



Milt Riviere

December 9, 1932 - June 19, 2024

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Adrian Milton Riviere of Suwanee, Georgia passed away peacefully at home in the early morning hours of June 19, 2024. Born to James Horace and Elsie Douglas Riviere in Monticello, Arkansas on December 9, 1932, he was the oldest of two, with his brother James Charles arriving nine years later.

After an early childhood when his parents owned a florist shop and travelled to conferences around the southeast, the family moved to North Little Rock with the outbreak of World War II where his father gained work on the railroad and his mother taught in a one-room schoolhouse. They also owned and ran a small farm with fresh vegetables, an orchard with apples, plums and peaches, and had milk cows and chickens. This led to my dad's lifelong commitment to NOT ever having a cow, i.e. anything that so ties one down that it is not possible to get away for a trip regardless of how important it might be.

He went away to college at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois outside of Chicago. After four years he graduated with a BA in Political Science, a wife of less than a year, Marty (Martha Van Der Eems), and their first son, Cliff (James Clifford). After suffering through a summer in Chicago they moved in with Horace and Elsie, where to help make ends meet Daddy set up a photo developer and took portraits and developed the film himself.

Then he entered Princeton Theological Seminary and earned his Masters of Divinity after three years, graduating in 1958. While there baby #2, John Kenneth was born. After graduation he accepted a calling to pastor All Souls

Church in Scott, Arkansas. While there they welcomed baby #3, Jacqueline. They then moved to Little Rock when he accepted the position of Director of Christian Education for the Synod of Arkansas, PCUS, where baby # 4, Jeanette, was born and the family was complete. While still in Arkansas Milt started working on a second graduate degree, this time from Union Theological Seminary in Manhattan studying Christian Education. He took a sabbatical year to focus on his studies in 1965 when the family moved to NJ and moved in with Marty's parents, John and Jenny (Abbink) Van Der Eems. While there he received an offer to take a teaching position at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA east of Atlanta, where he started teaching in the fall of 1966.

Friends and family members delighted in Marty and Milt's generous hospitality, which continued when they moved to Tucker, Georgia in 1973 after Milt accepted the call to pastor Northwoods Presbyterian Church in the Atlanta suburb of Doraville. Local and out-of-town guests exulted in lavish family dinners and evenings of laughter and music.

After Northwoods Milt accepted the position of Director of Court Partnership Services for the Presbyterian Church US. His position allowed him to facilitate the merger of the PCUS (southern church) and the UPCUSA (northern church) to form the PC(USA) in 1983, which was the first time the US had a unified Presbyterian Church since before the civil war. He then worked with a firm that (in addition to other work) built churches. He eventually bought the church building division and established his own company, ABC Construction, where he worked until his retirement.

His passion for photography continued for his entire life, including photos of family gatherings and their many European travels. He also had a gift for projects, that ranged from crafting his own frame from wood, building cabinetry, building out the downstairs of their house in Tucker, refinishing their first house at Bent Tree, and building a second Bent Tree home from scratch, The Timbers.

Together, Marty and Milt enjoyed a life of broad cultural engagement through

their avid appreciation of music and theater, and particularly their love of European travel. Perhaps their enormous love for their children is most dramatically exemplified by the generous gift of travel, as they treated each child with their spouse to a singular and enduringly memorable vacation in Europe.

Milt was preceded in death by his loving wife of 66.5 years, his parents, his brother Jim, and his daughter Jacqueline Smith. He is survived by his children Cliff (Judy), Kenneth (Mary Martha), Jacqueline's husband Gregg Smith, and Jeanette Fleischer (Don). He will be loved, remembered, and missed by his grandchildren Melissa Riviere Hearn (Rich), Michael Riviere (Megan), Jessica Riviere (Sten Heinze), Alex Riviere (Alison), Grey Willow (Thorn), Grant Smith (Christie), Doug Riviere and Nikki Riviere, as well as Great Grandchildren Hailey Riviere, Becca and Bryan Hearn, JR and Logan Riviere, and Lynne Heinze.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN **29**. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Flanigan Funeral Home
4400 South Lee Street
Buford, GA 30518

Memorial Service

JUN **29**. 2:00 PM.

Chapel of Flanigan Funeral Home

Tribute Wall



“ *Flanigan Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Milt Riviere*



Flanigan Funeral Home - June 24, 2024 at 03:24 PM

RT

“ *I am thankful for Milt. While I was serving at Church of the New Covenant in Doraville Milt was regularly there and often gave me good advice that all seminarians need when preaching in a church. "Preach behind the pulpit with notes or out front without, but not out front with notes." I can say that I took that to heart and have spent most of my ministry in the church out front without notes. My favorite memory, which always makes me smile, was a sermon where I used the word "cacophony" but I pronounced it more like "ka-ka-fony". After the sermon he said to me, George the word is cacophony not kakafony and I told him that the problem was I learned how to pronounce it from watching the Three Stooges. I didn't get a laugh but he did crack a smile. He was a traditional pastor who wanted to see me succeed and I am eternally grateful for his support and guidance. My prayers are with Kenneth, Mary Martha, the family, and for all who knew and loved Milt. I know that I am not the only minister who was shaped by his wisdom and I was blessed to have him in the formative years!*

Rev. George Tatro - July 20, 2024 at 11:11 PM

RS

“ Milt was a valued member of my Wheaton College class of 1954 and, in their behalf, we extend our deepest sympathies to his family. As a fellow History major we shared classes together. He was a gifted member of the Men's Glee Club for three years, served several offices with the Knights literary society, was business manager as a junior for the annual Washington Banquet. Fun loving Milt and i were among the seven junior men first at Jack & Jill Ranch in May 1953 to greet the senior class for their senior sneak. A sensational rivalry coup at the time. RIP.

Ray Smith - June 28, 2024 at 02:10 PM