



## Richard J. Merritt

February 13, 1965 - October 17, 2024

Albany, NY-Richard J. Merritt, a devoted father, son, and lover of nature, passed away unexpectedly at the age of 59. He is survived by his mother, Barbara; his children, Nicholas (and wife Sara) and Caitlin (and her partner Craig Helms) Miuccio; six beloved grandchildren; his love, Sunny Kellner; his three half-brothers, one half-sister, and several nieces and nephews. Rich was predeceased by his father, Jack.

Born and raised in Saranac Lake, NY, Rich had a lifelong connection to the Adirondacks and an immense appreciation for the outdoors. He poured his passion for nature into his career, spending more than 25 years with Audubon New York, where he served as Director of Operations, tirelessly working to protect birds and their habitats.

Rich embraced every part of life with dedication and enthusiasm. Whether birdwatching, hiking, curling, or traveling, he always did things with full commitment and joy. He had an undeniable love for music, writing, and celebrating life, and this infectious energy attracted people to him. His ability to find beauty and joy in everything around him was truly remarkable.

Rich's warmth, generosity, and love for the world and its people made him a genuine person, a good man who treated the world as his home and everyone in it as part of his extended family. He was an active and joyful member of the

Albany Curling Club, where he built lasting friendships, and his adventures in travel allowed him to experience the beauty of life in all its forms.

His passing has left an immeasurable void in the lives of those who knew him. Rich's overflowing love for life, his ability to bring people together, and his genuine spirit will be deeply missed. His legacy of passion, kindness, and zest for life will live on in the hearts of his family, friends, and all who were fortunate enough to be touched by his presence.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Richard's family Thursday, October 24, 2024 11:00 am to 1:00 pm at McVeigh Funeral Home, 208 North Allen Street, Albany, NY 12206. His Funeral Service will follow at 1:00 pm. Please enter the funeral home from the rear parking lot entrance only.

To leave a message for the family please visit [www.McveighFuneralHome.com](http://www.McveighFuneralHome.com)

Interment will take place on November 2, 2024 at St. Bernard's Cemetery, Saranac Lake, NY.

Those wishing to remember Richard in a special way may send a contribution to the National Audubon Society at [audubon.org](http://audubon.org)

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT **24**. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc.  
208 N Allen St  
Albany, NY 12206  
(518) 489-0188  
info@mcveighfuneralhome.com  
<http://www.McveighFuneralHome.com>

*Please enter the funeral home from the rear parking lot entrance only.*

## Service

OCT **24**. 1:00 PM (ET)

McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc.  
208 N Allen St  
Albany, NY 12206  
(518) 489-0188  
info@mcveighfuneralhome.com  
<http://www.McveighFuneralHome.com>

# Tribute Wall



“ *McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Richard J. Merritt*



-----  
**McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc.** - October 23, 2024 at 08:37 PM

LB

“ *oh my, this is a sad time.....so much energy and so much love to everyone he met. An infectious laugh and so much joy he would bring to every event. Dearest Barbara and Family, I have you all in prayers that God will provide you comfort in the days and months ahead. Every bird is singing a song of 'farewell until we meet again'.....Grandma Gert's got him to love on now.*

-----  
**lora Ruth brown** - October 24, 2024 at 11:56 AM

GS

“ *Gabriel S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard J. Merritt.*

-----  
**Gabriel S.** - October 24, 2024 at 11:12 AM

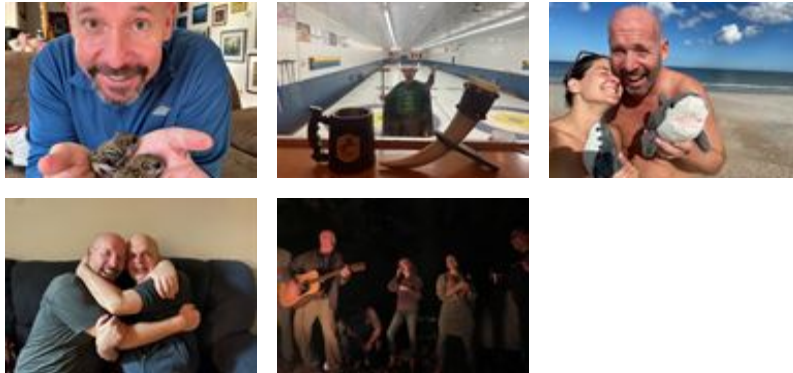
JM

“ I met rich back in the early 80's we became great friends. ill always cherish the times we spent climbing the high peaks with Jerry, Pete,Fenny and the gang breakfast at mas with chuckie brown the watering hole, the winter carnival, co authoring the Fenwich files i'm gonna miss you my brother.see what you can do about our Vikings finally winning a superbowl. give Pete a big hug from me and i'll see you on the other side I LOVE YA BUDDY your friend Joe Milham

Joe Milham - October 23, 2024 at 08:23 PM

MCVEIGH  
FUNERAL HOME, INC.  
(518) 489-0188

“ 173 files added to the album LifeTributes



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - October 23, 2024 at 04:30 PM

DM

“ Dr. E. Gray & Audubon Senior Management planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard J. Merritt.

Dr. E. Gray & Audubon Senior Management - October 23, 2024 at 11:32 AM



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Richard J. Merritt.*



---

October 23, 2024 at 11:32 AM



“ *We are deeply saddened by the loss of Rich. His 26 years at The National Audubon Society were marked not only by his dedication to our mission but also by the profound relationships he nurtured within our community. Rich was more than a colleague; he was a mentor, a friend, and a guiding light for many of us. His warmth, wisdom, and unwavering support created a family atmosphere that will be missed dearly. We are grateful for the time we had with him and the countless lessons he imparted. Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time. With heartfelt sympathy,  
Dr. Elizabeth Gray & The Audubon Senior Management Team*

---

**Ingrid Milne** - October 23, 2024 at 11:11 AM



“ *Pamela S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard J. Merritt.*

---

**Pamela S.** - October 23, 2024 at 10:38 AM

CA

“ Rich and I met each May for the past 10+ years for Audubon’s Birdathon. We were enthusiastic members of a small group of birders who cared passionately about the environment. We’d spend an intense 24 hours (over two days) going from place to place birding different habitats and having a ball. Rich was in charge of keeping careful count of what we saw and where. Citizen’s science. He generally distributed large cans of beer to the boys and always contributed the lion’s share of the fun. Day two always began early in Central Park and one year he crashed at my apartment so we could get a pre-dawn start. He had boundless energy and enthusiasm no matter the time or place. I have so many wonderful memories of these outings and he is a big part of all of them. I cherish those memories all the more now. -Carl Howard

Carl - October 23, 2024 at 09:58 AM

LL

“ Lisa L. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard J. Merritt.

Lisa L. - October 22, 2024 at 08:40 PM

AH

“ Andy H. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard J. Merritt.

Andy H. - October 22, 2024 at 06:31 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Richard J. Merritt.



October 22, 2024 at 04:40 PM

DA

“ Rich opened his home to me when I needed a place to stay overnight. He didn't know me at all. Only knowing that I knew Sunny. He gave me food, a bed and made me a part of his evening with his friends. It's clear he was generous with his friends, but I know he was generous with strangers too.

---

**David Anthony** - October 22, 2024 at 04:30 PM

EG

“ Please accept my condolences as you cherish Rich's memory after his untimely passing. I have been retired from Audubon for several years, but in my last years of work I had the pleasure of meeting Rich and witnessing his wonderful friendly spirit, dedication and enthusiasm which he shared so freely with everyone. I will always remember the wonderful positive energy he would share with the entire Audubon team whenever we had gatherings together.

*May special memories be a comfort to you as you honor the many ways that Rich brightened our world. I wish you peace.*

*Ted Gilman  
retired naturalist from Audubon Greenwich*

---

**Edward Gilman** - October 22, 2024 at 04:18 PM

JP

“ Rich will be very missed by his Audubon friends



---

**Jennifer Pines** - October 22, 2024 at 03:19 PM

DP

“ *Drusila Piovera lit a candle in memory of Richard J. Merritt*



---

**Drusila Piovera** - October 22, 2024 at 01:42 PM

GH

“ *I was fortunate to have Richard on one of my Little League teams. A really nice young man. Always fun loving and a well mannered. My thoughts and prayers go out to the family. Such a loss at a young age.*

---

**Gifford Hosler** - October 22, 2024 at 12:54 PM

BG

“ *Barbara Gowan planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard J. Merritt.*

---

**Barbara Gowan** - October 22, 2024 at 12:36 PM



“ *Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Richard J. Merritt.*



---

October 22, 2024 at 12:36 PM

DP

“ My sincerest sympathy to riches family. I was a classmate of rich which I haven't seen for many years as our life's go in different direction. I knew of his passion for music he played in my brothers band . And all the bird watching that he showed on social media . May he fly high like the eagle sores in the sky may he look down upon yous and keep you safe RIP Rich your missed by many sincerely Donna.

Donna wilson pecore - October 22, 2024 at 10:21 AM

TI

“ Thomas W Keesee III planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard J. Merritt.

Thomas W Keesee III - October 22, 2024 at 09:00 AM

TI

“ Thomas W Keesee III purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Richard J. Merritt.



Thomas W Keesee III - October 22, 2024 at 09:00 AM

KA

“ All of my best to Richie's family. Although I don't know his immediate family these days i sure knew him and his Mom Barb. Great neighbors and Richie was always involved with us outside in many events. I had recently seen a picture of Richie, Konrad and Fritz Winderl and myself sitting in our living room on Broadway with a new model rocket that we all built, while cleaning out my Mom and Dads storage unit from the old house. As with everyone else in time we all get separated in life. I'm truly sorry for that! Rest in peace my childhood friend. All of my best to all of you.

Kevin Aubin

---

Kevin Aubin - October 22, 2024 at 08:46 AM

AC

“ Albany Curling Club planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard J. Merritt.

---

Albany Curling Club - October 22, 2024 at 08:45 AM

AC

“ Albany Curling Club purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Richard J. Merritt.



---

Albany Curling Club - October 22, 2024 at 08:45 AM

Andy  
OL

“ I only did softball Tuesdays for one season. However one of the people that always stuck out the most was Rich. He was always so excited, full of energy, you can 100% see the way he brought people together. Even though I sucked at softball, he was always supportive and made it a space of fun for everyone. Rich is a legend and will live on in the memories of every person he's met. Sending a bunch of love and support to everyone.



---

Andy OL - October 22, 2024 at 07:51 AM

Drusila  
Piovera

“ Rich was an unexpected but amazing friend who taught me to live life to the fullest. My heart is with Nick, Catie, Barbara, Sunny and all his gran children. Rich, thank you for being one of my teachers of life. You truly were a guide and I'll never forget you.



---

Drusila Piovera - October 22, 2024 at 12:13 AM