



Erkki "Erik" Simola

February 6, 2017

Erkki "Erik" Simola of West Hartford passed away peacefully in his sleep on February 6, 2017, two days shy of his 79th birthday. He will be remembered as a kind and generous man, full of life and always thankful for the gifts that God had given him. Erik never took anything for granted. He was always the person one could count on and never made promises he could not keep. Erik's family takes comfort in knowing that he lived his life the way he wanted, always with a great sense of humor and never afraid of taking risks.

Erik was born in Finland and moved to Sweden as a teenager. He celebrated his 18th birthday in Mumbai, India, after embracing his adventurous nature by joining the crew of a ship set to sail around the world for a year. Upon returning to Sweden, he met and married Ulla, a kindred spirit, in 1959. The couple immigrated with their daughter Karin to the U.S. in 1964, living first in California where Erik owned his own photography studio and in their later years moving to Connecticut. Erik opened a studio in Unionville, CT, for a short time before deciding to continue with his photography part-time. Semi-retired, Erik found joy driving a school bus and later working as a crossing guard. He served the community with compassion and honor for many years. Throughout their lives Erik and Ulla made time to travel abroad and to explore 49 of 50 states in a conversion van during the long summer breaks. Besides travel, Erik enjoyed his garden, music and sports, especially the New England Patriots, who came from behind to win Super Bowl LI hours before his death. His family wants to believe that the miraculous finish by the Pats was orchestrated just for him.

Erik leaves behind a family who adored him. In addition to Ulla, his loving wife of over 57 years, he is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Karin and Ahmad; his grandchildren, Bijan, Brittany and Blake; and two sisters, Eine and Hilikka.

Family and friends will celebrate Erik's life at the end of May, his favorite time of year, when the snow has melted and everything is lush and full of life again. In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Salvation Army. Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home, West Hartford, has care of arrangements.