

Nicholas Michael Markow, age 83, beloved husband of Marilyn Joyce Hale Markow, passed away peacefully on Sunday, May 22, 2016 in Knoxville, Tennessee surrounded by his family. Nick (Rocky) and Marilyn were traveling by motorhome their normal route from Austin, Texas to Windham, New York when Rocky became ill.



Nicholas (Mikola) was born at home on November 12, 1932 in Willimantic, Connecticut to Helen Stupak and Jacob Markow, both emigrants from Ukraine. With his parents and brother Bohdan, Mikola then moved to lower east side of New York City where his sister Irene was born in 1934. Mikola attended St. Georges Ukrainian Catholic School, and until age six, spoke only Ukrainian. Thereafter, he excelled at English, later became familiar with German, Italian and Korean.

Growing up in both New York City and later near Windham on his family's property, Rocky was a talented solo baritone singer and dancer with Ukrainian Dancers of New York, where he served as vice-president and performed as far away as Detroit and Chicago. Rocky's athletic skill then and later extended to handball, boxing, strength feats, diving, ping pong, jogging, and tennis among others. As a teen, he worked moving furniture and helped fix cars. After graduating from Brooklyn Automotive High School in 1951, Rocky worked as a machinist and tool dye maker. With the Korean War ongoing, Rocky joined the Air Force at Sampson AF Base near Geneva, New York for his basic training, and afterwards transferred to Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas. There, at the Tourist Dance Club, Rocky met the love of his life, Marilyn, and a few months later, they eloped on February 14, 1954 to Seguin, Texas.

While in military, Rocky was assigned to bases, sometimes multiple times, in Texas, Italy, Mississippi, Germany, Nebraska, Massachusetts, Louisiana and Korea. The couple made most of each assignment by traveling nearby. All four of their children were born during these Air Force years. In 1966, after ten years of taking courses as available, Rocky completed his baccalaureate degree at University of Omaha, Nebraska, as a distinguished graduate in Military Science majoring in Industrial Engineering. He served the military in multiple positions, many at leadership level and often focused in Engineering (Civil, Industrial, Electronics, and Radar). He successfully headed several "large, complex and urgent projects" such as installation of radar systems along the East-West German border after loss of two Air Force reconnaissance planes. In the words written by his commanding officers, they consistently described Rocky as "outstanding, exceptionally knowledgeable, dynamic, highly successful and principled, and having his staff's respect and loyalty." In 1970, he was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal (First Oak Leaf Cluster) as Chief of Plans Branch, Directorate of Communications-Electronics for demonstrating superior management and implementation of complex communications-electronic systems in direct support of the Strategic Air Command mission.

After 21 years in Air Force, Major Markow retired in 1973, highly regarded and recommended for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel. The family took their once-in-a-lifetime summer trip

traveling around the U.S. camping at National Parks and other sites in their tent trailer, and then settled in Austin, Texas. With interest in business, Rocky obtained a real estate broker's license and started Markow Realty. He provided a trustworthy economical source for clients, especially with memory of his parents having been swindled out of their farm during 1930's. With Rocky's business and Marilyn pursuing her career at the Texas Highway Department, the couple helped support their four children graduate from college, took a Colorado family backpacking trip and began weekend trips in their motorhome.

In 1989, adding to birth eyesight issues, Rocky was officially diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa and Marilyn retired. They began what became an unexpected 27 year motorhome adventure visiting places, family, and friends, changing circumstances and routes as needed. In most recent years, they focused Texas time in Austin-Round Rock and at Fun-Sun RV Resort near South Padre, and New York time on their Catskill property.

Throughout their very happy 62-year marriage, Rocky and Marilyn shared together their passions for the outdoors, dancing from polkas to tangos, playing competitive bridge and other games, raising their children, and physically maintaining their land. Rocky was an upbeat person who loved life, looking for the best in a situation such that his medical appointments were like social events. His physical strength and intellect were still easily evident in his later years as he would easily move large rocks for land projects and then in detail be able to explain the rock's geology. He loved conversing with anyone on multiple subjects especially business, science, tools and news; playing games with family and friends; going to festivals savoring pierogi; and when "resting his eyes" listening to his radio keeping up to date on news. He endeared to his children and grandchildren his love for life, purpose and honor.

Nick was cherished by his family and friends and will be dearly missed. He is survived by his wife Marilyn; children Marsha Elam (Phil), Michael (Radiana), Mitchell (Helen), and Melanie Wilkes (David); grandchildren Mari Elam, Michael Elam, Abel, Joshua (Amber), Sarah Leger (John), Abby (Steve Muller), Rachael McGinley (Trevor), Sasha Walsh (Brian), Jacob, Cecelia, Ellen Smith (January), Claire Wilkes (fiancé Mitchell Smarda), and Audrey Wilkes; great-grandchildren (Paul, Austin, Briana) Christiansen, Isabella, Noah, Max, Vivian, Elizabeth, (Charlie, Nick) McGinley, (Daniel, Charlotte) Leger; brother Bohdan (Wanda), sister Irene Hunt; nephews Stanley, Greg (Regina), Eugene; nieces Dorothy Cooke, Helene Grant (Stuart), Patty Norris (Casey), Marcy Smith (Dave), Kim Wilson (Charles), and many other relatives. He was preceded in death by his parents Helen and Jacob Markow.

While still cognizant and aware of his circumstances in Knoxville, Nick enjoyed a chocolate shake and borscht, sang favorite songs with family beside him, and spoke with over 30 family and friends who called him. On May 21st Mikola received his last rites. Following his death, a memorial was held alongside him and family with the hospital chaplain leading prayer. The family is ever grateful for the kind words, visits, cards, gifts and prayers from so many.

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