



Stephen R Cole

June 28, 1947 - September 5, 2020

Stephen Reese Cole June 28, 1947

Beloved family man, longtime teacher, and esteemed Veteran, Stephen Reese Cole, entered in the loving arms of his heavenly father at the age of 73 in his home in Waldport, Oregon. Steve's wife and high school sweetheart of 51 years, Sue, and his son, Scott, were by his side when he passed. Steve's valiant battle with Multiple Myeloma began decades before he became one of Newport's most esteemed teachers.

Born on June 28, 1947 in Laramie, Wyoming, Steve was the eldest of three children to Charles and Marjory Cole. His family moved to Las Vegas, Nevada where he would eventually meet Sue and famously tell her that one day, he'd marry her. Steve's love for music was evident from early on. Shortly after winning Sue's heart through his weekly serenades, wit, and loyalty, Steve and Sue married on November 30, 1968. As newlyweds, Steve was drafted during the Vietnam War. While his heart longed for home, he put all of his valor and faithfulness into serving his fellow countryman. As a Navy hospital corpsman that put his own life on the line to tend to fallen soldiers, Steve embodied the Marine Corps motto, Semper Fidelis, to a "t." He was always faithful, even after surviving an ambush that would ultimately have him medivacked to Japan and eventually, back home to the US.

Steve would go on to receive his Bachelor's Degree at the University of San Diego, and his Master's in Education at Oregon State University. Steve's teaching career spanned over three decades, beginning at Waldport High School and then Newport High School, where he spent most of his time. He earned a reputation for being one of the most caring and impactful educators. He taught numerous subjects such as History, Sociology, and Psychology. His raw and earnest accounts of Vietnam gave him a unique edge and "street cred" with his students. One of the most endearing facets of Steve's tenure, were the countless generations of students he impacted.

On September 9, 1979, Steve welcomed his son, Scott, into the world. From the moment of Scott's birth, Steve supported his son's dreams and faithfully took him to countless extracurricular events, most notably, swimming lessons for several years. Scott remembers his father attending every single practice session when driving him to Corvallis for 4 years. In fact, Steve rarely missed a swim meet. He was always there to cheer on his son and encourage him to be his best.

A lover of music, Steve sang bass in the choir at the Presbyterian Church in Newport. And when he wasn't singing, he was either playing one of his beautiful dreadnought guitars, or listening to some of his favorite artists. In recent years, Steve's enjoyed seeing various musical acts from Alison Krauss to The Piano Guys and even Trans Siberian Orchestra. Steve loved movies; whenever one of his favorite flicks was on TV, like "Oh, Brother Where Art Thou", he was sure to be watching.

Steve and Sue would retreat to their winter home in St. George, Utah, where Steve would enjoy semi-retirement, warm weather, and lemon sour cream pie. He enjoyed seeing his old college buddies both in Utah and in Oregon. Ever faithful, Steve would always attend reunions and gatherings to show his support to students, teachers, and friends.

In 2018, Steve enjoyed perhaps his most endearing life accomplishment: becoming "Papa" to his first grandchild, Asher. While this year would also see him undergoing a bone marrow transplant to circumvent the spread of his Multiple Myeloma cancer, which was attributed to his exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam, he was most joyous every time his grand baby was on the phone or visiting him in person.

Steve is survived by his wife Sue, son Scott, daughter-in-law Maria, grandson Asher, and his two siblings, Sally Winters, and Chuck Cole. While the family's grief is still strong after having lost such a legendary man, they have great comfort knowing that one day they will meet again in heaven. Our deepest gratitude goes out to everyone who has given compassion, support, and love to the family during this time.

A formal military burial service will be performed for Steve's family members in October, and a celebration of life for the greater community to enjoy will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Newport Young Life, The Gideons International, or to local organizations that are aiding wildfire victims.