

Paul Reed Toomey, 74

Paul Reed Toomey, a longtime resident of Sanibel Island, died peacefully with his family by his side on April 23, 2011, at his Sanibel home after a long illness. He was 74.

Reed (as he was known) was born in Iowa City, on July 1, 1936, to parents Paul and Helen Toomey. He graduated as valedictorian from Brooklyn High School in Iowa in 1954. Reed next attended the University of Miami where he served as President of Sigma Chi fraternity, and was chosen for membership in the Iron Arrow Honor Society, the University's highest honor. He graduated cum laude with a B.A. in history in 1958.

After graduation from the University of Miami, Reed went on to earn his Juris Doctor from Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Mass., in 1961. During law school, he married Barbara Mather Knight in 1959. After law school, Reed served in the army as a personnel management specialist until 1963. He and Barbara then moved to Miami, Fla., where Reed began his law career with the firm Steel, Hector and Davis. He later worked with the State of Florida Department of Justice in Tallahassee, Fla., as Assistant Attorney General. Beginning in 1969, Reed worked as a corporate counsel for Lockheed Corporation in Burbank, Calif., for six years.

From 1976 until 1989, Reed established a private law practice on Sanibel Island. During those years, he enjoyed teaching business law and international business courses at Edison Community College in Ft. Myers and Florida International University in Miami.

Reed was also involved in numerous civic activities. He served as legal counsel for the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation for over a decade; was director of the Sanibel Public Library; and was founder, director and president of the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society. He took an active role in the lives of his children, volunteering as scoutmaster for the Cub Scouts and as a member of numerous school advisory boards and activities.

Upon retirement, Reed and Barbara traveled extensively, pursuing their interests in archeology, paleontology, and in learning about different cultures and environments. Reed visited all 50 states, all seven continents, and over 90 countries around the world. Whether he was hot air ballooning over the Serengeti, weathering a sandstorm in the Gobi Desert, or climbing icebergs in Antarctica, no adventure was too big or too small.

In addition to Barbara, his wife of 52 years, Reed is survived by his mother, Helen, (107 years old) of Sun City Center, Fla.; his three sons: James K. (Lori) of Bradenton, Fla., Christopher R. "Kitt" of Miami, Fla., and Michael O. (Heidi) of Gainesville, Fla.; his granddaughter, Kristen Toomey, of Bradenton; and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

Reed's infectious smile, sharp wit, and love of practical jokes will be missed, but never forgotten, by his family and many close friends.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hope Hospice, 9470 HealthPark Circle, Fort Myers, FL 33908. The family will hold a private remembrance.



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