

## THE HONORABLE ART K. COOK



Arthur "Art" Kenneth Cook passed away surrounded by loved ones on Wednesday, August 9, 2023, after a brief illness. Art was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on May 7, 1943, to Lillian and Joseph Cook. He was predeceased by his cherished wife, life partner and soulmate, Maxine Unikel Cook on October 26, 2022. Art is survived by his devoted sisters, Arlene Cook Alfred and Sheila Cook Reicher Fine;

as well as his adoring nieces, nephews, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, cousins and deeply treasured close friends. Finally, he is survived by their beloved German Shepard, BB. Art lived life fully and on his terms. He was a courageous maverick. He was a lifelong student of Paramhansa yoga and an incredibly gifted clairvoyant. His wisdom and his actions were guided by his heart. Art was charismatic and possessed an extraordinary sense of humor bringing levity and laughter... including his own... to the room with his magical talent for storytelling. Art attended Miami University in Florida. He became a pilot and then served in the United States Airforce. He worked in the family business of "Standard Sportswear," a menswear retail chain. In the late 60s, Art met and married Maxine. Maxine referred to Art as her "Mister Wonderful", "Slim", "Cookie" ...her "Mirror of Truth", "Best Friend of the Heart" and "My Everything". They were urban hippies who before it was popular left the city and chose their slice of paradise nestled in the lushly green blanketed mountains of Somerset County. It was there that Art enjoyed the simplicity of living quietly in nature, toiling in the soil, and using his skilled hands to contribute to its beauty. They became farmers and organic gardeners in 1970. They progressively constructed windmills on their land as well as engaging in solar energy production and use. Jo-li-co Farm (named for Art's parents) has been 100% solar and wind powered since 1978. Art and Max also started an automotive repair business that they operated for years. They generously embraced our family's participation in their dream. They afforded us many opportunities, lessons and endless memories on Jo-li-co. We learned about the freedom nature offers, the value of the land and the possibilities of what it provides. They educated us about our responsibility to respect and appreciate the environment while actively seeking to protect and sustain it rather than to exploit it. We also learned how to live in harmony with animals and recognize more clearly that we are simply a link in the chain. Art served Somerset County as an elected District Judge for 18 years. He processed nearly 200,000 cases, conducted 38,000 hearings, and collected nearly \$22 million in fines and court costs. He also performed the county's first video arraignment. He led by his beliefs in "the paramount importance of fairness and the treatment of people with decency." He also sited adopting and implementing the eastern philosophy that says, "There are no bad people; there is only bad behavior." Art was described by his colleague the Honorable John M Cascio, P.J., "All of us in public service hope to create some type of legacy and Art's long and distinguished career is one of scholarship, dedication, compassion and above all great common sense. All are the hallmarks of a great judge. After 18 years, thousands of cases, seemingly endless on-calls and a constant stream of difficult decisions, all have been taken in stride and completed with dignity and his own dose of humor at just the appropriate time." In addition to his courtroom work, Art also volunteered for The Somerset Humane Society and the local Hospice. His family is so grateful for the imprints that he has made in each of our lives as well as those in the community that he loved. His memory is for a blessing. Services and Interment Private. Contributions may be made to UPMC Medical and Health Sciences Foundation, Forbes Tower, Suite 8084, 3600 Forbes Ave. at Meyran Ave., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213, Attn: Gift Processing; The Somerset Humane Society, P.O. Box 182, 204 Whitetail Road, Somerset, PA15501; or a charity of your choice. Arrangements entrusted to **RALPH SCHUGAR CHAPEL, INC.**, family owned and operated.

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