

LEWIS WHEELER

October 15, 1941 - November 20, 2023



Lewis Paul Wheeler took his last breath on November 20, 2023, peacefully in Juno Beach, FL, at 82 years of age. Lew ferociously fought Multiple Myeloma for many years, believing he needed to do more. One of the flags hanging in his gym stated, 'Never yield'. He never did.

Lew was born on October 15, 1941. Oldest son of Harvey Beecher Wheeler and Madeline Beyrl Rimby Wheeler. At the time of his passing, Lew resided in Juno Beach, FL and Deep Creek, MD. Preceded in death by Susan Wahl Wheeler, mother of their four sons.

Survived by devoted, loving wife and companion, Peggy; and sons, Bruce along with his wife Cesarina of Boston, MA, Douglas along with his wife Karla of New York City, Brett along with his wife Shannon of Washington Depot, CT, and Wesley of Wheeling, WV. Also survived by beloved grandchildren, Roman, Lucas, Rodion, Nevere, Saskia, Sabine, Vesper, Atticus, Oliver and Solveig; as well as his stepchildren, Justin Welvaert along with wife Samie and their son Hudson, Cambria Davies, and Camron Davies. Also survived by sister, Donna Clark and her husband Bob; brother, Donald Wheeler and his wife Gayle and brother, Lee Wheeler. Also survived by numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

Lew graduated from Crafton High School in 1959 and Penn State's honors program three years later. He then went on to earn his MBA from Penn State, graduating first in his class. Lew and Susan married when Lew was a sophomore and welcomed their first two children into the world, while Lew completed his studies at Penn State and worked nights.

Upon graduation, Lew joined IBM in marketing for four years before founding Computerpeople in Pittsburgh where he served as CEO for 38 years. Lew rebranded Computerpeople into Radidigm to focus on the IT consulting business. With the support of many highly skilled dedicated partners and employees, Rapidigm grew to almost 3,000 employees with 20 offices in the US and two software development centers in India. Inc. Magazine included Rapidigm on its 500 Fastest Growing Companies list for several years. Lew Wheeler and partner Paul Freudenberg were honored as E&W Entrepreneurs of the Year. Rapidigm was acquired by Fujitsu in 2006 with Lew retiring as a beloved industry legend, leaving an incredible legacy of Rapidigm employees evolving into the stars of the IT consulting business.

Lew introduced his sons to youth hockey at WAHA in 1970. With no hockey experience or skating ability, he consistently coached his teams to league championships. Lew became the de facto league photographer taking photos of every player and team each year. Lew served as WAHA President for several years.

Lew always wanted to instill in his boys a strong and expansive work ethic. Part of his somewhat diabolical "plan" included anxiously awaiting the arrival of each new issue of Better Homes and Gardens for inspiration to plan his torturous home improvement projects for he and the boys to do each summer. He delighted in working with his sons to complete these projects. While the stories are fun for the family to recount now, the boys did not love these experiences.

Lew became an extraordinarily accomplished endurance athlete. His obsession with running began in 1977 when he ran in the first Wheeling Distance Race. He followed this up by running the Boston Marathon then running 29 marathons, two Iron Man triathlons and many other races with friends Hugh Stobbs and Ron Woloshan. At one stretch he ran six marathons in six weeks. On his 40th birthday Lew began a 5-year tradition of running his age in miles on his birthday. For many years Lew ran 10 miles to and from work each day.

Lew loved Deep Creek Lake, spending 5 months a year enjoying all aspects of lake life. Learning to water ski in Deep Creek as a child, Lew taught his children and grandchildren to ski here. In 1992 Lew built a home in Deep Creek to entertain and host his family and friends. Wanting to host more and more people, Lew converted the attached garages into bedrooms and built a detached garage and gym which he named the Garage Mahal and the Gymuseum. Every inch of the gym walls was covered by photographs that captured treasured family moments and decorated with trophies and awards. This was a sacred space for Lew. Always wanting to do more, he continued to expand the lake house yearly.

Lew spent 40 years visiting Aspen, CO. He enjoyed skiing, biking and dining with family and friends. He had epic trips to Aspen with friends for decades which always overlapped with his sons' trips. Bruce and his friends marveled at Lew's ability to run 12 miles in the morning and begin skiing before they got out of bed as well as at Lew's popularity at après ski. He was able to spend time there with Peggy and her children and more recently even skied with his grandson Lucas and his granddaughters Nevere and Sabine.

Lew was incredibly generous, building the Susan Wheeler House and Susan Wheeler Trail System at Oglebay Park in Wheeling. For many years he extended great energy hosting and entertaining wounded veterans in Deep Creek. Lew also supported countless other charities and organizations in Pittsburgh, Wheeling, Deep Creek and Juno Beach helping thousands of people.

Lew loved and fervently supported the police. He was proud to be a founding board member and Vice President of the Juno Beach Police Foundation. Lew was honored with the Juno Beach Civic Association 2021 'Lifetime Achievement Award'. Lew proudly served as a member of the Bethany College Board of Trustees for over a decade.

Lew had tremendous love and appreciation for the United States of America. Emblematic of his love of country was his signature look, some might call it "patriotic chic" or "flag couture".

Some may say that Lew's fashion sense was what brought him and Peggy together in 2010. They married in 2013. He was very proud of her business success, position as Vice-Mayor of Juno Beach along with her engaging personality and beauty. He was also proud of the work ethic Peggy instilled in her three children.

Lew's inspiration, leadership and generosity impacted many, but his greatest gift was as a father. He attended every sporting event or activity involving his children, providing wonderful positive messages of encouragement and support, even if they played poorly or barely participated. He showered his children with love, built their self-esteem enabling them to believe they could do anything, taught them hard work and gave them discipline. Lew loved doing the same for his grandchildren.

Lew's obsessive brilliance drove his phenomenal successes, incredible accomplishments and led to an amazing life. Lewis Paul Wheeler, October 15, 1941 - November 20, 2023.

Celebration of Life Memorial Services will be held on December 11, 2023, from 5:30-10:00 PM at Loggerhead Event Center, 14200 US Hwy. 1, Juno Beach, FL 33408.

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