



John Robert Risdall

May 25, 1945 - December 15, 2022

Age 77, passed away on December 15, 2022. He remained one of a kind until the end. Always an entrepreneur, John surreptitiously sold candy bars to classmates at his St. Paul elementary school. Starting at age 12, he earned money to buy stamps to add to his collection by working as a golf caddy. As a teen and young adult, he scooped ice cream at his mother's Baskin-Robbins store, and on the Monday after graduating from Mounds View High School, he simply showed up at the University of Minnesota, ready to take summer classes. He accumulated far more credits than needed to graduate, although they weren't quite distributed in the recommended manner. Whatever -- he was off to continue the advertising career he'd already begun, as what was then known as "copy/contact." John was creative and driven, and in his 20s, he started the advertising agency that still bears his last name, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2022. He was a friend and mentor to many. Some of his fondest memories were of being a Boy Scout, a dad, and a brother, both to his real brothers and his Phi Delta Theta fraternity brothers. Deeply connected to his community and active in leadership roles for organizations too numerous to mention, he was especially devoted to the New Brighton/Mounds View Rotary Club, of which he was a founding member. He had a variety of interests, from comic books to opera to college basketball to great food, both as a home cook and as an aficionado of the finest restaurants around the world. In his 60s, John returned to the U to finish his undergraduate degree. Just two years later, CLA recognized him as one of its

Alumni of Notable Achievement. Unfortunately, just a few years after that, he was diagnosed with vascular dementia, but he never lost his robust sense of humor or his generous, sociable nature. The family would like to thank the staff of The Harbors Senior Living Community of Fridley for their care of, and appreciation for, John. He is survived by his wife, Tina Karelson, and their daughter Lily Risdall; son Ted (Jennifer) Risdall; son Tim Risdall, and daughter Jennifer Risdall (Nick Bocek); grandsons Max and Alex Risdall; former wife Cathy Stark Risdall; brothers Robert, Charlie and Bill Risdall, and their families; cousin Bob (Judy) Becker and their daughter Kelly Mapes, and many other cousins and extended family members, as well as an uncle, Jim Diebel. John was predeceased by his parents, Newell and Mary (Diebel) Risdall, grandparents and many aunts and uncles. John was especially close to his paternal grandmother, the late Vashti Risdall. Memorials preferred to Opportunity Partners or Minnesota Opera. A celebration of life will be held at Holcomb-Henry-Boom-Purcell Funeral Home; 515 Highway 96 W., Shoreview on Friday, January 27, 2023, beginning at 1:00 p.m., with remarks at 2:00 p.m. Reception to follow at North Oaks Golf Club. RSVPs are encouraged for the 3:00-6:00 p.m. reception at <https://johnrisdall.eventbrite.com>

Tribute Wall

CR

“ I remember John for his jokes and sense of humor and his little wind up toys. Warm wishes to all his children and the rest of his family.



Carol Risdall - February 06, 2023 at 12:00 AM

LB

“ Dear family and friends of John, I am so very sorry to hear about his passing! I had the privilege of meeting John through my late boss, Steve Fjestad. He would join us at dinner meetings during the SHOT Show where they would compare their flashy ties and we would share so many laughs! John had a big heart and a kind personality. I will always remember him with a smile. Sending you all prayers of comfort at this difficult time.



Lisa Beuning - January 16, 2023 at 12:00 AM

MA

“ John was a great employer for many. Gave me and others an opportunity to showcase their talents. I will miss his generosity and humor.

Mark Arnold - January 09, 2023 at 12:00 AM

KO

“ *The Big Party!*”



Kevin O'Callaghan - January 03, 2023 at 12:00 AM