



Mr. Matt J. Duffy

September 4, 1971 - January 17, 2018

Matt J. Duffy, a journalist, gifted educator and enthusiast of life, died on Wednesday, January 17 at his Roswell home. He was a joy, sharing infectious love, warmth, and friendship with his beloved family and many students and colleagues, whose good fortune in life was to cross his path.

Surrounded by his wife, Ann, son, Jake, and daughter, Lydia, Matt left this world more than four years after his diagnosis of Stage IV lung cancer.

He was born Sept. 4, 1971, in Richmond, Virginia. He grew up in Pinetown, North Carolina. He graduated with a bachelor degree from East Carolina University, later studying for a master's degree from the University of Georgia and a doctorate in public communication at Georgia State University in 2010.

In June, 2013, he was diagnosed with cancer. Through treatments and drug trials, he broke ground for longevity. He checked off boxes from his to-do list when the small window for survival opened to become years: celebrating his daughter's high school graduation; coastal Maine summers spent on the Shackleton, the motorboat built by his hands in his garage; a recent trip to the betting tables of Las Vegas and other adventures.

The cancer was the least interesting part of him. His embrace of life and cheeky attitude drew people to him. He was gifted in dreaming big, seeing

potential in people they didn't see themselves, and served as a loyal companion to people working the 12-step program.

Cultures and the way everyday people lived in different lands fascinated Matt. During a break in teaching at Zayed University, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, while others booked travels to Europe, he made his way to Bangladesh, a developing country not on many tourist itineraries, where he played locals in a game of badminton and drank tea with new friends.

His journalism career included stops in newsrooms in Mississippi, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Georgia. He was an activist academic, examining press freedoms in the Middle East. He relished the task of turning students into journalists at Georgia Perimeter College, Georgia State University, and Berry College, before accepting a position as an assistant professor of communication at Kennesaw State University.

Survivors include his mother and step father, Susan and Mike Messick; brother Greg, and his wife Nicole, Jones; step-sister Terese Messick; and many nieces, nephews and extended family.

Family, friends, and others whose lives Matt touched are invited to Unity North Atlanta Church, 4255 Sandy Plains Road, Marietta, from 4 p.m.- 6 p.m. on Sunday for Receiving of Friends and Monday, January 22 at 4 p.m. for a Celebration of Life.

In lieu of flowers, please donate in his memory to the cause of your choice or to The Human Kindness Foundation, <http://humankindness.org/honor-memory/>.

Cemetery Details

Northside Chapel Crematory

12050 Crabapple Rd
Roswell, GA 30075

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN **21**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Unity North Atlanta Church
4255 Sandy Plains Road
Marietta, GA

Memorial Service

JAN **22**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Unity North Atlanta Church
4255 Sandy Plains Road
Marietta, GA

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Matt J. Duffy*

October 08, 2022 at 11:37 AM



“ *Knowing Matt as he grew up was a joy. He always had some profound thought about most things. I am glad to know that maybe he'll be seeing Robin again. They'll probably enjoy being together again.*

They left us much too soon, two of our bright shining stars that took some joy from all of us. We will always have good memories of them and they will be in our hearts forever.

Jade

Jade Harris - January 21, 2018 at 11:11 AM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Mr. Matt J. Duffy.*



January 20, 2018 at 11:28 PM



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Matt J. Duffy.*



January 20, 2018 at 10:29 PM



“ *Matt was truly a unique & vibrant individual, I feel blessed that I had the pleasure of knowing him! My sympathies to Anne and his family.*

Scott Christopher Heiman - January 19, 2018 at 02:01 PM