



Charles Roy Fender

March 11, 1936 - October 19, 2024

(Charles) Roy Fender

After a long adventurous life, leaving an indelible impression on everyone he met, Roy Fender died on October 19, 2024, with family at his side. His magical smile cheered family, friends, and caretakers, whom he adored and who buoyed him at Chatham Glen even in his last painful months. Roy was born in Brooklyn, NY, on March 11, 1936, but soon moved to St. Louis, MO, with his mother Mary Jane Wilder Knoepfle and his big brother Dan. mother, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunt and eventually uncle and cousins formed a tight knit loving family.

When his mother remarried in 1947 Roy and his brother gained a new last name, a caring new father, and an exciting new life. Roy spent the next six years in Egypt and Greece, loving every new discovery. His world was really his classroom, but he did manage formal education, graduating from Cairo American College (high school) in 1954. He returned to the U.S., where he volunteered for the draft. Given his desert experience, the Army sent him to pre-state Alaska, where he continued his life of discovery, 1954-56. After military service, Roy pursued formal education at Colorado State University, where he met and married his first wife Kathryn Wynn. Several business ventures and odd jobs later he graduated in 1963 and began teaching at Loveland (CO) High School and enjoyed terrific buddies and inquisitive students. Roy combined artistic vision with a love of projects and the ability to

execute them. In the summer of 1969 armed with hand tools and a chain saw, he began building a log cabin on an island in Lac la Ronge, part of the Churchill River system in northern Saskatchewan. Over the next few summers, he had the 30'x30' under roof. He spent the following 40 summers on the lake, 20 at his magnificent cabin and 20 at a long unused fishing camp and "lodge," happily rebuilding it.

Roy's success as an art teacher led to a fellowship at The Ohio State University, 1969-70. Always highly creative in anything he undertook, Roy's mind was really opened to how much he could apply that creativity to the visual arts. After finishing his M.A., he stayed at OSU to complete his M.F.A., specializing in ceramics. He loved his years at OSU, becoming a devoted Buckeye fan as well as an even more resolute artist. With terminal art degree in hand, and sadly divorced, he moved to Maryland where he taught at Western Maryland College. He met his wife Ann there. By that time, his Saskatchewan cabin was under roof, and he introduced her to the beauty of northern Saskatchewan and living off the grid (only in the summers). Roy and Ann had fifty-one wonderful, exciting years together until his death. For their work years, they lived in the Gettysburg, PA area in a house Roy converted from a weekend hunter's shack into a unique hillside home. Their occupations allowed them to travel extensively, and they did.

Roy was fortunate to have five smart, beautiful daughters: Nancy, Kathryn, Ellen, Sarah Jane, and stepdaughter Meredith. Tragically, Nancy and Sarah Jane predeceased him, as did his parents Owen and Jane Fender.

In 2009, Roy and Ann retired to The Villages, FL, where Roy vigorously took on projects on their house and in art. He was notorious in his neighborhood for his holiday lawn sculptures, created from palm boots, branches and other lawn debris. Palm pieces and bits of found bone found their way into his intriguing ceramic critters, many created at the Seabreeze Potters Club. The unusual Manhole Cover golf tournament that he originated in his villa complex has become an annual event.

Roy overcame many injuries, bouncing back to his exuberant self. He was

treated successfully for acute leukemia in 2000-1, thanks to Johns Hopkins Hospital. A fall in March 2024 that led to a broken hip was one injury too much, but he had lived a long, extraordinarily full life. He leaves his wife Ann, daughters Kathryn Bright (Kevin) and Ellen Yancey (Greg), his step-daughter Meredith Coffey (Chris Denig), his grandchildren Megan (Travis), Ben (Meghan), Drew (Anna), Megan, Gwen (Danny), Dane and thirteen great-grandchildren; his loving big brother Dan (Sharon) and cousins Nancy Mund (Bill), Virginia Yale (Bob), and Joe Cooper; and his many, diverse friends to mourn our loss. We dearly miss his unique presence that made us all feel special.

Roy would tell us to go out and have a beer with our significant other to honor his memory. If someone really wanted to make a charitable contribution in his memory, he would have suggested Smile Train (<https://support.smiletrain.org/>). Inurnment will be held at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida in February of 2025.

Previous Events

Inurnment

FEB **14**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Florida National Cemetery
6502 SW 102nd Avenue
Bushnell, FL 33513

Time is to be determined.

Celebration of Life Gathering

FEB **15**. 1:30 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

"Celebrate Roy" Post-Retirement Home Get Together
1124 San Bernardo Rd
The Villages, FL 32162

"Celebrate Roy" get together at his and Ann's post retirement home in The Villages, Florida. Get together will last from 1:30pm to 6:00pm or until the last person leaves. (if you let us know that you'll try to come we will try to have enough snacks and drink on hand).

Tribute Wall

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“ I found an email from Roy from about 10 years ago in my archives and decided to see what he was now up to. I sadly found this obituary of his passing. I was sadder to see that there were no tributes. Well... Roy was one of a kind a one of the 3 best teachers I had while at Western Maryland. I was a Biology major but loved Roy so much that I took 3 classes with him, including a Jan term course the the incredible cabin on Lac la Range in January. The course was called "Logs, Snow, and 40 below". It was truly the highlight of my 4 years at WMC. He was supportive, generous, and made learning easy. I am very sad today for Roy and Ann and for myself for not having stayed in touch. RIP, Roy. Gone but never forgotten.

David Stout - February 11, 2025 at 05:39 AM