. Our love, thoughts and prayers are with Stacy and entire family. May comfort and peace be with all of you. Elaine

Elaine Driver - December 20, 2022 at 07:15 PM



“ Dear Rick, why have you left us so soon? I'll miss our chats in my front yard as I grappled with the weeds in my St. Augustine. You were always so kind and inviting and that made me feel more a part of our neighbourhood. I feel robbed of that relationship that would have blossomed into our senior years. To know now that we have the same alma mater Toccoa Falls and we never even knew it. You are with our Lord now and many I'm sure are glad to have you there but our community will miss you dearly.

Gillian - December 16, 2022 at 08:12 PM

HR

“ First, I'll say that I miss my good friend and his wonderful laugh. It's almost as if I could still hear it. We met long ago at Winter Park fire. He was my 1st lieutenant. Rick was responsible for guiding me to become a paramedic and was always advising me on how to be successful in life. I have many memories of my friend, but I'll say he was so caring and would do anything for anyone. He loved animals so much. We went on a call once where a little dachshund was attacked by another dog and Rick sat with the little dog, petting it, until it passed away. When Rick and I were together, he was always laughing (usually at my expense) he loved my quirks. He loved to shock me. He loved how Fu Fu I was especially with smells. They would make me gag and I believe he nicknamed me heaving Hector. God-bless you my friend. I know you're with our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. Until we meet again, your friend always Hector

Hector Rivera - December 16, 2022 at 07:15 PM

DM

“ My love and prayers go out to Stacy and her family for their great loss.

Diana McDonough - December 16, 2022 at 06:03 PM

DE

“ I never had the opportunity to meet Rick but In speaking with those who knew him, he was a wonderful, kind, caring and family man. RIP, Rick.

Delinda - December 16, 2022 at 05:10 PM