

Russell Owen (Coakley) Donoghue

April 6, 1939 ~ June 16, 2023

Russell Owen (Coakley) Donoghue passed away Friday, June 16, 2023, after a fall and accidental drowning near his home in Murray, Utah while taking a walk to visit the geese and ducks along the nearby creek.

Rusty (as he was known to his friends) was born April 6, 1939, in the small town of Collbran, CO to Blanche Martin and Owen Coakley. He was raised by his mother and stepfather, John Donoghue, in Moab, Utah where he loved being surrounded by the red rock beauty.

Russ graduated from Grand County High School where he served at Student Body President and went on to receive a degree from Utah State University with a double major in History and English. He taught high school English and History in Moab along with coaching speech and debate from the years 1962-1972. During this time, he had the pleasure of serving as a part time park ranger at Arches National Park. He retired from teaching to build and operate a full-service RV park, Slickrock Country Campground with his family by his side. They loved having the Colorado River and the surrounding Canyons as their backyard.

Later Russ ventured into a new career as the Director of the Utah Rural Water Association and eventually served as a trainer and lobbyist for the National Rural Water Association taking he and his wife, Marjorie to Oklahoma for six years. After his retirement, Russ and Marj relocated to Park City, UT where he enjoyed time on the mountain as a ski instructor as well as being near his kids and grandkids.

Russ was an avid outdoorsman, reader, writer, John Wayne enthusiast, and collector of Buck Knives. He was often asked to speak at events and was well known for his storytelling ability. Russ never met anyone that did not become an immediate friend. If you saw him years later, he would remember your name and your story.

Russ married his college sweetheart, Marjorie Redd, in 1960 and loved having her by his side for 62 years. He is survived by Marjorie as well as their children Chad (Debby) Donoghue and Corina Donoghue Johnson. He has 4 grandchildren: Christopher (Brooke) Donoghue, Paige (Shawn) Holbrook, Devin Johnson, and Gabriel Johnson as well as 5 great grandchildren: Boston and Finn Donoghue; Dallas, Cal, and Dawson Holbrook. Russ was preceded in death by his mother, Blanche Donoghue; father, Owen Coakley; step father, John Donoghue; and brother, Robin Donoghue.

Russ was loved by many and we cherish the memories he gave us and those he inspired. We can take solace in his words: “Keep your face to the sun and back to a warm fire … preferably pinyon.”

A Celebration of Life open house will be held in the Chateau building of Larkin Sunset Gardens located at 1950 East 10600 South, Sandy, UT on Sunday, July 9th, 2023 from 1:00-3:00pm.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to the Salt Lake County Search and Rescue Team at www.saltlakesearchandrescue.org.