



## Richard E. Carver

August 28, 1937 - May 5, 2023

Richard Ellison Carver passed away peacefully at the age of 85 at his home in Sarasota, Florida on Friday, May 5, 2023. Richard was born on August 28, 1937, in Des Moines, IA to Maurice (Red) and Alice (Ellison) Carver, and was a big brother to Stephen Carver (deceased).

Richard lost his beloved wife, Judith, in January after 63 years of marriage. They never liked to be apart and are now reunited and together for eternity, surrounded by their many Siberian Huskies and Cardigan Corgi. He was a proud father of four children – Kathryn (RJ) Binau, Stephen (Wendy) Carver, Cynthia (Patrick) Smith, and Susan (Mark) Pendergrass. Richard loved being a grandfather to his nine grandchildren – Caitlin, Shannon, Alexa, Collin, Christopher, Beau, Sheridan, Kevin, and Hannah – and three great-grandchildren.

Richard attended the University of Iowa, where he joined the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, and then graduated from Bradley University in Peoria, IL. He and Judith met on a blind date while he was at Bradley and it was love at first sight. After college, Richard carried on his late dad's legacy as president of Carver Lumber Company. He also served in the Air Force Reserve Command, attaining the rank of colonel.

Richard was a pillar of his community and force to be reckoned with. His tenacity and passion led him to a long career in public service. Richard was never one to let a problem go unsolved. When he and his neighbors were struggling to get their streets plowed and trash picked up, he gathered folks

around his kitchen table and devised a plan to get their small township incorporated into the city of Peoria. But kitchen table conversations were just the start. He ran for the city council in his twenties and then spent nearly two decades as Peoria's mayor. During his tenure, he transformed downtown Peoria, building a Civic Center and ushering in a new University of Illinois medical school campus, among other things. The job of mayor suited Richard perfectly - he would happily recount the time two local tavern owners took out a contract on his life when he told them he wouldn't accept their offer of a bribe in return for a liquor license. Fortunately, he lived to tell the tale. He never stopped pursuing his vision and rarely took "no" for an answer. By the late 1970's, Richard's career moved to the national stage. He was appointed to presidential commissions under both President Carter and President Reagan. He spearheaded a "Mayors for Reagan" campaign and was appointed as the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Financial Management during the Reagan administration. His time at the Pentagon was a proud accomplishment, and he called the Washington, D.C. area home for nearly 30 years.

Travel was an enormous passion for Richard and Judy. They made it to nearly every corner of the globe, including mainland China, Taiwan, Scandinavia, Russia, and Papua New Guinea. Germany, however, held his heart. According to Richard, the best cars, beer, coffee, and bread can all be found in Germany. He grew the relationship between Peoria and its German sister city, Friedrichshafen, into a strong and long-lasting bond.

In 2013, Judy and Richard moved to Sarasota for the sunny weather, where they enjoyed afternoons on the lanai with their corgis, Jackson and Jack. In his retirement, Richard had two homes on two golf courses, and you could often find him on the green. And if you ran into Richard golfing, you might just have overheard some very colorful language alongside his big, booming laugh. Richard was a presence that couldn't be missed and he will be dearly remembered by many. The family requests that any donations be made to Mark Linder Walk for the Mind.



# Cemetery Details

## **Sarasota National Cemetery**

9810 State Rd 72  
Sarasota, FL 34241  
(941) 922-7200

# Tribute Wall

TW

“ Dick and I had three things in common: Arlington, US Air Force and politics. We meet at a bar while the two Judy’s were at the Rock Creek garden club. We could talk about the Air Force since I served five years and my father headed the communications and navigation unit of the Army Air Corp at Wright Field where I was born. Judy and I decided to explore moving to Sarasota. We were driving around with a kayak on the roof. Dick and Judy spotted us when they were visiting her brother. We got together often for dinners and Florida Studio plays. Dick and I are polar opposites politically. So we agreed to only talk about former and dead congressmen and Senators. Our dinners together got more difficult as Judy’s health deteriorated. But I’d like to recall the good times we were together in Arlington, Fairfax and Sarasota.

Ted Weihe - May 19, 2023 at 02:43 PM

MY

“ I was a member of the Longview Society with Dick in Sarasota. Dick was a key contributor to the group, and a really nice guy. He will be missed, Sorry for your loss. Mark Yecies

Mark L Yecies - May 15, 2023 at 10:53 AM

NZ

Every Thursday, Dick was my companion as we rode together to the Longview Society luncheon and meeting. Over the years, Janet and I became good friends to both Dick and Judy and would meet for lunch or dinner every month.

Dick was an extraordinary personality - intelligent, articulate and very likable. He was a loyal and true friend who I will miss very much.

Nick Zennario

Nicholas Zennario - May 16, 2023 at 05:24 AM

TS

*Dick and Judy were as close to us as friends can be. They stayed with us while looking for homes in DC when he came to DC as an Asst Sec of AF, We went on many trips abroad and saw each other weekly. Miss them big time. Lt General and Mrs (Inez) Truman Spangrud.*

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**truman spangrud** - June 28, 2025 at 04:25 PM