



Richard A. Bretko

April 1, 1937 - July 11, 2014

In Ct. Hospice, Branford, July 11, 2014, after a nearly two year battle with Pancreatic Cancer, Richard A. Bretko, 77, of Hamden. Beloved husband of Barbara Ketchel Bretko. Loving father of David A. Bretko and wife Jennifer of Hamden. Brother in law of Christine Ierardi of Branford. Also survived by several nieces, nephews, aunts, cousins, and many dear friends who helped Richard during his long illness. Born April 1, 1937 in New Haven a son of the late Andrew and Theresa Nemit Bretko, he was a graduate of Wilbur Cross High School and had served with the US Army. Richard had been employed by the Town of Hamden Dept. of Public Works for over forty five years until his retirement. He had a great love for the outdoors and nature and enjoyed hockey, hiking East Rock, playing the piano, UCONN Basketball and was a lifelong Boston Red Sox Fan. He will be remembered for his kindness, sense of humor and strength.

Funeral from Sisk Brothers Funeral Home, 3105 Whitney Ave., Hamden, Friday morning at 9:30. Mass of Christian Burial in Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church at 10:00. Burial with military honors will follow in All Saints Cemetery. Friends may call Thursday from 5 - 8 pm. In lieu of Flowers, memorial contributions may be made to The Smilow Cancer Hospital, specifically for Pancreatic Cancer Research, PO Box 7611, New Haven, CT 06519-0611 or the CT Hospice, 100 Double Beach Rd., Branford, CT 06405. www.siskbrothers.com

Previous Events

Funeral service

JUL 18. 10:00 AM (ET)

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church
2819 Whitney Ave.
Hamden, CT

Burial

JUL 18 (ET)

All Saints Cemetery
700 Middletown Ave.
North Haven, CT

Tribute Wall

“ *Memories of my dear friend, Richie,
In 1954, 60 years ago, Richie and I met, as teenagers, playing ball on Blake Field, New Haven, CT. We were inseparable for the next 3 years. What one didn't think of the other one did. We enjoyed the same activities which were going to State Theatre in Hartford, and the Apollo Theater in Harlem to see rock-roll stars, skiing in New Hampshire, the beach in Florida, and to the double beach in Branford, CT.*

In 1957 I enlisted in the Air Force for a 4 year term. When I got out of the service Richie was in the Army. Our lives reunited again in the late 60's. I was honored to be best man in his and Barbara's wedding and to be named God Father to their son, David. Richie was also named God Father to my 4th child, Aimee.

In 1974 I moved to Texas where I met my wife, Judith. I introduced her to Richie, Barbara and David in 1979 when we went to Connecticut to visit family. Even though there were several years and many miles between us, our friendship never changed. Each time we were together it seemed like we were never apart. Judith was so impressed with the Italian pastries Richie would have for us, even when he was sick with his disease he would drive miles to make sure we had the ones we loved.

When Barbara called to let us know that Richie was very sick, we immediately made plans to visit. Our last 7 days with him are days we will cherish forever. We laughed and cried together knowing his days were numbered. Our last day was particularly beautiful. We had the opportunity to spend some quality time with David and his lovely wife, Jennifer. They showed us their lovely home and beautiful flowers in the yard. Then they took us to eat lunch at Nellie Green's on the water, an awesome place with delicious food. What a great blessing these two were to Richie and are to Barbara. Then we went to visit Richie at the Hospice facility. When we arrived we were happy he wanted to go outside on the deck by the "double beach". There he and I were able to reminisce about the times we

spent here having fun together. Such memories!

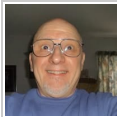
As musicians Judith and Richie shared a common "note" but she could never get Richie to play the piano for her. This day, however, would be different. He wanted to play her a tune on the grand piano in the lobby of the Hospice facility. Judith had to work the pedal because Richie's feet were extended in his chair. What fun the two had playing their duo.

Then it was time to say goodbye to our dear friend and his beautiful family. Tears of sadness and thankfulness flowed from our eyes. We were sad knowing the future days would be without our dear friend, Richie but so thankful for the past 60 years, the last 7 days and especially the last day. We do look forward to many more years of sharing lives on this earth with Barbara, David and Jennifer and rejoicing with Richie when we all get to heaven!

Richie was my best friend for 60 years and I will miss him terribly.

Earl & Judith LaFontaine

Earl & Judith LaFontaine - July 17, 2014 at 12:08 AM



Though we've only known Richard for a short time we found him to be a kind & generous man. We loved to listen to his stories & share desserts with him. His quirks made him a special individual (we could relate as Karen has a few quirks of her own). He was with us for too short a time. He will be sorely missed. Go BoSox!

Fred Oko Sr. - July 17, 2014 at 01:03 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Richard A. Bretko.*



July 16, 2014 at 12:50 PM



“ *Richard was a classmate of mine; Wilbur Cross class of 1955 and I am saddened to hear of his passing. While we were never close personal friends we were acquaintances often sharing classes and greetings in the hallways. Besides our classbook I have a cherished class photo from 1951 which includes Richard which I am willing to send to any of Richard's family members. I can be reached via email at: manzi-nicholas@aramark.com.
Nick Manzi - class of 55.*

Nicholas Manzi - July 16, 2014 at 11:47 AM



“ The reflection of the “Super Moon” Friday night on Long Island Sound was the pathway for the angels to bring Richard to his new home in heaven. Although our hearts are broken for the passing of our cherished friend we take solace as the pain, anguish and nightmare is over and that eternal peace has come to a very dear man. To be among those he considered his close friends was more than special. His acts of kindness and generosity were many even while he faced this insidious disease head on. He was determined it was not going to prevent him from carrying out his appointed rounds of delivering Babkas and pastries from “Edy’s”, “DelPrete” and/or “Sugar” bakeries at holiday time. So many times we would see his smiling face coming up the walkway with Barb in one hand and a bag in his other hand. “The Bag” which contained so many treats weather be it farm fresh corn, berries, fruit or special tomatoes will be sorely missed. We chided him that the Buick never got cold as he was always on the go which was in most cases for another goodie run. Speaking of the Buick, the spotless sparkling blue Buick; Richard set the standard for car care. As such it was decided by another dear friend of his that the color was to be named “Bretko Blue”. And so be it!
Barb, Dave and Jen; we are so honored to be a part of your and Richards life. We are truly better for the association.

Walt Pierce - July 15, 2014 at 02:01 PM

TG

“ Ted Greiner lit a candle in memory of Richard A. Bretko



ted greiner - July 15, 2014 at 12:26 PM

PR

“ Our deepest sympathy to Barb and David. Greg and Rich worked together for 40 years and had been friends for 50. During his illness he always managed to get together for our Friday night pizza. Occasionally, missing a few. But for the most part always there for what ever we had planned. He struggled, but he was courageous in his battle with this terrible disease. We admired him for that. He will be missed so much and we were blessed to have him as a friend.
Sincerely, Greg and Paula Roche

Paula Roche - July 14, 2014 at 08:26 PM

TG

“ Rich has been a treasured customer of TJB-INC for almost 20 years. He took great pride in having the greenest and healthiest lawn in the neighborhood. He was more than just a loyal customer, he was a friend. He would drop by our office just to say hello and talk to my wife and I for hours at a time.

During our last meeting, we talked about his illness and he reflected upon his life. Rich said he had no regrets. He had had a wonderful life up until his getting sick. He told me about all the places he had taken his wife over the years on vacation and how lucky he was to have her in his life. He shared many a memory during our last visit and told me how he was doing his best to battle his illness.

We will miss Rich and feel honored to have known him and called him our friend!

*Ted & Diane Greiner
Owners of TJB-INC Landscape Contractors*

Ted Greiner - July 14, 2014 at 04:34 PM