



George E. Mead

May 25, 1952 - January 14, 2024

George E. Mead

George Edward Mead, or her little GEM as lovingly referred to by his mother was born May 25, 1952 in Hollywood, California to Bill and Mary Lou Mead

He was raised in Burbank, CA where he attended elementary school and High School at John Burroughs High School. Growing up his family didn't have a lot of money but his home was always filled with love, compassion and a true mission to help those in need. Even though they didn't have much, they never let a mouth go hungry and shared whatever they had with whoever needed it. George from a young age inherited his parents' compassion and loving hearts that stayed with him throughout his life. His love of farming and growing fruit also began as a child. He would grow tomatoes in the vacant lot and sell them to the neighbors. Luckily for his neighbors now, he was happy to just share whatever his garden and fruit trees produced.

George was a true child of the 60s when you were able to just get in your car with your friends and drive wherever your hearts desired. He had many adventures exploring places in California and Mexico without a care in the world. He graduated High School in 1970 and initially went to Hawaii with aspirations of being a professional surfer.. Realizing that may not be a realistic option he made alternative plans. With a one-way ticket, a job with the

government and a group of friends he headed to Europe. He spent many months in Germany and then traveled to different countries backpacking and camping on the beach wherever he could. It was either after his money ran out, homesickness or after exploring for a while, his brother sent him money for a ticket home.

His next adventure began by being lured to Central Coast beaches by his friend with dreams of surfing all day and diving for abalone. There is where he also started his career in agriculture to fulfill his love of farming and growing things. He worked and lived at See Canyon Ranch maintaining the apple trees and attending Cuesta College. As time went on he had other opportunities come his way including being, as he fondly recalled, "Alex Madonna's gopher" at the Madonna Inn. He eventually landed a position at Cal Poly State University as a Grounds Worker and spent the next 35 years there rising in the ranks until he was Manager of Grounds.

George's true life began though when he had his two boys, Zack and Clay. They became his world and everything he did revolved around them. From coaching every sports team he could whether it was basketball, t-ball, baseball, soccer, softball, George was there. As they grew and started playing club and High School sports, he never missed a game. He also never missed an opportunity to tell his friends of all the boy's accomplishments, he was so proud. Even now watching them create their own lives and families his heart was filled with joy at the men they have become.

After his boys were grown, he and his wife Jo jumped into retirement with both feet. Skiing in Tahoe multiple times per year became the norm and the white sand beaches of St. John captured their hearts, returning year after year. Hawaii has always been part of George's soul and they looked forward to returning there a couple times a year. During the downtimes, Avila Beach filled in the gaps. The sand, the sun and each other was all they needed to be

happy.

When George was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2020 he was determined to not let it get the best of him and continue to live his life. Unfortunately a back injury curtailed some of his goals but he never lost his positive attitude and optimism that things would get better. George lived his life believing life is good and tried to make everyone he met feel special. Whether it was someone he had known for years, or a waiter at a restaurant he just met, they all knew he believed they mattered to him. He had that quality of just making people feel special and loved. His motto later in life became "Positive is How I Live" a phrase he picked up in one of his favorite places, St. John in the USVI. George truly embraced that quality all the way up to the end of his life.

George is survived by his wife Joanne, his sons Zack (Hilary) and Clay (Nikki) and the light of his life, his granddaughter Taylor and her soon to be little sister, Baby B. He is also survived by his favorite brother John and his very special nieces, Cynthia, Kelly (Ashley), Jenny (Cody) , nephews Johnny (Holly), Anthony, Scotty and their families to which he was lovingly referred to as Grunkle.

A celebration of life will be held at the Madonna Inn on Sunday, January 21, 2024 at 2:30pm in the Venetian Room. Please bring your memories and fun stories to share with all his friends and family.

If you would like, in lieu of flowers, donations to the SLO Food Bank or Homeless Shelters would be appreciated. If you are unable to come to his celebration, memories may be left on the reisfamilymortuary.net .

Tribute Wall



“ Margaret Bailey planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of George E. Mead.

Margaret Bailey - January 18, 2024 at 06:32 PM



“ Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of George E. Mead.



January 17, 2024 at 07:55 PM