



Rick Spill

January 2, 1948 - October 13, 2014

The world has lost a genius. The world should weep. On October 13, 2014, Richard Stephen Spill, born January 2, 1948 to Louis and Ruth Greenstein Spill, Biddeford, Maine, left this world. For the last 10 years he fought a valiant fight against a brain tumor and more severe complications than many could have endured. But the 7th trauma was too much to overcome.

The knowledge that Rick Spill was a genius came early. After graduating close to the top at Hebron Academy in 1966, Rick obtained an AB in Sociology/Latin at Bowdoin College in 1970 (during which time he created Bowdoin's weight lifting sports program), then an MA in Criminal Justice at State University of New York in 1972, then an MEd in Education at the University of Maine in 1976, then Post Graduate in Employment and Training at Harvard University in 1976, and lastly an MA in Marine Affairs at the University of Miami in 1993.

Rick's employment history was varied and stellar. After college and for the next 3 years he held several jobs in criminal justice, culminating in 1973 as Special Assistant to the Superintendent, Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Walpole, after a bloody riot. He devised short term projects to restore and maintain order, and then long term programs to alleviate inmate anger and frustration.

Rick then began a long career in the employment and training field, working

for several locals in Maine. At the first, he started with a staff of 3 or 4 and 20 some odd clients – within a year there were 20 some odd staff and several hundred clients. At another, and when meeting planned enrollment and outcome figures was the most important thing to the US Department of Labor (DOL), all of Rick's programs met every target every quarter. With almost 600 locals across the country, and roughly 30 different statistical goals to meet for each program 4 times per year, not one other local in the nation came anywhere remotely close to Rick's amazing feat.

This is what brought him to the attention of DOL's Office of Youth Programs, where he was offered a job in 1978. Rick was given carte blanche to create an exemplary youth program that could be replicated across the country. He took best practices from business and industry, vocational training, K – 12, college and advanced degree education. He revised and adapted precepts from these disciplines, and created new pieces where there were gaps, to design the very first competency based youth program that contained all components necessary to assure program quality. Meaning, in essence, that in this program no one was a success unless s/he demonstrated the ability to perform clearly specified tasks to numerical levels required by business, by means of testing protocols and assessments that were directly related to the skills being tested, and exited the program either for a job or additional schooling. This design was the cornerstone of Rick's subsequent work in the employment and training field.

Based on his experience with this program, Rick coauthored one of the first DOL monographs on competency based training, and wrote the majority of succeeding DOL documents intended to teach people how to design and operate such programs. (Over the course of his career, Rick authored or coauthored 50 publications, ranging from short articles to a "how to" competencies manual that ran close to 1,000 pages. He also wrote 19 presentation documents.)

When Reagan was elected the Office of Youth Programs was dismantled. Rick then spent a number of years as a consultant in employment and training, traveling all over the country (over time, he worked in all 50 states), always with emphasis on designing and operating high quality competency based programs. Although only grudgingly acknowledged by some, all in the field, whether local or state or federal, recognized Rick as the competency expert.

Competency based training requirements for youth were formalized in 1989, when federal regulations regarding their development and operation were finalized. These regulations were drafted by Rick. While some of the detail was deleted, there was only 1 change made to the content, and it was minor. It had been a scant 11 years since Rick was hired to design an exemplary youth program that could be replicated across the country. Now that program design was a requirement everyone had to meet. Anyone who has worked in this field knows that this kind of monumental change does not occur, unless the country is facing a serious problem like the recession that triggered the public service employment program, without significant political backing. Rick had none. All he had was the quality of his work, his effectiveness in teaching people to understand and appreciate it, and then the support of highly respected professionals at all 3 levels – local, state and federal.

Of course there had been a great deal of interest in “competency based” training for some time; no such program change would have been possible without it. And it wasn’t a new concept – those in education had been offering such training for a number of years. But there were no clearly identified or widely accepted parameters anywhere; there were few standards that everyone followed. Rick’s program design became that definition.

Just about anyone else would have negotiated some kind of financial deal with DOL; Rick never asked for a dime. The only money he ever made was for training people how to operate the system.

Since then, these regulations have been the foundation for all competency based training programs funded by DOL's ETA, whether for youth or adults. To the extent that today's competency based training programs adhere to his definition, they have quality programs; for the most part, to the extent they have changed his definition, they do not. Some qualitative changes have certainly been made; almost everything can still be improved. However, the majority of changes that have been made were made by people who don't understand the entirety of the definition clearly, and thus the changes have unintended negative consequences. Even so, because of his definition, thousands of people all over this country have received quality training and are in productive careers because of Rick, and none of them even know his name.

In the early 1990's Rick began looking for a new challenge, had a desire for a 3rd masters degree, and found himself growing more interested in and concerned for whales and dolphins; he decided to enter the marine mammal protection and environment preservation field. In May of 1993, at his first International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting as a representative for Animal Welfare Institute, Washington, DC, a scientific paper was presented purporting to prove whale populations were so healthy that the ban on whaling should be lifted. The Japanese and Norwegians appeared confident that this report would convince a sufficient number of IWC members to lift the ban, until they read Rick's 230 page response, that is. Rick's paper clearly identified and addressed in detail every flaw and fallacy contained in the scientific report. It is because of his rebuttal, because of his ability to clearly and concisely present his findings, and because of his considerable negotiation and persuasion skills (which admittedly he sometimes chose not to employ) that

the IWC kept the whaling ban – and the entire world has good reason to be grateful.

As the IWC conference came to a close, the scientist who had written the report Rick refuted asked him if he was a scientist, then a biologist, then a statistician, then a mathematician, and after Rick had said “No” to each query, asked what he was. Rick’s response was, “I’m just a technician.”

For the next 4 years Rick worked tirelessly for whales and dolphins. He was intimately involved in the careful and successful return of 2 dolphins from an attraction in Florida back to the dolphin family they had been taken away from about 8 years earlier. He assisted states and the feds in writing regulations for the care and treatment of captive whales and dolphins, always pushing for more room for them, less interaction with people, eventual release, and the prohibition against importing any more. He traveled to Ireland and Scotland and Mexico and Japan for IWC meetings, and to Alaska and Norway in attempts to prevent whaling.

His most astonishing accomplishment was bringing together the majority of whale and dolphin protection organizations, and creating an umbrella organization – Gadfly. For several years Gadfly harnessed and focused greater strength and effectiveness in dealing with whale and dolphin issues than members had been able to achieve while going it alone, or in loosely defined joint efforts. Anyone familiar with this field knows that some disagree so vehemently with how their peers in other organizations operate, that they appear to be, and sometimes actually are more at war with each other than with the opposition – it is truly amazing that Rick was able to get so many to set their differences aside and concentrate instead on working together for the greater good.

Returning to the employment and training field, Rick was hired by the North

Central Indiana Private Industry Council in Peru, Indiana. The programs he was responsible for had 12 numerical performance standards. When he arrived they were meeting 2 or 3 of the 12, and failing the other 9 or 10. The next year they met 2 or 3 of the standards, and exceeded the other 9 or 10.

Rick's last employer was the National Skills Standards Board, Washington, DC; they had not yet devised or implemented any programs. The board was being strongly urged by DOL to begin to produce – within 9 months of being hired, the board had 6 or 7 projects in various stages of implementation, all of them created by Rick. The board originally told Rick he would have to find another job, because right after he was hired he moved to California. But after witnessing Rick's high level of productivity, he became the board's West Coast Office.

Rick lost his adored mother, Ruth, to ovarian cancer when he was only 12, a devastating loss that in some ways he never recovered from. His beloved father, Louie, passed away when Rick was in his early 30's, and then his only sibling, Sandra Glatt, was lost to ovarian cancer in 2006. He was also preceded in death by his dear Aunt Naomi (and Uncle Hyman) Beigel, by the patriarch of the family, Uncle Si, the Honorable Simon Spill (and Aunt Eppie), and last but by no means least, by Ann and Cliff Clifford (the woman who became Rick's mother when he lost his, and her husband), who opened their home and their arms and their hearts to a desperately hurting boy, who made him part of their family. He also lost their two daughters, who were like sisters to him, Rhoda Tessari and Roxanne Clifford.

Rick is survived by his recently wed wife and partner of 28½ years, Nancy Humphrey. More than once he told her that she wasn't his soul mate – she was the other half of his soul, that only with her by his side did he feel whole, complete. He is also survived by his brother-in-law, Ted Glatt and his

nephews, Joshua and Gregory Glatt, and by his cousins, Linda (Dr. Benjamin) Cooley, Carole (Harvey) Cole, Stephen (Barbara) Beigel, Evelyn (Dan) Green, and by second and third cousins.

Rick is also survived by a number of friends, friends who were more like brothers. It started with Arthur Lerman, whose parents brought him home to the other apartment in the building where Rick, all of 1 year old, was waiting to greet the newborn. Next was Chuck Clifford, who became disgusted with the way the bullies were continually attacking Rick, a thin, short, not very athletic 9 year old, and told them in no uncertain terms to stop. Although Chuck was already an athlete, he was only one against several, but the bullies backed down, and a life long bond was forged. In college Rick soon met John Benson, and one cold winter night picked up a hitch hiker, later Dr. Lee Rowe, and both have time and again come to Rick's aid. Also while in college or through work he met Mike Denoncourt, Roy Bouchard, Bruce Merrell, Paul Paskoff, Paul Sutton, Greg Pickering, Warren Dorr, Steve Dunlap, Steve Sims and Joe Ore. These 14 have had no greater supporter, no bigger admirer than Rick.

Rick made and cherished friends everywhere he went. He admired others strengths, supported and encouraged everyone to grow and hone their skills, and always gave credit where credit was due. He could be and often was impatient with and critical of peers or superiors when he felt they were not doing their job, but never with anyone who did their best, and certainly not with subordinates. Rick was never jealous of but always grateful for and eager to recognize the gifts of others. While in Norway fighting to eliminate whaling in that country, he met an opponent, a man who worked in the whaling industry. It soon became apparent that the two had much in common. Always they remained diametrically opposed regarding whaling, but they both relished "off hours" together, when no shop talk was allowed. Given the acrimony and animosity felt by those on both sides of this issue for each other, this

friendship was miraculous.

Rick was a loyal and constant friend – he refused a lucrative job at a time when he wasn't even being paid survival wages because the job came with one prerequisite: he had to denounce a good friend. Rick was an even more constant lover and mate. After meeting Nancy at conferences starting in 1984, and speaking with her on the phone about work issues for some months, professional topics gave way to personal ones. By mid 1985 he was talking about her every chance he got; it wasn't until early 1986 that Rick realized he was in love with her. He first asked Nancy to marry him on March 21, 1986, and never stopped, until she finally did. Rick taught her much of what she knows about programming, protected her as she hadn't been since her father died, showered her with gifts when he could, always listened when she talked about something she liked and sooner or later it was there, teased her, laughed with her, loved her, loved her, loved her.

During the last 10 years of Rick's life the growth of a benign brain tumor and then major complications caused harrowing brushes with death – Rick once entered the hospital with his kidneys shutting down; another time he was sinking into a coma by the time Nancy got him to the hospital. During an operation he was given the most vicious staph infection known; by the time it was discovered it had completely taken over his back right skull bone, and was poised to next infect his brain. Rick fought courageously to recover from 6 brain operations in 7 years, but even in this he had to be different. Two of those operations were to remove a growth that was not the tumor: Papillary Endothelial Hyperplasia (Rick was the 21st person in the world known to have this disease in the brain).

And finally, a little over 2 years after his last operation, Rick achieved a new plateau. His brain had finally started to heal. He began to take an interest in life, to talk again about the possibility of getting a doctorate, to plan for him

and Nancy to go places and do things, and for them to get married. This was truly a stepping stone on the way to recovery; he remained in this higher state of awareness every day for 3 weeks – it was here to stay!

And then the August 24, 2014 6.0 Napa earthquake took probably its last victim. Their home has a brick 2-step front porch; each step has a ¼” overhang. Both of them had tripped on one or the other of those steps, but because of the shortness of the overhang they always fell forward, causing little or no damage. Nancy noticed that the earthquake had caused a crack at the base of the top step, just a little crack, no more than ¼” wide. Yet that little crack forced the overhang of the bottom step to 1 full inch, and not all along the step either, just the area closest to the wall of the house, where one is most likely to step when entering the home. And of course the change to the overhang wasn’t visible. On September 6 they’d been out, and Nancy went in ahead of Rick to turn on lights. For a moment she thought about going back out and helping him get up the steps, but then dismissed it because Rick was now walking like a man his own age, without the need for a walker or cane. Then he caught his toe on the elongated overhang and fell backward onto concrete, with nothing to break his fall. If this had been the first such injury, or even the 2nd or 3rd, in all likelihood he would have made a full recovery. But being the 7th trauma proved too much, and 37 days later, Rick simply went to sleep.

But before he did, Rick did one more thing that few could accomplish. For the past several years, every time Rick mentioned getting married Nancy would tell him that she didn’t want to until he was able to remember it. The new plateau Rick achieved included short term memory gains; they began to discuss possible wedding dates. When the accident put poof to that, she and Rick decided to get married in the hospital. Since Rick could not present himself at the Clerk’s Office to obtain a marriage license, a notarized

statement was required, and lucidity would be judged. Up until then, Rick had been out of consciousness more than he was in it, but for 4 days he stayed fully aware of what was going on for large segments of each day. He convinced the notary that he knew what he was doing because he did know what he was doing. As soon as he had been able to call Nancy “My wife” once, Rick began again to slip away. That was gut wrenching, as for those 4 days Nancy hoped his lucidity was a sign he was recovering.

Rick was definitely a man who saw “. . .things that never were, and ask, ‘Why not?’” But Rick did so much more than that – he then made those things happen. The world has lost a genius. The world should weep.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, January 17, 2015 at 2:00 pm at First United Methodist Church, 502 Virginia St., Vallejo, CA. Meal to follow; please RSVP for meal by speaking to Nancy or mention it in the comments section of the web page.

To view pictures, read comments or add pictures or reminiscences, go to www.twinchapelsmortuary.com and link onto “Rick Spill.” Please feel free to honor Rick in any way you wish – flowers, donation to the charity of your choice, assistance in defraying expenses, committing acts of kindness in his name, or simply by sending loving thoughts to those left behind.

Previous Events

Service

JAN 17. 2:00 PM (PT)

First United Methodist Church
502 Virginia Street
Vallejo, CA 94590

Tribute Wall

NC

“ My twin sister, Susan, and I went to grammar school with Ricky Spill, as he was known then. I was thinking about him last night, as I have so many times over these decades, and I googled him today, only to discover his obituary. Now, I can't tell him what I've wanted to tell him for so long. I remember the day Ricky's father came to our classroom to take him home because his Mom had passed away, and I remember the day about two weeks later when his Dad returned him to our classroom, too. I was so heartbroken for him, but I never spoke to him about it, because I didn't know what to say. I should have simply given him a hug and said, "I'm so sorry".

From the second grade on, I had little crush on him, because he was so smart. He and I were the last two standing at multiple spelling bees, and he beat me every single time. I was so impressed by that. My sister and I left Biddeford High School in our freshman year, so we lost touch with everyone, but I remember some of the people mentioned here: Marilyn Salvias and Chuckie Clifford in particular. And I'm so happy for Ricky that they remained lifelong friends.

Ricky, I'm sorry about your Mom, and I'm sending you a big hug today. I'll never forget you.

Nancy Chapman

Nancy Chapman - March 09, 2024 at 11:02 AM

SL

We knew, even as young as we were, that Ricky was someone very special. He had the admiration of all of his classmates, not only for his intellect, but also his sweet, kind demeanor. Now, as adults, we realize that he was truly an example of God's greatest work. Rick, may you rest in peace in the loving arms of your family.

Susan Chapman Leff

Susan Leff - April 28, 2024 at 12:09 PM

JH

“*Rick and I worked together in Portland Maine from 75-~79. We planned youth programs during the CETA years. I can still remember his wordsmith of how he wanted to help you via 'the positive inculcation of positive work habits, attitudes and behaviors'.*

More importantly, he knew how to make that happen. When Rick moved to DC, I followed him. He graciously opened his home to me while I found my own place.

Rick was a genius and I owe much of my post-college skills to him. I have been trying to catch up with him for a couple of years now. I found him today. I am sad. Thanks for your friendship Rick.

--Jeff H

Jeffrey Holmes - July 11, 2016 at 02:33 PM

PS

“*I wrote for more than an hour on this page--my fondest memories of our humble champion, Rick. As I wrote my closing thoughts to Rick and Nancy, this website kicked me out of the tribute wall and sent my words into oblivion, perhaps because I never logged in. Who knows? I don't have it in me to try it again--at least at this time. You know how I felt and feel, and we will leave it at that, kind sir. We will love you and miss you, dear friend--always.*

Paul Sutton

Paul Sutton - February 10, 2015 at 02:54 PM

“ Part Two: A Letter to Nancy from Mal Salvas and Jeff Goldwasser

After Rick left Biddeford High, college happened and we both moved away and totally lost touch with each other until MANY years later when there were rumblings of one of our most recent high-school reunions. With the Reunion Committee members and others all working to track down classmates, somehow, Rick and I made “first contact” and, as I recall, from there, sprang not only a series of phone calls between Rick and me, but also, Nancy, your and my email relationship...which in turn led to Jeff’s and my learning about the health challenges Rick had already experienced and, subsequently, visiting you and Rick while we were exploring “The California Wine Country”(see photo posted earlier). By the time Rick and I actually got together “in person” again, we had become middle-aged people. But, we very comfortably fell right back into “old times” and were quite content to be sharing our little reunion... and history...with our spouses. Rick’s and my relationship was certainly riddled with big time-holes, but, whenever his name came up in conversation over the many years that passed, I always remembered him warmly and felt happy simply to know that he was “in the world” somewhere...even if I didn’t know exactly where somewhere was. So, in short, I will be missing Rick and knowing that he’s only a phone call away, and so will Jeff who, though he had only recently come to know Rick and had spent comparatively very little time with him, enjoyed their long-distance phone chats and had concluded that “Rick was a really good guy.”

Jeff and I are both very disappointed that we will not be able to be with you for Rick’s memorial service and celebration of life. We never mentioned...when you told us that you were moving the date of this event from December (your original plan) to January...that we were very happy for the change because we could never have made the trip in December but EXPECTED that we WOULD be able to participate in your plans for a January event...because, as luck would have it, we were also going to need to be out in L.A. for a business trip at nearly that same time. However, as these business

trips “go,” the date of this one, which we had thought was as close to a sure thing as was likely, was, just last week, moved to some indefinite point in the future. So, there went our plan to be with you and lend our support in person. However, please know that we will be thinking of you and Rick and wishing you a beautiful day with friends and family to remember and celebrate Rick, a most humane individual, an “old” and gentle soul, and a truly beautiful man.

Sending our deepest sympathy and big hugs and kisses and looking forward to the time...hopefully in the not-too-distant future...when we can get together and share in person.

Mal Salvias (for hubby Jeff Goldwasser too)

Maralyn Salvias - January 11, 2015 at 09:41 AM

“ A Letter to Nancy from Mal Salvias and Jeff Goldwasser...in Two Parts

Part One

Dear Nancy,

Jeff and I are so sorry for your...and our...loss of Rick. Back a few years ago and prompted by preparations for a Biddeford High School reunion (as Jeff and I recall the sequence of events), the four of us had all just “found” each other after many years and at a time when, as things turned out, you and Rick were both happily “between” dealing with two of his very challenging health crises. During this period, which included the time of our visit with you while we were vacationing in California, both you and Rick...and, therefore, we too...were very optimistic about the progress Rick was making and confident that FINALLY he was truly “on the mend” and that we all could, therefore, dare to look forward to more communication and visits together in the future...maybe, even out East.

But, sadly, destiny had other plans. After Jeff’s and my visit with you and Rick, Rick fell into one major health crisis after another, each seemingly more dire than the last. Nevertheless, through all of these challenges...any one of which would have grounded most ordinary people...and as a testament to Rick’s great courage, optimism, and strength of character, he, with you always at his side, kept his focus on the future and what he felt certain were better times ahead, and he soldiered on. You have written about Rick’s amazing accomplishments in his professional life...accomplishments which showcase the depth of his respect and caring for others (humans and the other creatures with whom we share this planet) as individuals and as members of Earth’s Family. In the way that Rick chose to spend the time of his life, he consistently demonstrated that he had a generous and unselfish spirit, was a man of principles who “walked the talk” and willingly and enthusiastically supported

his convictions with the time and energy of his life. In his professional life, Rick, who always stood tall in the face of adversity and injustice, was a truly "big man" who set an example for anyone who knew him. And, certainly, just as exemplary was the manner in which he dealt with the repeated and very hard health challenges which he faced over many YEARS...always beating them down and, through sheer force of will, giving his all to push forward to what he hoped would be a better day for both of you.

From the very beginning, my personal relationship with Rick, was an interrupted one and, often, interrupted for long periods of times. It all started back more than 60 years ago in kindergarten when Rick and I just happened to share one of those little-kids long tables with four other classmates and Rick became my very first boyfriend. Now, I don't remember much about those days so long ago. But I DO remember that Rick was always smiling and kind, and he was not a pony-tail-puller (PHEW!) or ever mean in any way to anyone. Sadly, after kindergarten, we lost touch with each other because my parents shipped me off to St. Joseph's for one year... after which I attended Birch Street School before ending up at Washington Street School where Rick's and my paths crossed once again in fifth grade. Then, though I think he, like me, was also back at Emery School for sixth grade, for some reason, I don't actually remember our being classmates again until we attended Biddeford Junior High...when, together, we worked on the school newspaper, The Junior Snooper, and Rick demonstrated, as I do remember from some of our discussions, already being well on the track to having some pretty intense political awarenesses. Then, sadly for me, as I recall, Rick and I only enjoyed two years together in high school because, midway through that experience, he went off to private school at Hebron Academy....Please continue to "Part Two."

Maralyn Salvas - January 11, 2015 at 09:39 AM

MS

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



Mal Salvas - January 08, 2015 at 12:08 PM

“ Rick Spill’s Remembrance by Warren Dorr: Part 2

On another occasion in 1981, my wife and our oldest son, Cameron, drove to Washington DC at Rick’s invitation, and he gave us the grand tour of the city. At that time, he owned two attack-trained Belgian Malinois, which he kept in the basement (thankfully). It was a difficult time for Rick because he had just been let go by the think tank where he’d been employed. Prior to our visit, I had won the Maine Golden Gloves Middleweight Championship, the oldest man to ever do this. I had taken my Golden Gloves jacket with me to DC with the intent on giving it to Rick, which I did. I’m told by Nancy that he wore it proudly everywhere. I’d also been a state scoring champion in high school football (three consecutive state championships and one loss in three years) as well as playing four years of college football. I’d also played six years of varsity hockey, nearly losing my right eye in a game against the Colby College freshmen at Alford Arena in Waterville, and I also played baseball. I say this not to boast but to make the point that Rick reveled in my athletic accomplishments living through me vicariously. I would have given anything to trade some of my athleticism for a tiny piece of his intellect. In talking with Nancy shortly before Rick’s passing, I relayed that I had competed in The Maine Senior Games at Fitzpatrick Stadium in Portland winning gold medals in the 100, 200, and 400 meter sprints. Nancy relayed this to Rick as he lay nearly lifeless and a big smile crossed his face as he reveled one last time in my victories...Before Rick left Maine for good, he spent time at my house, and he arranged for two “family reunions.” They were reunions in that he invited all of his closest friends (lots of them). We all knew Rick, but the rest of us were strangers to each other. We assembled on those two occasions for the benefit of Rick out of love and respect for him...Wherever Rick resided around the country, he would call me at work or at home. When I answered, Rick, without identifying himself, would say, “I’m calling you out!” Immediately, I would know that it was Rick. The calls became less frequent until

they stopped altogether, and I always wondered where he was and what he was doing. I did an Internet search and learned that he was still working at what he loved best, training people to train others for jobs on the West Coast. I knew that he still had my mailing address and phone number, but we never spoke again once he moved to the west coast. It wasn't until Nancy called me this fall that I found out why I had not heard from Rick. If there'd been more time, I would have loved to visit him one last time to "call him out."...Rick is resting peacefully in the grave waiting for the return of Jesus at His Second Coming and the Resurrection. "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words." 1Thessalonians 4:16-18...My fervent prayer is to be reunited with you, Rick, when God soon calls both of us out!

Warren Dorr - January 07, 2015 at 12:26 PM

“ Rick Spill’s Remembrance by Warren Dorr: Part 1

I first met Rick in July of 1974 at the Androscoggin County Court House in Auburn, ME where I worked for the Maine County Commissioners Assoc. as a field rep for the CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act). The MCCA, along with the Maine Municipal Assoc., were program agents dispensing the funds to non-profit entities such as towns and non-profit agencies and monitoring them for compliance with federal law. Rick worked for the State of Maine which oversaw the administration of CETA by the MCCA and MMA. I distinctly remember him walking into my office, briefly introducing himself to my boss, the Executive Secretary of the MCCA, who was in charge of CETA representing the counties. Next, he sized me up and asked if I lifted weights. I said that I did, and we instantly bonded. He worked his own schedule and would take time during the day to workout or walk his two Irish Wolfhounds down busy Court St. slowing traffic as cars came to a crawl so their drivers could look at these pony-sized dogs. On one occasion, I accompanied him to his alma mata, Bowdoin College, in nearby Brunswick where he did some dead lifts in the weight room...Rick had the capacity to produce volumes of work (we now call it multi tasking). I remember him writing a several thousand page federal grant application in addition to his regular job responsibilities and at the same time completing an entire masters thesis for a friend of his...One serious conversation we once had was about the ineffectiveness of state and federal bureaucracies, particularly as it related to the management of CETA and other job training practices. Rick’s plan was to “play the game” until he attained a position of power where he could effect meaningful changes to the way such jobs programs were administered. And true to his word, that’s exactly what he did.. After two years of CETA being managed by the MCCA and MMA, each county was to operate the various CETA components, i.e. on-the-job training, classroom training, and what was called less-than-class training whereby the county would design and hire an instructor to teach a particular class that would lead to a certification such as CNA certification...In July of 1976, I

was scheduled for an interview in Oxford County as a possible director of CETA where I would hire, train, and supervise a staff for the county's CETA program. Rick took an entire day telling me everything I needed to know about the various programs so that I would excel at the interview. He did this as we traversed the Bowdoin College campus. And, I was subsequently hired for the directorship...Another episode was a trip to a Red Sox game in Boston with first wife, Suzie and my wife, Nancy. I don't remember anything about the game, but I do remember everyone in the car holding our collective breath as Rick raced through Boston like it was a casual stroll down a back road in Maine for him. We made it home safe and sound, thankfully...In 1977, I was one of twenty people selected to compete in a car marathon in Auburn, ME where the contestants had to keep at least one hand on a brand new car with short breaks every hour to go to the bathroom or take a quick cat nap. The last one standing would win the car. My wife was there cheering me on, and as the third night progressed, Rick showed up out of nowhere. I quickly took a bathroom break and then a "brief" catnap. Unfortunately, neither my wife, nor Rick, nor the medical staff could wake me. The contest was over for me. I'm told that Rick picked me up over his head and walked through the standing room-only crowd of spectators and contestants and walked right out to his car where he slid me into the back of his station wagon like a slab of beef. I soon woke up, but it was too late. I wish that event could have been captured on video with Rick holding me over his head. Really!!...

Warren Dorr - January 07, 2015 at 12:25 PM

LR

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Lauren Rowe - December 26, 2014 at 10:15 AM

LR

“ *Rick Spill, my friend. You truly gave meaning to the word friend. You embodied the tributes of kindness and concern and independent advice that only a loving friend could give. Your voice went straight to the center of my own music. Thank you my friend. My heart misses you but can feel your spirits peace. Lee*

Lee and Lauren Rowe - December 26, 2014 at 09:45 AM

LR

“ *Lee And Lauren Rowe lit a candle in memory of Rick Spill*



Lee and Lauren Rowe - December 26, 2014 at 08:49 AM

RO

“ Rick is such a loss to us ALL.... To us ALL..... I have never met Rick -- have heard SO much about him (talked with him during his health crises several times), his accomplishments and service to all life through Nancy. I value such rare souls as he is as pure gold. So very rare. I can just hope to strive to approach the service and goodness that Rick has achieved. What a loss -- and what a dear and deep loss for Nancy. All my deepest love -- Roger Tribble

Roger - December 19, 2014 at 03:03 PM

LG

“ I was a classmate of Rick's from Kindergarten until early High School years and, thinking back, I have to say that he always treated his friends with dignity, even at a young age. I came across this picture of Rick with his friend Chuck Clifford that I thought I would add to the collection. We re-connected when planning the 40th High School Reunion and I treasure the phone conversations we had. He will be missed.



Louise Nicol Griffin - December 16, 2014 at 05:55 AM

LC

“ What a wonderful collection of memories and a beautiful homage to Rick! I am honored to have been his friend.

We all have an opportunity to make a difference in our life--Rick took that challenge over and over with great success. He is missed.

Lynette Cardoch - December 15, 2014 at 08:45 AM

RS

Rick was one of the best. . Fiercely loyal, protective, generous, and kind. The world is a bleaker place without him, but his family and friends can continue sharing his amazing spirit to make a difference. .

Ruth Samuels - December 15, 2014 at 09:33 PM

DH

You were always there for me, as I was for you. You were a really good friend and I am so grateful for the memories! You will be missed by so many.

Donna Hertel - December 18, 2014 at 10:31 PM



“ 41 files added to the album Memories Album



Twin Chapels Mortuary - November 26, 2014 at 05:00 PM



“ 3 files added to the album Memories Album



Twin Chapels Mortuary - November 25, 2014 at 03:37 PM