



Walter Craig Sumerlin

May 11, 1951 - September 1, 2024

Walter Craig Sumerlin, 73, passed away peacefully at his home in Shacklefords, Virginia on September 1, 2024 after a long battle with Granulomatosis with Polyangiitis (Vasculitis).

He is survived by his wife, Wendy Redfield Sumerlin; daughter Catherine Sumerlin Nickel and her husband Ross M Nickel; and family including his sister, Sandra K Sumerlin, three brothers; Christopher E Sumerlin and wife Diane, Curtis A Sumerlin, Danny Sumerlin and wife Sherry, sister-in-law Jackie and beloved grandson Bennett S Nickel who called him Hot Paw! He was preceded in death by his mother, Catherine E Rice Sumerlin, father Lt. Colonel Earl B "Slim" Sumerlin Jr, and brother Timothy L Sumerlin. Special best friends Bradley Detuncq and Rita Pace also survive him.

Born on May 11, 1951 in Orange County California, he and his five siblings spent their early years moving every couple of years as Marine families do before settling in Virginia Beach during Craig's Cox high school and Christopher Newport college years. Their stories of childhood antics get better with each passing year! Craig went on to work in the food/beverage business and spent more than 28 years working for Valley Food Service and Reinhart Foods in the Hampton Roads area. He met his wife Wendy in Charlottesville and they married on August 20, 1983 and spent many many moons together -- over 41 years! After 10 years together they were blessed by the birth of

daughter Cate (Catiebug) in May 1992. She was the apple of his eye and indeed he instilled in her the adventurous spirit that they both shared.

He was most happy working in his shop on his many cars and boats (more than 30) and unending home improvement projects. His workshop/garage was larger than his house - that puts things in perspective! Boating and traveling with family and friends were also priorities -- he was truly at peace on the water and enjoyed it till the end -- wakeboarding several years ago!! And the stories those friends and family would share rivaled no others!

Anyone who knew Craig would probably agree you were lucky to be around such a genuine and positive man. It is rare to be adored and loved by every person you meet. Craig would drop anything to help a stranger and his smile was infectious.

Several gatherings will take place at a later date when family can return to the states. Contributions can be made to the Vasculitis Foundation (<https://www.vasculitisfoundation.org>), the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (<https://www.cbf.org>) or a charity of your choice.

From now until eternity every rum and coke will begin with a cheer to Captain Craig!!

Tribute Wall

MA

“ *A Dear Friend,*

Craig was always smiling, always cheerful and upbeat, always had a kind word, and always modest. He was also one of the most fearless people I knew...adventure!

Toast to living life to the fullest!

"Only the good die young!"

Mary - September 23, 2024 at 11:28 AM

JA

“ *Iran ran on the Cox High School cross country team with Craig in the Fall of 1968. He was a Senior and the Captain of the team and I was an underclassman. He was always generous and kind and a damn good runner. Thanks for all the good times Craig. Keep em' smiling!*

James - September 22, 2024 at 08:55 AM

SN

“ *We (Scott and Kally Nickel) had the pleasure of knowing Craig for five years. His lovely and beautiful daughter, Cate, is married to our son, Ross. In that short of time when we would gather together for holidays, Cate and Ross's wedding, and Ross's military promotion, Craig was so upbeat, always smiling and laughing...such a great guy to be around. He will be missed.*

Scott and Kally Nickel - September 19, 2024 at 10:49 AM

DS

“Where do I start? Craig was a best friend, not just the best uncle I could have asked for. He put up with a lot and never harbored ill will and made damn sure everyone else was smiling, laughing and having the best time. There was never a time I didn't feel loved and happy and safe around Craig. He wasn't going to let anything spoil a good time. I have so many insanely fun memories hanging with him. Spending family weekends at the house in West Point and on the Bayliner. Craig taught me to kneeboard and slalom water ski on the Chickahominy and Mattaponi Rivers, and half the time, mooning whoever was driving the boat. I'll remember the times in his garage and running around the vast property. I'll remember being handed a fat cigar, met with the biggest smile, in the parking lot after graduation. I saw how good of a father he was to Cate and husband to Wendy and how much he loved his family and the all the insane trips. I learned that those were the important parts of life. Not what you could own or buy, but the memories and the trips you could go on, the people you brought along the way and the memories made. Those never die. He really lived the best life and I'm sad I won't be able to spend another day with him and never got to say goodbye but damn, if we all weren't the luckiest people on earth to know Craig and be blessed in his presence. I'll miss your smile and never forget your laugh and will be damn sure I always try to enjoy myself and walk in your path until my time has come. What a gift you were. I'll miss you bud, and I will always love you.

Daniel Sumerlin - September 19, 2024 at 12:01 AM

JH

“Craig was such a special positive person. When I think of him, I picture him working on the docks of Urbanna Town Marina laughing at something silly. We miss him and treasure the time we were blessed to spend in his company.

Janie Hastings - September 18, 2024 at 09:33 AM

SE

“ Craig was one of those very special people who you will never forget. We hold close to our hearts our many memories of him over the years, especially at family gatherings. Our deepest love and sincere condolences go out to Wendy, Cate, Chris and the entire family. Godspeed, my friend.

Steve and Vicki Ervin and Family

Steve Ervin - September 18, 2024 at 08:22 AM

VP

“ May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind always be at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face. May your bilge pump always run properly and your ice never melt. Until we meet again my friend



virginia pirate - September 18, 2024 at 07:33 AM

TW

“ Sorry For Your Loss



Thomas Widgeon - September 18, 2024 at 05:54 AM