



Tap Robin Patrick Payne

January 30, 1951 - January 12, 2024

Tap Robin Patrick Payne, 72, of Bloomington MN, died peacefully at home, January 12, 2024, in the arms of the love of his life, Margaret.

Tap was born January 30, 1951 to A.W. and Ladye Margaret (Stogner) Payne in Carlsbad, NM. Over the years, five younger brothers and sisters arrived in the Payne household and Tap became the Best Big Brother in the Whole World according to each of them.

Tap graduated from Manzano HS in Albuquerque NM in 1969 and went on to graduate from Eastern New Mexico University in 1973 with degrees in Theatre, and Radio/TV Production. Tap earned an MFA in Scene Design and Stage Lighting from the University of Oregon in 1979.

While at Eastern, Tap was well-known around campus as one-half of the legendary "Tap and Toad Enterprises" - providing all-purpose technical production assistance. Their motto was "What's good for Tap and Toad Enterprises is good for the USA". They obviously weren't humble, just desperate for income.

During a classroom acting assignment, Tap was asked to do a scene from a play with a pretty blond student. As they rehearsed, they started taking an interest in each other. Margaret Pellegrini noticed he was a little shy, so she

not-so-subtly urged him to ask her out. He was very willing to comply and a year later they were married.

The young couple left New Mexico when Tap entered the United States Marine Corps after graduation. Tap served to the rank of Captain. Margaret and he were stationed all around the US and spent a year in Iwakuni, Japan.

After earning his MFA, Tap was offered a job at the University of Minnesota in Morris. Coming from New Mexico, Tap said, "How cold can it get in Minnesota? Let's try there for a few years." Thirty-three years later, he had two children, was a full professor, was serving at his church, going on mission trips, a leader in Boy Scouts, traveling the world, and yes, he learned how cold it could get in Minnesota.

Tap believed that every student, to be fully educated, should experience another country. Tap led the first study abroad trip to London for UMM students in 1989. This led to his leading more study abroad trips to Italy, Africa, and China. Tap always made sure his students went into grocery stores and shops, not just museums and art galleries.

Tap designed over 100 UMM theatre productions, oftentimes creating everything - scenery, lights, and costumes. Tap served as Discipline Coordinator for 12 years. Tap always said the part he missed most in retirement was working with students, many of whom became friends. Many former students still quote "work faster" as a typical Tapism. He encouraged his daughter to pick up a paint brush in the scene shop when she was 11 and he had a father's pride that she became a successful muralist.

Tap's greatest loves were his wife, and children Justin St. Giles and Liliana Love Ostia. The years raising them were the happiest of his life. The latest light of his life was "little Leon", his grandson.

Tap and Margaret retired to Arizona in 2013. After their daughter, Liliana, married Travis Lennox in 2020 and a grandchild was waiting in the wings, Tap and Margaret moved back to MN so they could be part of the baby's life.

Little Leon arrived in February of 2023 and pancreatic cancer arrived in August. Although his prognosis seemed very positive, sepsis put a stop to chemo treatments. After several hospitalizations, Tap came home to hospice care. He brightened up whenever little Leon would visit, and enjoyed eating any food item he craved. His brothers and sisters visited plus many friends. Tap enjoyed reading the cards and letters from his former students and colleagues. Tap entered into eternal life peacefully with Margaret right there with him.

Tap enjoyed any John Wayne movie, only New Mexico Mexican food, reminiscing with his brothers and sisters, pretending to be a ventriloquist, popcorn, road trips, being a former Marine, visiting ancient theatres around the world, folk music, discussing apologetics, and he made the best meatloaf. He disliked exercise and doctor's appointments and very little else. He was a kind and gracious gentleman - quiet, but somehow garnered everyone's attention. He was respected and loved.

Above all, Tap was a man who followed Christ in his life. Not flawlessly, but unwaveringly. Through personal study, the influence of a trio of pastors, and seeing his Creator in the beauty of the world around him, Tap was "sure and certain" that death had been defeated.

Tap will be missed by: his wife of 52 years, Margaret. His children: Justin (Erica) of Thailand, and Liliana (Travis) Lennox, and precious grandson Leon Robin Payne Lennox of St. Louis Park MN. His brothers and sisters: Suzan

Wambold, Rockney (Donna Marie) Payne, Patricia Payne, Pam Topper, and Frank (Donna Sue) Payne. His in-laws: Patti (Marty) Wilcox, Judy (Terry) Holloway, Jon (Rebecca) Pellegrini. His many nieces and nephews and their families. And a world of friends.

A memorial service is being planned for Friday, March 8th, at 1pm at the Morris Evangelical Free Church in Morris MN. A burial service will be held at a later date at the National Cemetery in Santa Fe, NM.

Memorials in Tap's name may be sent to:

Christian Light School
PO Box 8732
Jacksonville FL 32239
christianlighthaiti.org

CLS was started to impact the lives of children in Haiti through a Christ-centered education. Through nutrition and instruction, CLS is developing future leaders of Haiti. Tap has supported CLS since 2008. Tap visited Haiti twice and saw this school in action.

Tribute Wall

ZW

“ Tap was a kind man, always very pleasant!

Zelma Wilcox - January 21, 2024 at 11:02 PM

MN

“ Tap was a brief but powerful inspiration for me. When Tap and a very pregnant Margaret arrived at UMM I was in my final quarter or two of college. At 23 I would have been considered the old guy in the theatre department. My wife and I were newish parents of a 1 year old. We didn't really have much of a plan for what came next. In Tap and Margaret I got a glimpse of what my future could be. Here I saw a young couple, child on the way, making a life that involved theatre. More importantly, Tap showed that even amid all the craziness that a life in the theatre brings, you could go at it with a sense of humor, a love for the creative process, and the joy of working with a team to accomplish magical moments on stage. Because of this I decided to pursue my MFA in Lighting Design at UW-Madison. The plan was to become a university professor. Just like Tap.

While my studies and professional work eventually led me in a different direction, everything I learned from Tap and my theatre education played a key role in any success I had since then. My only regret is that our paths didn't cross sooner. Like many people who knew Tap, I feel that my life was richer with every interaction I was fortunate to have with him.

Thank you for everything old friend. Break a leg.

Mark Nash

Mark Nash - January 19, 2024 at 02:26 PM

SL

“ Don and I were married in 1976, and Don was transferred to Marine Corps Base, Twentynine Palms, CA. We preceded to drive across the country, but Don wanted to stop at Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, AZ so I could meet his Marine friend and wife who he had recently met in Japan. Tap and Margaret could not have been more hospitable, helpful (to a new Marine wife), and hysterical! We instantly became close and dear friends, having many fun adventures continuing throughout all these years. Distance was never a problem, when we would eventually get together new memories were created and each day was a happy and fun time. Tap will be missed by so many and will always be in our hearts. Margaret and family, our prayers are with you. Love, Sue and Don

Sue and Don Lane - January 19, 2024 at 01:00 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Tap Robin Patrick Payne.



January 19, 2024 at 10:25 AM

MR

“ Mike and Roxanne planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Tap Robin Patrick Payne.

Mike and Roxanne - January 19, 2024 at 10:25 AM

AM

“ I can't believe I was fortunate enough to be placed with Tap and Margaret when I came to live in MN for 5 months. One of my memories was actually on my last day there. I left my suitcase in my room as Tap had agreed to carry it downstairs. Margaret took my arm and counted down quietly “3...2...1” and on “0” we both heard Tap cry out as he lifted the weight of my suitcase! Tap and Margaret were the most beautiful couple - meant to be. Tap will be so missed.

Anna Mayne - January 19, 2024 at 09:40 AM