Vasilios Chris Priskos

May 29, 1964 ~ October 9, 2017

For the first time in 53 years the sun rose and Vasilios Priskos was not there to see it, passing away at 5:00 a.m. on October 9, 2017. Though he fought mightily for many years against the cancer robbing him of his adult life, he died peacefully surrounded by family at the Huntsman Cancer Institute. Our sun blazed a bit dimmer that day.

Vasilios was born on May 29, 1964 in the village of Kamaritsa deep in the mountains on the Greek island of Evia. He came to the United States in 1966, in the arms of his father and mother, Chris and Tula Priskos, who settled in Utah to fulfill the family ambition to live the American Dream. That dream was realized when the family established the Royal Burger on the corner of 400 South Main in 1981 where Vasilios began flipping burgers and washing dishes while a student at Skyline High School. During this period Vasilios developed his own ambitions to help grow and shape Salt Lake City as each day he was met with a new story by another of Salt Lake's movers and shakers, the rich and the poor, the white and blue collar. Their stories moved him to marry the American dream with his own Greek birthright of achievement, stewardship and honor, termed Philotimo in the language he first spoke.

In 1990 he earned his Bachelors of Arts degree in Finance from the University of Utah and began a real estate career. After earning his brokers license, he founded InterNet Properties in 1994 and purchased his first property on 400 South that still houses the company today.

Vasilios became well-known as one of the major influencers of downtown Salt Lake City with a particular love for Main Street where he not only brokered sales, but also purchased properties that others had left abandoned or ruined. His vision for, and belief in Main Street, allowed establishments like Eva's Bakery, Mollie and Ollies, Whiskey Street and Apollo Burger to begin the modern transformation of Main Street. When the Salt Lake Tribune left downtown and its historic building behind, Vasilios was able to purchase and transform it into the vital campus and housing for Neumont University. Many other businesses and properties throughout downtown are benefactors of his vision. The Downtown Alliance recognized that vision, naming Vasilios one of the Top-25 People Who Helped Shape Downtown.

Vasilios believed in giving back to his community, serving on multiple civic and public boards including positions with the Salt Lake City Police Foundation, the Children's Museum, Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce, the Salt Lake Redevelopment Agency, the Heritage Foundation, Utah Film Center, the 2002 Olympics Committee, Westminster College Foundation, and the Board of Realtors Grievance Committee. He served on the board of the Salt Lake Country Club and is a past president of the Alta Club. Vasilios was a member of the National Hellenic Association and of Leadership 100, two groups dedicated to the preservation of Hellenic heritage and culture. Vasilios was always ready with financial aid or mentorship, and importantly, to connect the dots between other community leaders. His sphere of friends and allies includes persons of every religion, every ethnicity and every social strata.

Especially cigar smoking gamblers.

His true calling is that of admired son, brother, uncle, husband, father and faithful steward to the Greek Orthodox Church, in which he became a Nono (Godfather) to many local children. He married Shauna Bamberger in 1988. Together they raised four strong boys, Christian, Nico, Alexander and Aristotle each of whom are gifted with particular Vasilios and Shauna attributes. Of his many accomplishments, he considered his children his greatest. They were a source of pride that motivated him during his darkest times. Throughout his illness he continued to attend their sporting events, Greek dance performances and graduations. They were his rock and his reason for waking to each painful day. Those who knew him best agree that his highest accolade is that of loving husband and father. His reward was that they loved him in return.

Vasilios is now welcomed into heaven, joining his father Chris and nephew Jorge. He is survived by his wife and children, and his mother, Tula, his sisters Tessie, Melanie and Stephanie and his brother Deno with whom Vasilios held a special relationship and loving bond. He is also survived by his Godchildren and many nieces and nephews, of which all regard him as their favorite. Through his family, Vasilios found the strength to fight each and every day. He was a champion for not only life itself, but a living memorial that despite all the bad cards one is dealt, it remains possible to build a winning hand. His zest for life, his smile, his solid words of confidence, his encouragement to all and his embrace of even his critics is the final chisel on the piece of granite we all knew as among the finest and strongest men ever.

Vasilios and the family wish to thank the compassionate and tireless care from the medical staff at Huntsman Cancer Institute, his friends and daily caretakers Meleane and David Mahe and Mele and Spencer Katoa, and especially the unselfish energy provided by Peter Couman and Shelley Anderson.

Friends and family may call at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Friday, October 13, from 6-9 p.m. Trisagion prayer service will be at 8 p.m. Funeral services will be held Saturday, October 14, 10:00 a.m. at Holy Trinity Cathedral. Interment at Mount Olivet Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Holy Trinity Campus Development Fund (279 South 300 West, SLC, UT, 84101) or to the Huntsman Cancer Institute.

We love you and miss you. Thank you for standing strong for all of us. We will honor your legacy and pledge to stand strong for you.