



Clifford Ross Hinkle, Sr.

November 3, 1948 - December 5, 2015

Cliff Hinkle, born November 3, 1948, passed away surrounded by his loved ones on the morning of December 5, 2015, at the Big Bend Hospice House. Even though he battled early-onset Alzheimer's for 10 years, the care he received from his wife and primary caregiver Lee, son Ross, and friend Sarah Portillo, among many others, made his journey as comfortable as possible until the end.

Cliff was fortunate to live an extraordinary 67 years. A native son, born in Apalachicola and raised in Tallahassee with three siblings, he leaves a deep and lasting imprint on his family, friends, colleagues and the many local and national organizations with whom he was affiliated, including his alma mater Florida State University. He has been described by family, friends and professional colleagues around the country as a brilliant, multi-talented and compassionate man who could be counted on to contribute to any situation with a focus, humility and degree of wisdom that always matched the moment. Cliff was also known for his exquisite taste in bow ties, long after they were fashionable.

He graduated Florida High University School in 1966, and continued his educational career at the Florida State University College of Business (B.A., 1971) and Nova Southeastern University where he earned masters (M.P.A.) and doctoral degrees (D.P.A.) in public administration. While many people knew of his degree from FSU, few ever knew of his graduate degrees. He was reliably more interested in helping others than receiving recognition for his

accomplishments.

Although Cliff shared with and contributed to many friends and colleagues over the years, he always saved his most intimate and profound moments for his family. Cliff enjoyed a wonderful life with Lee, his bride of 31 years. They found great joy in their shared interests of family, politics, literature, music and the arts. Both were active in the community and supported many charitable organizations. They traveled and explored the world together, along with family and longtime friends. He also loved and was deeply proud of his only child, Ross, who became the father of his own son, Ari, just a month ago. Some of he and Ross' most precious memories included the many years they enjoyed playing golf and basketball, hiking, playing and listening to music, and the hours spent sharing with one another in a long-running conversation about life. He left a legacy of love, integrity and a deep commitment to family and friends for his son and grandson to follow.

Cliff would have loved teaching Ari many things, including how to swim. As a teenager, he was a lifeguard at the YMCA where he taught scores of local children to swim. Lee has had numerous adults approach her over the years and share that Cliff was such a great teacher who not only gave them swimming lessons, he gave them confidence. Always active in sports, he was known for being a fierce yet light-hearted competitor. An avid golfer, he loved competing, especially with his younger brothers Bob and Don. According to Lee, he also played softball until "long after he should have!" To his younger sister Jeanie, Cliff was a father figure, mentor, and tormentor after their father died in 1982, and they shared a love of music that endured until the end. As a lover of music, Cliff played the guitar, banjo and harmonica all of his adult life. Even as Alzheimer's slowly robbed him of meaningful speech, he made his voice heard through his music. Humming along to his strumming became a calming means of communication for Cliff. Until this year, he joined his wife in bringing awareness to how the local non-profit organization, the Alzheimer's Project, assists both patients and their caregivers as they share the painful

journey of the long goodbye. Annually they organized a large, supportive team to raise money and awareness for the organization at its' Forget Me Not Walk. At the age of 24, Cliff was appointed the third Leon County Administrator, a position he held from 1972-1977. At the time, he was one of the youngest county administrators in the country. He was responsible for the acquisition of the federal land that became Tom Brown Park and also represented the county in the efforts that produced the Donald L. Tucker Civic Center. Since 1977, Cliff was in the investment business as a banker, financial consultant, and portfolio manager. He spent four years (1987-1991) as the executive director and chief investment officer for the Florida Retirement System pension funds. While there he created and implemented a set of investment principles, including policies and procedures that survive to this day, and more than doubled funds under management during his tenure. Those principles led to Florida's pension fund becoming the one of the largest retirement portfolios in the nation.

At the time of his diagnosis, Cliff was chairman and chief executive officer of Flagler Holdings Inc., a merchant banking firm founded in 1996. He was also a partner in Murphy, Middleton, Hinkle and Parker (MMHP), an investment management company based in Thomasville, Georgia. In addition to the time he spent running Flagler, he was the past CEO or president of several other successful companies and served on the boards of numerous foundations, charitable organizations and publicly traded companies.

Cliff's love for Florida State University ran deep. His wife, father, brothers, sister and sisters-in-law are all FSU graduates. His mother attended FSU until she began raising a family, and his grandmother was a graduate of the Florida State College for Women. Cliff shared his sage advice with FSU for many years, volunteering his time and knowledge on its behalf, including service as Chair of the FSU Foundation Board of Trustees. In 2008, he was honored by the Faculty Senate with one of three prestigious Torch Awards, the VIRES Torch Award, honoring friends of Florida State who have contributed

significantly to FSU's ability to fulfill its academic mission.

Cliff is the son of Lena "Jimmie" Chauncey Hinkle and the late Jene Lewis Hinkle. He is also survived by his wife, Lee Hinkle, his son Ross Hinkle (Noa Tishby), his four-week-old grandson Ari Ford Tishby Hinkle (Los Angeles, CA), his brothers Robert (Marylou) and Don (fiancée Mimi Graham), his sister Jeanie Hinkle (all of Tallahassee, FL), as well as seven nieces, six nephews, three great-nieces, two great-nephews and his cats, Pogo and Daisy, who ran the house.

A celebration of Cliff's life is planned for Monday, December 14, 2015, at 4:00pm. It will be held at the FSU Alumni Center Ballroom, located at 1030 W. Tennessee St. in Tallahassee. For those interested, the family suggests memorial donations be made to the Tallahassee-based Alzheimer's Project at alzheimersproject.org or via mail to 301 East Tharpe St., Tallahassee, FL, 32303.

Rocky Bevis and Kelly Barber of Bevis Funeral Home (850/385.2193, www.bevisfh.com) are assisting the family with their arrangements.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

DEC 14. 4:00 PM (ET)

FSU Alumni Center Ballroom
1030 W. Tennessee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32304

Tribute Wall



“ *Fruits and Blooms Basket was purchased for the family of Clifford Ross Hinkle, Sr..*



December 16, 2015 at 02:09 PM



“ *Dear Lee and Ross - please know that you and Cliff have always been near to my heart. I am so sorry that yet another young man has passed from this earth, but I am comforted by the fact he left it such as better place by being here. Love, Joan Varner*

Joan Varner - December 09, 2015 at 05:07 PM



“ So sorry to hear of Cliff's passing. I have fond memories of growing up with him on Barbara St. He lived on the top end and we were at the botton end of what looked like a massive hill...at least when we were 6 years old! The last time I saw Cliff was at my Mom's funeral in 5/05. I hadn't seen him in over 30 years, but he popped in with hiw bow tie and had us all feeling better in about 5 minutes. I attached two old pics. The first one must have been about '64 or '65. The second one is circa '54. That's me, Jimmy Carr, and Cliff on the bottom, and I think Doug Dunlap and Marvin French standing up. I'm pleased your holding a "Celebration of Life" because there's certainly a lot to celebrate



David Means - December 07, 2015 at 04:51 PM

EH

“ On behalf of the Florida State University Association of Retired Faculty (ARF), we extend condolences to the family of Cliff Hinkle. We hope the support and loving concern of others will give strength to the family from day to day. Please know he is remembered fondly and will be listed in our Association's Memorial. Sincerely, Tom & Esther Harrison, Memorial Chairs

Esther Harrison - December 07, 2015 at 04:21 PM

KN

“ Dear Lee and family, my condolences to you during this very difficult time. Cliff touched the lives of many people, including some very close to me, and for that I am grateful. Even though your long goodbye to Cliff has reached it's end, I know your love for him and memories of happy times together have not. May he rest in peace and may you find comfort in each other at this time.

*With kind thoughts and a heavy heart,
Kim Nichols (daughter of Bill and Cindy James)*

Kim Nichols - December 07, 2015 at 09:25 AM

JC

“ Cliff and I have been friends since we were about 6 years old. We were neighbors, schoolmates and later in life, professional fiends. Cliff was a very talented individual who was born into a wonderful family. My life was blessed by his friendship and by knowing his siblings and his parents. Life is precious and brief and having had Cliff in my life has made me a better person. May Gob bless the wife and family he leaves behind and may we all be prepared to make the same transition he has made---someday soon. Jim Carr

Jim carr - December 06, 2015 at 04:02 PM