

CROSSED THE BAR

Richard P. Mueller Jr.

Richard P. Mueller Jr. passed away peacefully on January 6th, 2024, at 3:36 PM in Gulfport, MS, with his family at his side. Richard P. Mueller Jr. was born on May 15th of 1949 in Lakewood, Ohio.

Richard was preceded in death by his parents: Dr. Richard P. Mueller and Rosemary Allen Mueller, brother-in-law Walter Baas, brother-in-law Donald Holliday, Jr., and nephew David Baas.

He was survived by his high school sweetheart and loving wife of 54 years, Linda Marie Mueller; their children: Richard Mueller, III (Stephenie) of Raleigh, NC, Kathy Barclay (Thom) of Atlanta, GA, Chris Mueller (Karrie) of Tampa, FL, and Mike Mueller of Tampa, FL; siblings: Carol Whitworth (Tom Leach) of Portland, OR, Shirley Baas (Walter, deceased) of Mitchell, SD, Phyllis Mueller (Glenn Warren) of Idyllwild, CA, Glenn Mueller of Pass Christian, MS, Rudy Mueller (Diane) of Lakewood, NY; sister-in-law Patrice Holliday, brother-in-law Tom Holliday (Ann), former sister-in-law Val Mueller; an aunt: Shirley Duff of Cincinnati, OH; seven grandchildren: Marc and Chris Barclay, Alex, Emma, Lily, Luke, and Alice Mueller; many nieces, nephews, and a host of long-time friends.

At an early age, Richard developed a love for creating model layouts and collecting model trains. In high school, he developed a love for pizza stores while working at his uncle Harry's Pizza King in Ohio.

Richard began working at Domino's Pizza in 1967 while a student at the University of Michigan. He delivered pizza for a year before beginning to work inside the store and then dropped out of college to pursue his career at Domino's. Richard would sometimes give the Founder of Domino's Pizza, Inc., Mr. Tom Monaghan, suggestions on how to make the stores better.

In partnership with Tom Monaghan, Richard opened 60 Domino's Pizza stores in Ohio before age 30, and then merged with Domino's to become 10% owner and Vice President of Operations. In 1981, Richard sold his stock in Domino's Pizza, Inc. and received franchise development rights to the states of Mississippi and Louisiana. Richard asked his brother Glenn to join him in founding RPM Pizza, LLC in 1981, and together with brother-in-law Tom Holliday they opened hundreds of stores, operating the largest Domino's franchise in the United States for over four decades.

Also in 1981, Tom Monaghan made a \$50,000 bet with Richard that he would not be able to run a marathon within a year of the bet. Richard trained hard, lost 100 pounds, and finished the Baton Rouge marathon by year end. He put that \$50,000 into his Domino's Pizza franchise.

In 2001 Richard and wife Linda purchased Castle Farms in Charlevoix, Michigan, which is now a multiple award-winning wedding destination and event venue housed in 100-year-old stone French chateau style buildings that Richard and Linda lovingly restored. www.castlefarms.com. Richard also helped Linda with the gardens which have become one of the best in Michigan.

In 2003, Richard retired from RPM Pizza and Glenn became the official franchisee with Richard Mueller III, as Chief Operating Officer. In 2005 Richard returned to help RPM Pizza with recovery from Hurricane Katrina and in 2008 returned to help with marketing.

In 2022, Richard opened Hungry Ducks Farm in Charlevoix, Michigan after restoring the 100-year-old wood barns. It is a non-profit interactive petting farm with farm animals, a carousel, a tram ride, and historical collections of antique toys and dolls, doll houses, quilts, and more. www.hungryducksfarm.com.

In 2023, Richard and Glenn founded TrainTastic in Gulfport, MS as a non-profit organization -- the largest and most exciting and largest Model Train Museum in the U.S. with large, scenic, and interactive model railroad exhibits, riding trains, activities, party rooms, and a playground. www.traintastic.com.

Of special interest, Richard was a Life Master Bridge player. He was a collector of vintage pull toys, and accumulated one of the largest antique pull-toy collections in the world. He was a member of the Antique Toy Collectors of America.

Richard and his family loved their time at the Belvedere Club. Richard and his siblings are fourth generation members/Belvederites following his mother Rosemary Mueller (cottage 129), Grandfather Glenn Allen (cottage 504) and great Grandfather Oscar Allen (The Blue Belle cottage 506 and one of the Club's 8 founding members). Richard spent his childhood summers at the club and at times Camp Charlevoix. He would enjoy sailing and taking family, friends and gangsters sailing on his catamaran—especially during high winds! Lately he cherished Venetian week and could be seen giving children and parents rides downtown on his riding train or allowing kids to pet animals while Bridge St was closed. For the past 30 years, Richard and Linda would enjoy most of the year on club grounds and often (like Rosemary) looked for ways to help the club maintain its unique character for future gangsters and generations to come. Richard would often be seen giving tram tours at Castle Farms, hayrides at Hungry Ducks and train rides at TrainTastic.

Richard brought an unparalleled passion to everything he did and cherished his time with family and friends. His special love for Domino's and RPM Pizza included countless innovative ideas that he brought to life, which reflect his remarkable dedication and vision. He fostered a sense of community and inclusion wherever he went and faced every challenge with unwavering determination. Richard would want to remind us to hug our loved ones, never stop playing and remember we are all blessed!

Services were held Saturday, January 13, 2024 in Gulfport at St. James Church and the reception at TrainTastic with more details at this website: <https://www.riemannfamily.com/obituaries/richard-mueller-jr>.

A memorial service in Charlevoix is being planned for late July 2024 with details to follow. Burial services are planned for St Mary's Cemetery in Charlevoix on the afternoon of July 28, 2024.

In lieu of flowers, Linda and family would prefer donations be made to the Belvedere Club Memorial Fund or to their two favorite charitable organizations: to Hungry Ducks Farm www.hungryducksfarm.com, or TrainTastic (the Designated Richard Mueller FUN Fund) www.traintastic.com,