

Richard Gilbert

January 7, 2024

Richard Gilbert, 82, born in Reading, PA, to Arthur and Leona Gilbert, embarked on his life's journey with purpose and dedication. He graduated from West Reading High School in 1958 and continued his academic pursuits at Lafayette College, earning a BS in Mechanical Engineering in 1962. Richard then began his professional career at Western Electric Company in Laureldale, PA.

His commitment to service led to his commission as a second lieutenant in the Army Ordnance Corps in 1962. Richard entered active duty in 1963, serving for a year in Korea with the 7th Division and rising to the rank of 1st Lieutenant. He commanded the 41st Ordnance Direct Support Company and was honorably released from active duty in March 1965.

Returning to full-time employment with Western Electric, Richard dedicated 17 years to the company while simultaneously contributing to the U.S. Army Reserves for the next three decades. He attended the Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, KS, graduating with honors in 1976.

During his tenure at Western Electric, Richard pursued higher education, earning a master's degree in Business Administration from Lehigh University in 1970. His commitment to the Chi Phi fraternity extended beyond his college years, serving nine years as the president of the chapter's alumni association

and assuming various roles on the grand council from 1971 to very recently, including a term as national president from 1987 to 1989.

In 1973, Richard joined the Lions Club of Wyomissing, PA, where he served as President, later taking on roles as Zone Chairman and Deputy District Governor. Transferred to AT&T corporate headquarters in New Jersey in 1979, he resided in Summit until his retirement in December 1989. In New Jersey, he continued his Lions Club service, presiding over the New Providence Murry Hill Club and serving as Zone Chairman and Deputy District Governor.

Retiring from the U.S. Army in 1992 with the rank of Colonel after 30 years of dedicated service, Richard's military career involved significant research and development activities at Aberdeen Proving Grounds in MD, the Pentagon in Washington, DC, and the Army Research Lab in Maryland. For two decades while residing in NJ and PA, he worked as a field representative for West Point's admissions programs in PA and NJ.

In 2001, Richard married his childhood friend, Mary Wolpert. They lived a life filled with adventure, moving from Willow Valley, PA, to Cocoa Beach, FL, becoming full-time Florida residents. Richard was an active member of the Cocoa Beach and Willow Valley Lions clubs. In 2006, they relocated to a gated community in Melbourne called Baytree before acquiring a part-time home in Lancaster, PA, in 2010, which became their full-time residence in January 2017.

Tragically, Mary passed away in May of that year, leading Richard to find solace and companionship in the Willow Valley Retirement Community. Until his passing, he lived a fulfilling life, cherishing moments with his new friend, Pat Mortenson.

Richard Gilbert leaves behind a legacy of service, leadership, and enduring friendships. His contributions to his community, country, and fraternity will be remembered with gratitude and respect.

Richard is survived by 2 stepsons, Bruce Micciche and his wife, Barbara, Brian Micciche and his wife, Charlene, and a stepdaughter, Melanie Wolpert, in addition to 5 step-grandchildren and 3 step-great-grandchildren.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend Richard's Funeral Service at Calvary United Church of Christ, 640 Centre Avenue, Reading PA 19601 on Friday, January 12, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. with Pastor Steve Ohnsman officiating. A viewing will be held on Thursday evening, January 11, 2024 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at The Groffs Family Funeral Home, 528 W. Orange Street, Lancaster, PA 17603, and again at the church on Friday, January 12, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. until the time of the service.

Please omit flowers. Donations in Richard's name can be made to the American Cancer Society.

Previous Events

Viewing

JAN 11. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

The Groff's Family Funeral and Cremation Services Inc
528 W Orange St.
Lancaster, PA 17603
(717) 394-5300
admin@thegroffs.com
<https://thegroffs.com/>

Viewing

JAN 12. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Calvary United Church of Christ
640 Centre Avenue
Reading, PA 19601

Funeral Service

JAN 12. 11:00 AM (ET)

Calvary United Church of Christ
640 Centre Avenue
Reading, PA 19601

Tribute Wall



“ *The Groffs Family Funeral and Cremation Services Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Richard Gilbert*



The Groffs Family Funeral and Cremation Services Inc - January 10, 2024 at 05:01 PM



“ *I was raised by Nana and pop and Richard had a huge impact on my life he taught me respect and structure he taught me how to dance and is the reason for my love of opera. I never had a dad but he became my dad for many years. I know him and my nana are finally reunited and dancing in the sky now and he will always hold a very special place in my heart. Rest in peace pop. 🙏🏻*



Faith Billingham - January 14, 2024 at 11:00 AM



“ 14 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



The Groffs Family Funeral and Cremation Services Inc - January 11, 2024 at 01:58 PM



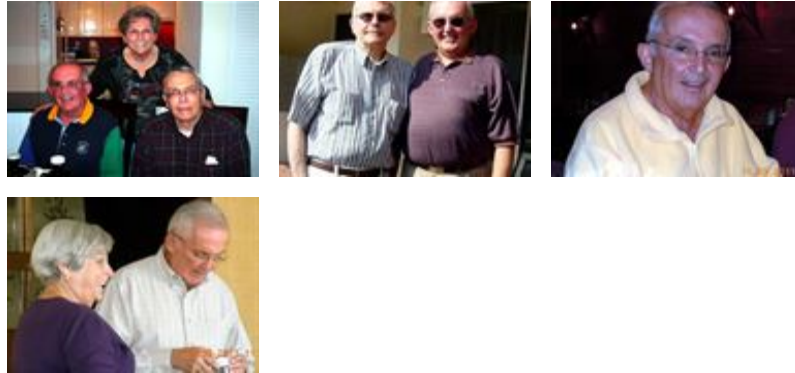
“ 71 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



The Groffs Family Funeral and Cremation Services Inc - January 10, 2024 at 04:55 PM



“ 4 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



The Groffs Family Funeral and Cremation Services Inc - January 10, 2024 at 02:12 PM

JH

“ *Dick was such a giving person. I knew him through Chi Phi and was constantly impressed by his dedication and openness. He came to our Congresses whether he had an official role or not. He was always welcoming and gracious. He seemed to derive extra strength from spending time with the undergraduates who had no idea who he was or how much he had done for the Fraternity over the years. We will miss his constancy and good counsel.*

John Hutzler - January 10, 2024 at 12:03 PM

MH

“ *The West Reading High School Alumni Association extends our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends at this time of loss and sorrow. May cherished memories comfort you. We are keeping you in our thoughts and prayers.*

Mary Heist - January 10, 2024 at 11:21 AM