



Russell Clyde Collins

January 3, 1953 - October 6, 2024

Russell Clyde Collins, age 71, of Tallahassee, Florida – family physician, sailor, bricoleur, beekeeper, environmentalist, and consummate traveler – passed away on Sunday, October 6, 2024.

Russell was born to Martha Green (Collins) Letchworth and Wesley Clyde Collins on January 3, 1953, at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas where his father was stationed as a band officer. Raised in Miami, Florida, Russell was an avid diver, fisher, and sailor as well as soccer player, scientist, tinkerer, trombonist, and pianist, playing a mean Blue Rondo à la Turk. At age seventeen, Russell left high school a year early to attend King College in Bristol, Tennessee, finishing his undergraduate career with a degree in zoology from the University of Florida, Gainesville in 1974.

While in college, Russell spent a summer shadowing his uncle Dr. Robert Morgan in his Sylvester, Georgia medical practice and found his calling to become a family physician. Determined to make this dream a reality, Russell travelled to France in 1974 to attend the Faculté de Médecine - Université de Bordeaux. Despite his college German professor's pronouncement that he would never learn a foreign language, Russell completed his medical degree in French, earning his MD in 1982.

While in France, Russell married his first wife, Anne Bajou, and had his first

daughter, Gwendolynne. He also bought and remodeled his first house and fixed up his white Renault. Russell returned to the United States for his medical residency at the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta, Georgia in 1982, welcoming his second daughter, Estelle, that same year. After completing his residency at Eugene Talmadge Memorial Hospital in Augusta, Russell moved to Lenoir, North Carolina, in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, to realize his dream of being a small-town country doc. Russell practiced in Lenoir for many years, becoming the beloved “Dr. Collins” who took too long with patients because he truly got to know them.

In 2003, Russell returned to Florida where he joined Capital Health Plan in Tallahassee and finished his career in urgent care. Soon after moving, Russell met his wife Deborah Rue Collins (Lindsey). They were married November 27, 2010, at the St. Marks River Park. During their years together, they traveled extensively throughout the world.

In February 2022, Russell retired from medicine, devoting his time to sailing, traveling, remodeling homes, beekeeping, and ecological pursuits, as well as spending time with his wife and family. Highlights of these pursuits include having his yard designated “Florida-Friendly” through the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, installing solar panels on his home, visiting the Grand Canyon and Kennedy Space Center, and taking week-long sailing trips with his grandsons, Simon and Oliver.

Russell is survived by his wife Rue Collins of Tallahassee, Florida; daughter Gwendolynne (Jerry) Reid of Covington, Georgia; daughter Estelle Bajou of New York; step-son Lonny (Tammy) Luttrell; grandsons, Simon Pierre Reid and Oliver Thomas Reid of Covington, Georgia; sister Debi Collins; brother Hart (Anita) Collins; half-siblings Elizabeth Collins (Daniele Artistico), Michael Collins, and Daryl Collins; aunt Betsy Morgan; uncle Bernie (Christina) Collins; nieces and nephews, Amy Dunson, Sherri (Steven) Atwell, Keith (Kristin)

Collins, and Sean (Brittany) Collins; five great-nephews and nieces; stepmother Teresita Collins; numerous cousins and close friends; as well as his beloved dog Lil' Bit and cat KitKat. He will also be missed by his godson Bradley Enriquez and his dear friend Kathy "Kat" Anderson. He was preceded in death by his parents.

Russell's Celebration of Life will take place at 1PM on November 30, 2024, at the St. Marks Wakulla River Park (City Park Ave, St Marks, FL 32355), with his ashes scattered over the Gulf of Mexico from his sailboat, Dream Maker, at sunset.

In lieu of flowers, and if you are so inclined, the family asks that you provide donations to the Wakulla Garden Club (through the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs), the Fish and Wildlife Federation of Florida, or the National Wildlife Federation. Any efforts at conserving our planet would have pleased him.

Dayne Parker of Bevis Funeral Home (850-385-2193 or www.bevisfh.com) is assisting the Collins family with their arrangements.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

NOV **30**. 1:00 PM (ET)

St. Marks Wakulla River Park
City Park Ave
St. Marks , FL 32355

Tribute Wall

SS

“ I had the pleasure of working with Dr. Collin's when I worked at CHP Urgent Care. I enjoyed his sense of humor and hid medical knowledge. I am so very sorry that he has passed.



Sandy Skidell - October 15, 2024 at 04:36 PM

SR

Rue, I'm so very sorry for your loss of Russell. My heart hurts for you.

Sammie R Reimers - December 13, 2024 at 11:36 AM