



Jeffrey Michel Neff

JUN 1, 1941 - JUN 21, 2017



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Jeffrey Michel Neff

Jeff died peacefully after a long illness on June 21, 2017. He was born on June 1, 1941 to Lowell and Babette Neff in Manhattan, New York. He grew up in the Bronx and studied fine art which led to his initial career as an art director on Madison Avenue in the 60's. The inherent pressures there led this free-spirited, kind, unconventional and giving man to flee to upstate New York where he learned the tools of the trade and became an auto mechanic. In 1977, seeking further adventure, he packed up his toolboxes into a green and white Ford van and he and Mr Dog set off for California. A pit stop in Tucson became a permanent stay when he was introduced to his soulmate, his "Forever Sweetheart", Barbara by mutual friends. He was her "Sunshine Man" and they married May 18, 1979.

Jeff was mellow yet meticulous, always willing to go above and beyond to lend a hand whether you were coworker, neighbor, friend, family or any of their menagerie of critters including indoor and outdoor cats, dogs, bunnies and, of course, birds including many cat-refugees and a flock of pigeons. Generally soft spoken, yet intelligent and articulate, he was often a man of few words but was full of interesting things to say once you got him talking. He was very knowledgeable about many diverse topics including astrology, religion, art, music, computers, bicycling, the care and keeping of animals (especially birds) and cars. He was a wonderful painter and really got back into this in his later years, especially after Barbara died in March 2016. Despite his own health problems, he was an incomparable caretaker to her in her last years. He was optimistic yet realistic. His perspective on life could be summed up by a song he used to sing while playing the autoharp, "Keep on the Sunny Side of Life".

He and Barbara were two peas in a pod, homebodies who enjoyed just being together



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and who shared a love of art, music, dancing, cooking, bicycling, U of A Basketball and, above all, animals. In the early years, they maxed out at 9 cats and 6 dogs but later added bunnies and birds to the mix. Jeff became especially knowledgeable about pigeons and doves. At the end, he was down to one cat, one dog and one bird and was greatly relieved when they all found good homes when he could no longer care for them. He and Barbara were longtime vegetarians. He became a loving father to her son Steve and strived to reconnect with his other children: Lenny, Lela and Stoney but his tendency to avoid conflicts made this task only partly successful. Although he never completed his degree at Pratt college, after going to the School of Fine Arts in New York, he was given an honorary degree by the University of Arizona in honor of his many years as Art Director of the U of A Alumni Magazine. He deeply loved and was loved and cherished by so many, foremost his wife Barbara, his son Steve and grandson Alex, his daughter-in-law Jennifer, his daughter Lela, his brothers Lowell (Anneke) and Ron, his sister-in-law Joanie and her family as well as so many others. He always put the needs of those he loved first and foremost in his heart, his mind and his deeds. His family, friends and critters will miss his warmth and kindness, his sense of humor, his giving nature and his love. He is reunited with all of his loved ones, human and animal, who have previously crossed over the rainbow bridge, especially his "Forever Sweetheart" Barbara, and is at peace after a long and difficult illness. A memorial will be held in Tucson at Evergreen Cemetery on Sunday, June 25 at 9 AM.



Events

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Cemetery Details

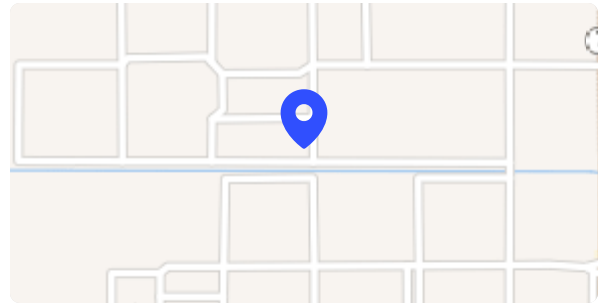


Evergreen Cemetery

3015 North Oracle Road, Tucson AZ 85705



520-257-4831





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Jeffrey by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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