



# Michael James Flaherty

MAR 3, 1946 - APR 13, 2023



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**C**elebrating the life of Michael Flaherty, formerly of Pekin and Galesburg, IL, who passed away in Largo, FL on April 13 from heart disease. Michael was born on March 3, 1946, in Galesburg, IL where he lived until attending Western Illinois University in Macomb. His parents were John Flaherty and Ethel Carlson Flaherty. He attended Galesburg High School, Western Illinois University, where he graduated with a B.S. in Political Science, and Bradley University, where he obtained an M.S. in Education. After graduation, he began a career as a teacher at Washington Junior High in Pekin. He developed an innovative classroom model during his teaching career, and he tutored homebound students. He later worked as a realtor and automobile salesman. He eventually moved to Atlanta, GA and then the Tampa Bay area, where he lived until his death. He married Barbara Ruby in 1968. They later divorced and he married Linda Mize in 1992. After Linda's death, his loving friend and partner was Joyce Howlett. In college he was active in the Young Democrats. He was a member of the Board of Realtors in the 1970's and in his later years represented resident interests at the East Bay Rehabilitation Center in Clearwater, FL. He had an excellent sense of humor, and he will be remembered for his wit and practical jokes. Michael was intelligent and social and loved to participate in all kinds of activities. He played a competitive tennis game. He loved movies, early and classic rock music, and keeping up with (and debating) current events. Michael suffered severely from bipolar disorder, and in his later years he was a great example of how proper treatment can offer the best life to someone whose illness has made their life difficult. His family is deeply grateful for the efforts of the caregivers who assisted him in obtaining treatment. He was much appreciated by the community at East Bay Rehabilitation Center. His family is forever grateful for these later years, and for his gentleness and thoughtfulness. He is much loved and missed. He is survived by his son, Sean Flaherty of Coralville, IA, loving friend and partner Joyce Howlett of



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Tarpon Springs, FL, and nephews John Flaherty, of McKinney, TX and Kevin Flaherty of Houston, TX. He was preceded in death by his parents and his brothers, John Flaherty of Henderson, NV and Rodney Flaherty, of Galesburg. In lieu of memorial gifts or flowers, donations to Mental Health America are much appreciated: <https://www.mhanational.org/donate-now> A celebration of life will be held at a later date.



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Michael by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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