John Judson Solowiej

June 12, 1956 ~ June 21, 2019

John Judson Solowiej (OLJ - One Legged John), the most loved man in the entire world, left us unexpectedly on June 21, 2019 from his home in Eagle Mountain, Utah.

John was born in Endicott, New York on June 12, 1956. He was preceded in death by his mother, Betty Jane Zedar, father, Anthony Solowiej, stepmother, Marge Solowiej, stepfather, Joseph Zedar, and sister, Suzy Mack.

He is survived by his five children, William Solowiej and his wife Michelle, Candi Solowiej Hicklin and her husband Jason, Kristina Solowiej McInnis and her husband Sam, Tina Evenson and Sara DeVries; brother, David Solowiej and his wife Blanche; sister, Toni Solowiej Loomis and her husband Tim; and stepbrother, Frank Zedar and his wife Maritssa, along with numerous aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Closest to his heart were his grandchildren, Hailey Solowiej; Maylyn, Anthony, Ashley and Jacob Hicklin; Madalynn and Claire McInnis; and Keith Wurtenberg.

John was educated at Christ the King and Maine-Endwell High School in Endwell, New York. In his late teens, he decided to spend two years hitchhiking across the country, after which he enlisted in the Air Force and served our country from 1976 to 1979. At the young age of 24, John, already the father of four children, became a cancer survivor. Fortunately for the rest of the world, while cancer took his right leg, this only made him a stronger man. John was a loving father and grandfather, a successful businessman and an admired mentor. He left a legacy of inspiration to the physically disabled community. He found great joy in teaching skiing, biking and golfing, especially to young people. "I can't" was not in his vocabulary. John cofounded Greek Peak Adaptive Snowsports Winter Challenge Scholarship Week and its associated Skiathon. He taught adaptive skiing at Greek Peak and at Camelback Adaptive Race Camp for many years. He also spent time helping at Winter Park, Colorado, in their adaptive program and at Adaptive Adventures in Lakeland, Colorado. After moving to Utah, John became involved with Wasatch Adaptive Sports and the University of Utah TRAILS program.

John changed lives with his gifts of encouragement, compassion, knowledge and "anything is possible" attitude. When you think of him, remember: Having a bad day is not an option! It's just some days are better than others. Yesterday is the past, today is today and tomorrow never comes. He loved to travel - New York, Utah, Kansas, Colorado, Big Pine Key, and all places in-between , and was loved wherever he went. So, raise a toast to OLJ!

Calling hours will be held on Friday, August 2, 2019, from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at Wm. R. Chase and Son Funeral Home, 737 Chenango St., Port Dickinson, New York 13901. The Military Honor Guard will be performing a flag presentation promptly at 1:00 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, John's children would like donations to be made to Greek Peak Adaptive Snowsports, 518 Hooper Rd, PMB 261, Endwell, New York 13760 where a scholarship will be established in John's name to support

physically disabled young athletes. Donations can also be made to the University of Utah TRAILS program, 30 N. 1900 E., Salt Lake City, Utah 84132 to support their participants.