



Mr. Peter Holmes Berge

June 17, 1956 - February 25, 2020

Berge, Peter Holmes

Age 63, of St. Paul, passed away 2/25/20 at home. Born in Phoenix, AZ, June 17, 1956, to S. Matthew Berge, M.D., and Nancy D. Berge, R.N., he lived on White Mountain Apache Reservation before years in Rochester, MN, from his father's work for Public Health and Mayo Clinic. His family moved to the San Diego, CA area in 1961, where he grew up, graduating from Monte Vista High School (1974), and then California Lutheran Bible School (1976) in L.A. Moving to MN, he graduated from Saint Olaf College (1980) and William Mitchell College of Law (1983), afterward serving as Judicial Clerk for MN Court of Appeals and MN Supreme Court. Beginning 1985, Peter worked as a Minneapolis attorney, until moving 1989 to Philadelphia, to study and work at Temple University School of Law (LL.M., 1992). More teaching at Temple and Georgetown University brought him back to MN in 1993, to teach at William Mitchell. In 1994 he restarted legal practice, then worked as VP of Risk Management at MN Lawyers Mutual (1999-2002), where he created training and publications to lessen infractions and liability. Back to practice again, he received Minnesota Law & Politics "Super Lawyer" designations in 2004 and 2005, before return to his love of teaching. At MN Continuing Legal Education (2005-2017), he became Web Education Director, building that program from the ground up. During active practice, Peter primarily represented injured plaintiffs, doing numerous appeals, and co-authored The Practitioner's Guide to the Minnesota No-fault Act (3rd Edition, 1988). In addition, he represented

lawyers in cases of ethics and personal responsibility, and expanded in other areas (arts/entertainment, commercial, copyright/trademark, corporate, intellectual property). He belonged to MN, Hennepin County, and Ramsey County bar associations-member and chair of multiple MN Bar committees-and served on Mitchell Hamline's alumni board and MN Lawyers Board of Professional Responsibility - Fourth District Ethics Board. He strongly contributed to Association for Continuing Legal Education (ACLEA), including Executive Committee service and frequent speaking, like his ACLEA Boot Camp tech seminars and conference sessions on "Business School for CLE." He also earned an MBA with honors from UMN - Twin Cities in 2016. People knew Peter for his intelligence, humor, hard work, and hospitality. His skills and knowledge cut a wide swath: from consulting, writing, and analysis to computer and political savvy to delicious cooking and grilling. Music was a passion for Peter, as a listener, concertgoer, and performer-particularly the guitar, which he owned many of and played expertly, both solo and with others, as in his groups Old Soul and Midnight Mo Experience. Sports held a prominent place in his life, as spectator and participant, notably soccer, running, and biking. He also took joy in his dogs, Keena and Scruffy, and loved art, architecture, and photography, with fine selections of photos he took on his "Through My Lens" and "Faces of Minnesota" websites. Peter valued reading and learning beyond his degrees and education work, always exploring, and had special appreciation of good food, fine wine, and wide-ranging conversations companioning these. His enjoyment of dialogue followed naturally on the importance of friends and colleagues for him. Family, too, was important for Peter, with strongest emphasis on time with his beloved wife, Debbie Sit, and with his father, also living out his love of travel with each. Peter and Debbie were married 2004, sharing a bright life together in spite of her recurrent battles with cancer, from their postponed honeymoon onward, and he cared for her all the more in those difficult times. The home they made in St. Paul was home to many, combining both their large social circles. Debbie's 2015 passing grieved Peter deeply, though he bore the loss stoically,

in line with his Scandinavian heritage. He also carried impact of other family passing from cancer, like his mother in 2001. Peter began his own valiant battle with cancer-five glioblastoma brain tumors-in February 2017. Related impairments, radiation, chemotherapy, and progressive illness took their toll over time, but he kept on. His father's sudden death in September 2017 struck him another great blow. In the end, despite superior treatment from MN medicine's best, Peter finally succumbed to this extreme form of inoperable cancer. Admired and treasured, Peter was as his CaringBridge comments describe him: "those who know you understand that you are a gentle and good soul;" "a positive light in so many people's lives;" "one of the real good guys in our industry;" "a wonderful person and well respected;" "such an inspiration;" "beloved by many;" and "a truly amazing, brilliant, talented man." His remains were interred last year with Debbie's in the Sit family plot, Lakewood Cemetery, Minneapolis. Peter is survived by brothers Mark and Eric (wife Tammy, and children Kevin, Laura, and Katherine), as well as cousins Kimberly Randolph Loccisano and Jacqueline Randolph Woomer and families, who grieve his going along with the Sits and a host of others who valued him dearly. The Berges deeply thank everyone who did so much to help during Peter's illness, including the excellent medical staff, all this greatly extending his span and quality of life. That he lived twice as long as initial prognosis stands as tribute to his strength and the fine loving care he received. Peter's solely online service will be Sunday, June 13, 3PM, with 2:50 prelude, livestreamed on University Lutheran Church of Hope's YouTube page (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdafm2u6o-lbK4tLBZNEtGg>), and later replay there. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations toward social justice, arts, cancer research, and Peter Berge Diversity Scholarship at Mitchell Hamline School of Law. Share thoughts and memories on Peter's obituary page at Washburn-McReavy.com. Edina Chapel, 952-920-3996

Cemetery Details

Lakewood Cemetery (Minneapolis)

3600 Hennepin Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Tribute Wall

MH

“ I was on the St. Olaf Term in the Middle East with Peter. I well remember the guitar, which he brought with him, and how good a player he was. And I remember the photography. I have many photos of our time there. My condolences to Peter's family.

Martha Henderson (St. Olaf, 1980)

Martha Henderson - June 11, 2021 at 06:06 PM