

## **Walter Charles "Rusty" Riese**

June 8, 1951 – October 6, 2022

W.C. "Rusty" Riese passed peacefully from this earth on October 6, 2022, at CHI Baylor St. Luke's hospital following a protracted battle with pulmonary fibrosis. A prominent geologist, loving father, and consummate storyteller, he will be missed by countless friends, family, and colleagues.

Rusty was the elder son of Katherine E. and Walter H. Riese of Baldwin, New York. He spent his childhood on Long Island with his Navy veteran parents and younger brother Sandy, and he attended Archbishop Molloy High School, where he excelled academically and lettered in track and field, principally as a shotput and javelin thrower. After his graduation in 1969, he departed for the greater Southwest, specifically New Mexico, to study earth sciences.

Rusty earned his bachelor of science degree in geology in 1973 from the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology. He earned his master's and doctoral degrees in geology in 1977 and 1980, respectively, from the University of New Mexico

The Southwest suited him. During his years as an undergraduate at New Mexico Tech and graduate student at UNM, Rusty realized and nurtured two of his most valued endeavors: his passion for cacti, and his relationships with fellow students and advisors that would endure through his life. At the time of his passing, he was in a loving relationship with Jamie Boling, a college friend turned partner in 2019.

Rusty worked as a geologist and geoscience adviser for Gulf Mineral Resources, Anaconda Minerals, ARCO Oil and Gas Company, Vastar Resources, and finally BP, having successfully navigated a series of acquisitions and mergers. He was known for his work ethic and spirited partnerships with colleagues. He traveled extensively for his work, eventually visiting every continent but Antarctica, and residing in Colorado, California, and finally Texas for the rest of his life. He authored dozens of papers and held numerous U.S. and international patents for his work. Even in retirement, he continued to give lectures on economic geology, coalbed methane sequestration, and climate change.

Though he wore many hats and held many titles—from adjunct professor at Rice University and UNM to United States Powerlifting Federation judge to board member for the American Association of Petroleum Geologists—he was most proud of being dad and “Boris” to his two kids, Clay and Monica, who are gutted by this loss. They will treasure their memories of family camping trips, road trips through the Southwest and up the East Coast, and steaks so good they both refuse to order them from restaurants anymore.

Rusty was preceded in death by his parents, Katherine and Walter. He is survived by his son Clay; daughter Monica and son-in-law Matt "Ozz" Oztalay; his brother and sister-in-law, Sandy and Laura Riese; his partner Jamie Boling; and her sons, Colin and Blake.

Everyone who knew him doubtless has a story of their own of a wonderful dinner together from

the World Famous Riese Driveway Steakhouse, a neighborly chat, or conversations over glasses of wine or Blanton's. They'll recall a bit of advice he gave them or their children, a project he helped them complete, a road trip or camping adventure they experienced together (perhaps in the company of a few dozen Molloy students in a national park), and maybe even a fortuitous run-in with Santa Claus when Rusty was mysteriously absent.

He will spend his eternity becoming one with the Sangre de Cristo mountains in northern New Mexico, where he longed to spend his retirement years. Though the world is decidedly darker without him in it, his light shines on in every story you tell of him to another friend or family member.

A celebration of his life will be held Saturday, Nov. 12, at 2:30pm at the Memorial Oaks Funeral Home in Houston, Texas. In lieu of flowers, please direct donations to the Archbishop Molloy High School in Queens, New York, or the American Association of Petroleum Geologists Foundation.