IN MEMORY
OF OUR DEAR FRIEND STEVE

UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN!

Words & memories from just some of your camp friends.

June, 2019
The following is the eulogy by Joanne Fieldseth on behalf of everyone in Steve's camp family.

Everything Stevie!

I’m honored to be speaking on behalf of Steve’s entire camp family. I’ve wracked my brain with what to say and how to summarize this incredible person in a few minutes. I hope I do justice in capturing the essence of everything Stevie and how he touched the lives of literally thousands of people from all over the world! I can hear him saying “Gol, Joanne” “You’re always saying that aren’t ya?” “You’re real nice aren’t ya?”

My name is Joanne Fieldseth and I had the privilege of working with Stevie from 1986-2001 but more important I am his forever friend. Camp Friendship’s existed since 1964, Stevie arrived in 1979 and was there for 40 years! Every summer he’d meet 100’s of staff from around the world, every week 80-100 campers, and then year-round weekend rental groups of 100’s more. And to think, he was a friend/family member to pretty much all these people. If you recall the television show Cheers, there was a gentleman that every time he walked in to the establishment, they would yell “Norm”, well Stevie was the Camp version of Norm as no matter where we went, as soon as people saw him it was “STEVE!”.

In those 40 years, he witnessed a magnitude of changes to camp. He remained “Steady Steve” and would just go with the flow. He remained loyal to his friends and didn’t take sides. Although, I must say that I knew he had my back at all times (which helped greatly in my supervision of staff and to keep my Boss Ed in line). He was like a bodyguard to so many of us young staff any time we went out. He would make sure no one was going to mess with us. He looked a little intimidating to others, but we knew what a gentle giant he was. As many staff have referenced in their comments to me – their favorite thing was the big bear hugs he would give!

A fond recollection of mine from the 80’s is that Stevie had a sidekick named Richard…they both worked in the kitchen and were quite entertaining. Those two were always after each other about something, but they didn’t hesitate to come together as pranksters. I was leaving work one day and they both were standing outside the lodge just waving and giggling away. I wasn’t sure why, but I was suspicious they were up to something. I was hearing a few horn beeps as I drove down the road so I stopped my car and walked around it to find a sign on the back attached to a pair of men’s underwear that stated “if you fit into these, honk”.

In 1987, Stevie was the very first recipient of the “Friendship Award” for his help with fund raising and volunteer events. He was a member of the Owatonna Jaycees, Medford Knights of Columbus and Clearwater Lions. Every Memorial Day weekend, for I don’t know how many years, Stevie was at camp working on projects with his friends (including this most recent Memorial Day weekend with the Owatonna crew). Oh, and the Camp Friendship Auxiliary women loved him also! He may have grumbled when asked to do things at times, but you knew that he would do them and do so with a Cheshire cat grin before you thought about asking again.

Several staff also shared memories of Steve’s parents Chris and Marie. The most popular topic was the delicious caramel corn that Marie made and Stevie would flash in front of us when he returned from a visit home; there were those of us lucky enough to receive a bag when we dropped off or picked up Stevie during a break from camp! Steve was also one of the first people to hold my newborn sons. I was personally blessed with a special white crocheted baby blanket that Steve was bursting at the seams to give me. Marie had made it for the birth of my first son and it was subsequently used for both of my sons’ baptisms; and will be again for my first grandson this November!
Several of us had outings with Stevie away from camp. One holiday season we went as a large group to the musical performance of Tony & Tina’s wedding in Minneapolis. This production is set up like an actual wedding with the ceremony, reception and dance. We were seated at our tables and couldn’t find Steve. We thought he must have went to the restroom. Then the organ started playing and the wedding party started to enter….to our surprise – there was Stevie! They had pulled him from the crowd to walk the bride in! Again, his smile was from ear to ear and the cheers in the room were deafening!

Always a good sport and willing to try new things, a couple of my coworkers shared that while they were on a cruise vacation with Steve, there were all kinds of contests on the boat. Steve entered the knobby knees competition, but didn’t win; only to have the next competition be the Hairiest Chest contest…needless to say, if you know Stevie, all the other contestants sat down before Steve even finished unbuttoning his shirt!

Part of my journey with Steve also included sharing a home at camp when I was director of staffing. I lived upstairs and Steve had an apartment in the basement. This was an old home so there thin walls and a few mouse visitors…my forever protector Stevie came running upon my screams and made sure those mice were gone. On our weekends off, several members of our staff group loved to go out dancing. Steve was always a willing dance partner. Remembering our old house, I did realize he was starting to get into “our music” when I could hear him singing the songs from our prior night out in the shower downstairs!

A lot of people also thought Stevie missed his calling besides being a dance king…he should have been a news reporter or meteorologist. He always knew the weather forecast and since he would talk to pretty much everybody throughout the day, he knew more about what was going on than anyone else. He didn’t spread gossip, he looked for the facts!

Oh, our dear Stevie. A true friend, regardless of your status in life, he wanted nothing in return but your friendship. His gentle sweet soul, his beaming smile around his spikey stubble, the sparkle in those unforgettable twinkling eyes that made his whole face radiate. A beautiful, dedicated, loyal, simple man with a sprinkle of mischief!

I think we could all agree that there’s no one quite like Stevie and how he made us all a much better person. His joy of life transmitted wherever he went. In closing, I’d like to use a saying taken partially from composer Irving Berlin, Stevie’s song may have ended, but his melody will linger on! And may we hum, whistle, sing or dance along with him always 😊

We love you Stevie! 💙
The following pages are submissions to social media made by staff from around the world to honor Steve

Nicola Lavery  Ireland - There are many people who will know him a lot better and seen him more frequently than I but he remains a major memory from those two summers, even 27 years later. He remains in my memory because he effused positivity, warmth and connection. No hidden agenda, no game playing, just him omnipresent and happy.

Lisa Swan, Colorado  Stevie was always like a big teddy bear! A gentle giant!! Sometimes in life you meet people who touch your heart that never leave you the same. Stevie was one of those people. I am so thankful to have known you and called you a friend! You will be greatly missed!!

Sammy Whammy Sam Clingan  A well-loved, loving guy. I just noticed we have the same b-day. Thank you Steve Holst! We’ll miss you & see you again.

Shannon Vadnie  Best bear hugs around ... Steve always brightened everyone’s day. He’ll be remembered fondly by me along with so many others. 💗 Rest well old friend!

George B. Severson, Utah  Stevie had the biggest heart and I loved, loved, loved his laugh!! RIP Steve!

Pam Witte Kenning, Minnesota  Awww, so sad. RIP, you big teddy bear!

Danny Vermeer-van de Sande, Netherlands  What a great loss! He was such a sweet person 😊

Manon Mous-pietersen, Netherlands  Sad news😊, he was always kind and friendly person.

Amy Blake, Missouri  I remember laughing so hard at his antics when I worked every other wknd during the fall and sharing a cabin with him. He was an angel on Earth. 💖 And summers were always brighter because of his smile. He had a great smile.

Tammy Erickson-Wittek, Minnesota  Such an amazing person with the largest heart! He will for sure be missed 😞

Jennie Halterman, Minnesota  sending prayers and hugs to his family!

Laura Markham, Wisconsin  He was such a teddy bear! 😊

Suzanne Van Nevel, Minnesota  So sad! What a loss, such a great guy!
Cory Peterson, Wisconsin  He was the heart of that place. Thanks for always being there for the memories Steve. Sleep in peace.

Luke Kramschuster, California I always loved when Steve had a part in skits and plays. My favorite was when Steve played the plumber as part of the Camp Friendship singers. I’ve seen that skit dozens of times at several different camps throughout the years, no one could deliver the line, “PLUNGE IT, FLUSH IT, LOOK OUT BELOW” like Steve did.

Devon Richter, Minnesota  How sad, Steve was one of a kind! Sending prayers and love!

Ross Keveles  So sad! What a great soul! He will be missed

Tim Mackereth, Minnesota  It’s amazing how hard something like this hits even though it’s from someone I knew so long ago. He was camp family, and for a big chunk of my life that was my family. I feel so fortunate to have known such a kind person.
Lisa Finlayson-Clements, Wales UK Absolutely heartbroken to hear this. When I think of camp I think of Steve; I automatically feel him too if that makes sense. I feel his gentle sweet soul and the most gorgeous mischievous smile with his spikey stubble that made his whole face radiate and his eyes twinkle. When I think of him it evokes a sense of feeling safe and so at ease. A beautiful, dedicated, humble man with a sprinkle of mischief and sheer joy xx To his family I hope that in time these memories that you read give you a source of comfort and bring a smile to your heart, Despite many of us not meeting up for years the loss of Steve is absolutely heart felt and has sent shock waves around the world. The love for Steve is phenomenal and most definitely global.

Beth Beardsley, Minnesota So sad. A great loss for Camp Friendship.

John Wright, Minnesota I was just remembering going to The Pickle with him. "You're always sayin' that aren't you." "Go on. See if I care" Such a silly ol bear.

Robert Stevenson, Minnesota he was a great man. And yes he always defended you to the end. Absolutely the best friend at camp. Great times with him playing pool and darts. Definitely a fond first memory of moving to Minnesota was Steve.

Chet Tschetter, Minnesota Oh, Steve Holst - your Camp Friendship family is broken hearted. You were one guy that everyone called friend. You made a huge impact on so many people’s lives, the campers and the staff loved you. We were blessed to know you. Nobody had as many camp staff t-shirts as Steve! So many of you had very special relationships with Steve. I am not sure if you all knew how important that was to Stevie! ❤

Mandee Lewandowski, Minnesota So sad to hear this. What a wonderful person! ❤
Kristian Hughes, Minnesota I’ve spent the night looking over old pictures of those 2 years. Loved living with him.

Amanda Rae Allen I’m so sad to hear this news. Steve was always a joy to be around!

Jerry L. Carter, Minnesota I miss washing dishes with him. We would race to see who could wash more.

Cynthia Kelash Oh wow I’m very saddened to hear this he was the heart of camp!!!

Tara Hart Couldn’t agree more! What a lovely human Steve was. He will be dearly missed! He was such a beautiful shining light of a soul! Heaven captured a bright star!

Michael Deiss, Minnesota What very sad news. :( I enjoyed working with him. Praying for everyone.

Shannon McDonald Just got off the phone with a camp friend (and non-FB user, Troy Schrupp) who put it perfectly... didn’t matter how bad your day was, he managed to make it better. For me, he was an angel on this Earth and I believe he changed the course of many lives.

Maggie Venell This is so sad to hear! SteveO was a true one-of-a-kind!!

Jamie Capps-Heil, Minnesota Such sad news

Theresa Wagner-Loftman, Minnesota I am so sad to hear this😢
Barbara McGinn

He was a lovely man, I remember on a day off we had a day out, I had to ride on a Garbage truck, Steve was unwell, and we couldn't get him back to the coach, so I had to ask the garbage man to take him, I couldn't let him go alone, I took some stick from the other staff when he was well we did laugh about it 😂

Susan Gale

My heart and prayers ❤️💛

Sue Stelton, Minnesota

Steve was a great guy. We always had a lot of fun when we worked together. 😊

Leah Ol

So very sad to hear this news. I have such great memories of him at camp. He will be missed. Thoughts and prayers to friends and family of Steve.

Samantha Louise

Oh my gosh! This is sad news love and thoughts with the family, many memories to be cherished xx

Kris Crandall, Minnesota

Sad, I loved Steve

Ashley Beeson, Texas

Steve was the best!!

Vicki Stretton, Wales UK

So sad! Sorry to hear of such sad news!!
Jodi, Judy and Jerry Bowdin, Minnesota

Steve Holst has been a friend of ours for almost 30 years!! Such a wonderful and caring pal. We met Steve at Camp Friendship. We first met at the Steak Fry Fundraiser run by the Annandale Snowmobile Club. We instantly formed a loving friendship with him which has been a true blessing to us all. Jerry referred to Steve as "Steve-O". I know my dad is with Steve as my dad was greeting him the moment Steve arrived to Heaven. Judy has worked with Steve ever since the first Steak Fry and has loved working with him. Jodi also worked at camp multiple times and loves him as well. Judy spent lots and lots of years team working with Steve. He was always hard working and it mattered that he was willing to be so kind and share smiles even with having to be overwhelmed with clean dishes, dirty dishes, gathering and taking out the trash, sweeping and scrubbing floors, etc...etc...etc. Whenever my mom or I would ask Steve for help, he was always willing to help. Steve was a big Teddy Bear that cared so much. He was willing to work hard and share such kindness. My parents and I (Jodi is typing) will forever treasure Steve. We enjoyed many meals and get togethers at camp and at my parents house as well including boat rides, seadoo rides, picnics, hanging out, chats, rides including to the bus stop and bringing Steve home when he lived at camp just down the street from the Dining Hall. What a jolly smile he gifted us with. GOD blesses Steve and now he is in the Paradises of Heaven!! It is so sad for us still here on Earth...to understand the current separation until we meet again. Just trust and have FAITH. STEVE HOLST--you are forever loved!!

Laura Elizabeth, Wisconsin

This makes me so sad

Fran Buesgens, Minnesota

Great guy to have on kitchen staff. RP, Steve! Find Richard!!

Fiona Kay, Australia

So sad to hear 😔

Lizzi Murphy

So so sad xx

Rara Jane

Such sad news

Hayley Cavanagh, UK

Oh no what awful news, he was such an awesome person 💖💖

Toni Renée

Some of my warmest memories are of Steve and his big heart. Rest in Heaven

K-anna Loyd

Oh no!! I’m really sad to hear about Steve!! Our thoughts are with his family 😔
Crystal Pauls  Steve was the first to make camp feel like family! Thoughts and prayers to all family and friends.

Beth Klein  I am so sad. We did so much together. I have a thousand awesome memories.

Emma Elizabeth Payne  Such sad news

Lorna McFindlow  This is such sad news; he was a wonderful guy. Big hugs to everyone 😊

Louise Tondeur  sorry to hear that 😞

Sarah A Welker, Minnesota  Steve was just at camp last weekend memorial weekend...CAMP ...was his world....and 😊 and ALL the people he knew!!! 🖤 I cant beleive your gone steve. I miss your smiles and helping hand!! Rest in peace!!...I will pray for you!!💕

Faye Reber  Oh my goodness 😞 this is such sad news! Steve is such a huge part of my time at Camp Friendship and a true blessing.

Jennie Wendland  Oh Steve, such a kind and joyful spirit! Thanks for all you taught us, you will be greatly missed.

Dawn Brenner  Camp will never be the same again. So very sad. Always a smile and a laugh

Jon Hausman  My favorite roommate! We had a lot of fun & an awesome ventures travel trip to the Dude Ranch...his favorite spot

Kim Hill  Oh so sad! I really loved Stevie. Lots of good memories with him. 💖 I especially remember sitting next to him at a Twins game and having such a fun time.

Laurel Ahsenmacher  So happy I was there to see him
Andrea Mil Rest In Peace Stevo 💓

Jenn Peterson Oh no! Man, what a fantastic human. He will be missed forever.

Beth Klein (Rokala) I lived and worked at camp from 98’ to ’05. Steve can be summed up in one phrase; He gave the best bear hugs in the world, and his smile could brighten any day! I wish I could have seen him again.

Amanda Connelly Was so bummed to hear this. My thoughts are with those who have had the privilege to know him over the years—we are very lucky people. ❤️

Jeris Sunneberg Thanks for letting me know. I hope it brings his family comfort to know there is such a wide network of people who were touched by Steve’s presence at Camp.

Frannie Kate I’m so sorry to hear this. Steve was such a beautiful soul. I will never forget how kind and funny he was. He will be missed dearly.

Margie Owen Joseph Enjoyed being around Steve!

Corrie Rathmann-Cooke Good person I enjoyed meeting him and working with him in ’06

Maddie Mulcahy Steve always brightened my day. He will he missed!

Sammie Richard A truly amazing human!❤️

Brenda Curtis, Minnesota Rest in peace big guy...u will be missed.

Mary NeeleyWhite I've known him since ‘78 great man our teddy bear

Mehri Davis One of the camp friendship greats! I loved stevie. I’ve been telling people stories of how he used to mess with me every morning in the dining hall 😃. I loved him, we all did ❤️😔

Cody Jameson Greer One of the kindest guys you could ever wish to meet.

Sara Vanevenhoven Stumpf, Wisconsin Goodness, I will never forget him. So very saddened to hear this.

Larry Anenson, Minnesota Oh....such sad news....what a great guy. I will miss him

Mary Smith, New Zealand Although I was only there one summer, I remember him well. RIP Stevie.
Kristen Schimanski  He was a gentle giant, with a smile that could light up a room. A quiet, mischievous fellow that knew how to giggle and grumble. A teddy bear with a heart of gold and a spirit as true and pure as they come. A helping hand, a gentle soul and friend to all ages. This is the life of Steve “Stevie” Holst. If any ONE person could embody the spirit and mission of Camp, it is him.

With warm remembrances and a grateful heart for knowing you~

The little one

James Iago Young, Colorado  Sad to receive this news. Steve was a great guy

Bryan Heise, Minnesota  Sad news, so many memories with the big guy.

Rashad Albeiruti I still remember his radiant smile- he was a good man

Carolyn Shivers I worked at Camp Friendship the summers of '06, '07, and '08 (counselor, village leader, and HR assistant), with trips back in summer of '10 and winter of '12 to be a counselor. I don't have a single "story" about Steve - he was just such a constant presence at camp. We all know how challenging camp can be sometimes, but Steve was always such a reliable, delightful presence. He was never demanding; it wasn't that he would insist on talking and being cheerful. He'd just smile and return your greeting. He was just so grounding, such a lovely person. He knew so much about camp, obviously, so he could always be counted on to help you figure out where something was or who to ask when you had a problem. I was so sad to hear that Stevie died. For me, Steve was as much a part of camp as the hayride or the pontoon boats-a central institution that made Friendship the magical place that it was.
Deb Gerads I started at camp as a young kid who had never been away from home - a very young and sheltered 15. Steve is one of the first people I met. He was gruff in a friendly way that made me laugh and eased my anxiety - giving people grief about where things belonged and not being lazy in the cleaning. He was very appreciative of people doing as they should in his domain, and more than once would show that appreciation by helping out in return after a particularly tough week by coming and helping to clean. He was a good man, always with a humorous remark and left his mark on my world.

Becky Goddard-Hill, London UK So much love to Steve from the UK. Some of my favourite ever life memories were made at Camp Friendship over the 5 fabulous summers I spent there. Our beautiful, fun, loyal friend Steve was always there at the centre of it all. Oh the laughs we had and he was always so protective of me and the many (many) scrapes I got into. I adored him and if I could I would give him a big, big cuddle and say thank you for being part of my most wonderful memories. What a forever family I found. God bless you Steve you bought the sunshine ☀️ Sleep well my friend

Steven Tonna, orig. Australia now Minnesota Steve was Camp Friendship! RIP Big fella!

Jenni Suchy Wheeler, Minnesota So heart breaking!

Michelle Cuka, Minnesota Biggest heart ever! 💖

Deb Riggs-Martens, Canada Oh dear, I will always remember his smile and laughter.
Laura Brown Bridges, Minnesota Oh no!! He was such a sweetheart! Lots of memories with him! I can still see his smile...

Johanna Davy Ireland; .. and his chuckle!!😊❤ Poor Stevie!!😊 A lovely big teddy bear of a man!! Washed them dishes like no other person I know, and still had the biggest smile! Rest in peace, and love and thoughts are with your family. Another Camp Friendship soul gone to rest😊❤

Tori Bates, Illinois So sad to hear. Steve was such a great part of our Camp Friendship family.

Deb Heying Viney, Minnesota So sad

Tracy Smith, Minnesota Several times in the 1980's, I had the pleasure of driving Steve home for holidays. I enjoyed our time on the ride from Annandale where he spoke highly of his family and especially his mom. Even though his mom would thank me with caramel corn when I dropped Steve off, it was always fun for me to have that one on one time with Steve. Later, in the mid 2000's, I would go to Camp Friendship in the winter with my daughter and several of our friends, other moms who had adopted children. Again in his quite way, Steve would show his kindness to the 4-5 year old girls and their moms. As the girls would bring their dishes to the dish wash area, Steve would ask them a question and try and get them to smile. God Bless Steve. He's a pure gem.
Amanda Allen I’ve been thinking about what to say about Steve for a few days now. I started working at camp back in 2007. I met Steve that year. He had such a contagious smile. Steve was easy to pick on, and he always gave it back to you! I worked 8 years at camp and each summer I looked forward to seeing him. Steve will forever be in my memories and a big part of why camp was so welcoming and enjoyable! One smile really can change a person’s day!

Melanie Snodgrass He will forever be my Cowardly Lion.

Maggie Rodríguez Henríquez Hugs from Colombia! I volunteered a couple of years and had the wonderful opportunity to know him! Thank you for everything Steve! Thank you for your smile!

Jeral Dine Thanks Steve !!!! 😔❤️ Rest in peace with God and another angels cuz you have always been surrounded by a great family!

Ann Roesler Kennedy My thoughts are with the whole Camp Friendship family. 😊❤️
Bree Sullivan Rogers  So sorry to hear that.

Darrel Whitfield 💔💔 rest easy Steve

Ona Williams Sorry to hear that

Dawn Hastings Awww, thank you for sharing. Stevie was the greatest! I remember when I would get to the dining hall early for med pass and be in my sweat shirt bc it was a little chilly & I am always cold, he would always give me a hard time & say "what you think it's cold. It's hot in here" and then give his famous laugh. He will be missed by many.
Mindy Holahan Peters Steve was an absolute delight and such a good friend to my brother Tom. I'm so glad they got to spend some time together just a few days earlier. Much love to everyone at Camp who is missing dear Steve.

Chris Klingenberg Steve was a very welcoming part of Camp. He made a big impression on all of us staff. That was 30 years ago and we still have very wonderful memories of him. Steve lived a great life with all his talents and caring for others.

Mary Palin Steve was the best and made camp so special. Prayers and love to his family and his camp family!

Vicki Greene Steve was just so much a part of the camp. His smile & energy will be missed.

Wendy Barnett Hind Aww I remember him from 2014 he was a lovely man who I had the privilege to meet RIP big man

Shirley Stan Hillestad You will be missed Steve got to know him while working there always friendly and happy RIP 😊🍻😌 😊

Joe Dolan He was the staple of camp friendship. He always had a smile and will never forget his laugh.

Peggy Devitt Kay Prayers for his family and friends

Carrie Rathmanner Camp Sorry for this loss ....🙏 for all who knew him.
**Holly Lynn Imdieke** What a blessing and honor it was to work with you, be your friend and be graced with your amazing presence! Your laughter, dedication, hard work, camp gossip, taking you to football games at SCSU to watch our guys play, giving you rides home after work when the weather was icky, your friendship...the list goes on! I will truly miss you and all the days you came down to the CF kitchen just to say hi and chat! Heaven sure is lucky to have gained an angel like you! Love you and cherish every single memory we have💕💕 I loved being around Steve! What a wonderful soul! He will be greatly missed💕

*Thanks to all that contributed; but a special thanks to Lisa Finlayson-Clements for her assistance in comment searching!* JF 💖