



Stephen John Merrill

September 5, 1944 - December 12, 2025

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With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of Stephen John “Steve” Merrill, a beloved husband, devoted father, and proud veteran of the United States Navy. His memory will live on in the lives of those he touched and in the countless stories shared about his life of service, love, and dedication. Steve passed away peacefully on December 12, 2025, at the age of 81, after a 17-year battle with Parkinson’s.

Born on September 5th, 1944, the son of William Merrill and Shirley Pedersen, in Shirley, MA. Steve lived in Albuquerque, NM through fourth grade, and relocated to San Mateo, CA in sixth grade, where he met his lifelong friend David Coats. Steve graduated from Hillsdale High School in 1962 and was a proud member of the cross-country team.

He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1964 and proudly served from 1964 to 1968. As an Electronics and Radar Technician Second Class (ETR2), serving aboard the USS Stoddard (DDG-22) and the USS Canberra (CAG-2), supporting crucial missions during a time of great change and challenge. The friendships he forged in the service remained important to him throughout his life, and his pride in having served his country was always evident.

After leaving the Navy, Steve completed his B.S. in physics at the University of New Mexico and transitioned to civilian life, where he enjoyed climbing, cycling, photography, coaching and mentoring robotics. While working at Hewlett Packard in the Bay Area, he met his soulmate, Betty. His greatest pickup line was asking if she could move his mattress in her station wagon. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this year. In recent years, he was an active participant of Rock Steady Boxing in Albany with his fellow Parkinson's friends. He was above all a loving husband, father, and friend and a stalwart presence in the lives of those who knew him. He was known for his humor, kindness and selflessness. Whether sharing stories about his time in the service, enjoying his favorite pastimes, or spending time with loved ones, he brought a sense of purpose and warmth to everyone around him.

Steve is preceded in death by his parents; his brother, Bruce Merrill; and daughter, Shannon. He is survived by his wife Betty and son Nathan of Corvallis, OR, son Alexander and Alex's wife Ashlee of Philomath, OR; and a community of friends and loved ones who will miss him dearly.

A celebration of life will be held on January 11th at 4 Spirits Distillery in Corvallis from 1 to 4. Steve will be buried at Golden Gate National Cemetery on January 20.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JAN 11. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (PT)

Four Spirits Distillery
3405 SW Deschutes Street
Corvallis, OR 97333
<https://4spiritsdistillery.com/>

Tribute Wall

PA

“ I admired Steve and Betty as they fought the good fight together to make the best of the life they had with Parkinson's Disease. Betty was dedicated to him and his wellbeing and met adversity with love. And to the family, thank you for lovingly supporting Betty.

Patricia - January 09 at 12:55 AM

GB

In the few short years that Brenda and I got to know Steve and Betty you couldn't see a stronger couple working together under the circumstances of Parkinson's. Many heartfelt thanks to you, Betty and your family.

Gary & Brenda Burch - January 10 at 10:17 PM