



## Stephen L. Merker Ph.D.

December 4, 1941 - May 2, 2023

Stephen L. Merker, PhD, 81, died unexpectedly and surrounded by family Tuesday, May 2, 2023. Steve was born December 4, 1941, in Cleveland, Ohio to the late Steven J. and Margaret Kotich Merker. He grew up in the Hungarian (Buckeye Road) neighborhood, attended St. Margaret School, and graduated from Benedictine High School. After high school graduation he joined the United States Air Force, proudly serving from 1960 – 1964. Most of his time was spent as a radar technician at Snow Mountain Air Force Station near Fort Knox, KY.

Following his military service, Steve embarked on a variety of career pursuits. He was a research physicist at Brown & Williamson, while pursuing multiple degrees at the University of Louisville. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Physics, an MBA, and ultimately a PhD in Systems Science in 1980 and served as a professor in the College of Urban & Public Affairs at the University of Louisville. During his time at U of L, Steve met his wife Sharon, and they married May 31, 1986. After leaving the academic realm in 1991, Steve was active as a consultant focused on Distance Learning. A natural inventor, throughout his career Steve contributed to many patents.

Steve had numerous hobbies and interests. While his family always came first, he also enjoyed bicycling, antique car restoration and shows, traveling, and serving his community as a volunteer. He was a member and past president of the Louisville Wheelmen as well as a member of the Southern Indiana Wheelmen. He participated in RAGBRAI riding across Iowa 25 times, as well as numerous rides throughout Europe with Sharon. He was recently honored for having been a runner in the first Annual Mini-Marathon. Steve was the first lay president of the Board of Mercy Academy and was instrumental in the restoration of the Cathedral of the Assumption clock now located at Mercy Academy. Steve was also a long-standing volunteer with St. Vincent DePaul and Baptist Health Louisville, as well as an active member of British Sports Car Club of Louisville, Baptist Health/Milestone Wellness Center, and St. Brigid Catholic Church.

Steve and Sharon enjoyed the company of family and friends. Their events became quite

memorable traditions, including Father's Day, 4th of July, the Chili Ride, and the annual neighborhood picnic. Steve enjoyed good times, good food, good bourbon, and a good cigar. He will be missed at Check's Café.

Steve was proud of his children and looked upon his grandchildren and great grandchildren as the reward for having been a parent. He always told Sharon, "Our job is making memories".

Steve was preceded in death by his older sister Loretta Rothgery. He is survived by his loving wife Sharon Machtolff Merker; his children Lori Stauffer (John) of Landis, NC, Russell Merker (Mary) of Eminence, KY, and Karen Hughes (Alan) of Corydon, IN; his grandchildren Grace Stamper, Ben Stamper, Max Stamper, Heather Mendez, Alanna Klotz, Daniel Hughes, and Stephen Hughes; his great grandchildren Nathan, Lilliana, and Karlee Klotz, and Flynn Stamper; his sister Veronica Briggs (Kelly) of Medina, OH and brother-in-law Robert Rothgery of Aurora, CO and many cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Visitation will be 2-8 p.m. Monday, May 8, 2023, at Ratterman and Sons, 3800 Bardstown Road. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated 10 a.m. Tuesday, May 9, 2023, at St. Brigid Catholic Church, with burial to follow at Calvary Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Margaret Kotich Merker Memorial Scholarship Fund at Mercy Academy, St. Vincent DePaul, or St. Joseph Children's Home. Online condolences may be shared at [www.Ratterman.com](http://www.Ratterman.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Calvary Cemetery

1600 Newburg Rd  
Louisville, KY 40205  
[cemeteries@archlou.org](mailto:cemeteries@archlou.org)  
<http://www.archlou.org/departments-and-services/agencies-facilities/cemeteries/>

# Upcoming Events

## Visitation

MAY 8. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Ratterman & Sons Funeral Home - Bardstown Road  
3800 Bardstown Road  
Louisville, KY 40218  
<https://www.Ratterman.com>

## Funeral Mass

MAY 9. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Brigid Catholic Church  
1520 Hepburn Avenue  
Louisville, KY 40204

# Tribute Wall



“ *Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Stephen L. Merker Ph.D..*



Yesterday at 08:30 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Stephen L. Merker Ph.D..*



Yesterday at 08:25 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Stephen L. Merker Ph.D..*



Yesterday at 04:19 PM



“ *Sandy Mattacott purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Stephen L. Merker Ph.D..*



**Sandy Mattacott** - Yesterday at 03:34 PM



“ *Sharon, I was so saddened to hear about Steve, so sudden. I will keep the fond memories of him in my heart with all the good times we had with both of you at The Diplomat. I will miss his tomatoe pie, but I have the recipe and will think of him fondly when I make it. Sincerely, Sandy Mattacott*

**sandy mattacott** - Yesterday at 03:24 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Stephen L. Merker Ph.D..*



May 05 at 09:43 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Stephen L. Merker Ph.D..*



May 05 at 02:03 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Stephen L. Merker Ph.D..*



May 05 at 08:01 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Stephen L. Merker Ph.D..*



May 04 at 03:50 PM

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“ *Steve, or as Mom would say, Stevie, i will miss you beyond comprehension. There are too many memories to even begin to give a favorite. Rest In Peace my Brother and thanks for all you've done for me. Love you, your younger/older sister.*

veronica.briggs - May 04 at 03:05 PM