



## Roger William Rolke

September 23, 1940 - November 28, 2020

Roger Rolke, 80, of Houston passed away Saturday, November 28, 2020. Roger was born September 23, 1940 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to Ralph and Ann Rolke. He is preceded in death by his parents and daughter Kristie Rolke Smith. Mr. Rolke is survived by his wife of 54 years, Judy; his son Bob Rolke and wife Ann; son-in-law, Mark Smith; and grandchildren Katherine Smith, Eva Rolke and Reed Smith. He is also survived by his sister Sally Burke as well as his nephews and extended family.

Roger grew up in South Milwaukee. He attended The University of Wisconsin, where he received his Bachelor of Science. He then went on to Princeton University, where he earned his Masters and Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering. Mr. Rolke had an extensive professional career with Shell Oil. Roger's career moved the family from California to Houston in 1971, then on to Louisiana until 1979, then back to Houston in 1986, where they remained for the rest of his career.

Roger was generous and kind. Community service and volunteering were a big part of his life. He was a board member of the Executive Service Corps of Houston, was a supporter of YES Prep Public Schools, and was a volunteer chaplain at Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center. He was a long-time member and an active volunteer at St. John Vianney Catholic Church.

Roger was a private pilot who loved to travel. He also enjoyed live theater, music and dance, photography, gardening, reading, travel, and eating. He was curious and open-minded. He enjoyed learning and sought out new experiences, and made new friends all of his life. He was loved by those who knew him and will be greatly missed. Roger never let adversity stop him. He accepted what he could not change and forged ahead on his path.

The Funeral Mass will be celebrated Friday, December 4, 2020, at 10:30 a.m. at St. John Vianney Catholic Church, 625 Nottingham Oaks Trail, Houston, TX 77079.

In lieu of flowers donations in Roger's memory may be made to Lungevity at <https://lungevity.org/for-supporters-advocates/support-our-work> or Yes Prep Public Schools at <https://www.yesprep.org/support-yes/ways-to-give>

The Streaming Link for Roger's Funeral Mass:

<https://youtu.be/9FjFqENgyGg>



# Comments

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“ I attended bible study with Roger at St John Vianney. I remember he had such a kind spirit and shared his faith from the heart. My deepest condolences to the Judy and family. The world has lost a true disciple who lived his faith. May God bless and comfort you.

Audrey Angel

**Audrey Angel** - December 22, 2020 at 10:11 AM

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“ I worked in Roger's organization for the first 4 years of my career at Shell. He was Director of Engineering in Shell Dev and he had a genuine sense of humanity that seemed to set him apart from the other directors. He was approachable and always interested in a good engineering success story.

My favorite Roger story happened during the Friday afternoon department technical seminar that was a mainstay at the time. A certain very highly graded engineer (who shall remain nameless) was giving the seminar. This speaker had been with Shell for well over 30 years and was quite outspoken about how he wanted a severance package from Shell to end his career. Roger asked a few technical/business related questions and there was some heated back and forth between Roger and the seminar speaker. Roger deftly put an end to the quibbling with this remark which I will remember forever; "[Name]... I don't care how many times you call me an asshole. I'm not going to give you that package!". The whole room broke up laughing.

Condolences to Judy and the rest of the family. I know he'll be missed by many.

Evan Bauman

**Evan Bauman** - December 19, 2020 at 10:50 AM

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“ One of the kindest men I ever worked with He was dedicated to the development of professional talent and making life better for all with whom he associated. RIP

**Julian Dalzell** - December 18, 2020 at 09:15 PM



“ Roger was a kind and generous man and I thoroughly enjoyed working with him at Westhollow. After he retired, I enjoyed meeting him and Judy for lunch and catching up. May Roger Rest In Peace and may the family find solace in knowing that so many people are here to support them.

**Wendy Dominguez** - December 18, 2020 at 10:14 PM

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“ So sorry to hear this news.

The world has lost a great human. My deepest sympathies for his family.

Kelly Showalter

**Kelly Showalter** - December 18, 2020 at 05:40 PM

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“ If I have to choose three word to define Roger’s life, I will say Family, Faith, and Service. Since I met Roger almost 30 years ago, I always associated him with Judy. When we mentioned Roger to our daughter, she always asked is that the one married to Judy? In my daughter’s memory, they were always together. Also, I remember their 50th wedding anniversary where all his family was there and how in the timeline of married life, the family activities and trips where highlighted.

For over 15 years, we had a group of men that gathered monthly to pray, discuss religious topics and share a glass of wine and dessert. Some of the members died, some others moved out of Houston, but since the beginning Roger was there and always challenging our faith. It did not matter that we did not want to become a book club, Roger convinced us that was important. We did not want to read Richard Rohr, but he kept sending us the daily meditations that he considered worth reading until some of us subscribed. Recently he shared a letter from his church in California because it was important regarding social issues. Like one member of the group said to me, if there is someone that was ready to meet God it was Roger.

Service to others was also important to Roger. Although I never worked with him, he championed the different organizations that he was involved with. I remember his invitation many years ago to explore joining Executive Service Corps Houston because he believed that it was a good cause. More recently he regularly mentioned the Yesprep Schools as a way to help people progress in life.

I am honored to have met Roger my second day at work at Shell and to have developed a relationship over the years founded on our faith.

Piero Puccini

Piero Puccini - December 10, 2020 at 11:42 AM

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“ I am quite saddened by the passing of our friend Roger Rolke. Roger was one of my first managers at Shell, a mentor, and a dear friend. Roger’s model of servant leadership was of tremendous influence to me early in my career. I could always count on him for wise guidance and support.

We also shared a passion for education. As fellow University of Wisconsin alums we developed a special tie with our Alma Mater. And I will be forever grateful for getting me involved with YesPrep schools.

Griseida and I offer our deepest condolences to you Judy and your wonderful family. May you be comforted by the assurance that he is enjoying eternity with our Lord.

Carlos & Griseida Garcia

**Carlos Garcia** - December 07, 2020 at 09:39 AM



“ Well said.

**Russ Rhodes** - December 18, 2020 at 09:59 PM



“ Sending our love and prayers from Rossmoor and Christ the King Church. Will miss that smile. Condolences to all. Chris and Dick Bertrand and Rossmoor Friends of Christ the King.

**Chris Bertrand** - December 05, 2020 at 08:33 PM



“ Best brother ever. He will be missed.

**sally rolke burke** - December 04, 2020 at 12:36 PM



“ We send our condolences to Judy and all the family and we shall greatly miss our friend Roger. He was our Zoom master at our neighborhood book club where he will be sadly missed. We're distressed by the situation that prevents us from being with you at the church service. Bill and Ilene

**Bill and Ilene Crook** - December 04, 2020 at 11:16 AM



“ My heartfelt prayers and sympathy to Judy and her family for their loss. May the wonderful memories of your life together sustain you through this difficult time.

Love,  
Sara Griffin

**Sara Griffin** - December 04, 2020 at 11:16 AM

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“ I have a very personal story to share about the kindness and generosity of Roger and Judy. Three years ago our home was flooded by Hurricane Harvey. Our neighbors Jim and Jan Soller who are friends of Roger and Judy shared our story with them. The Rolke's at the time were in California and even though they had never met us they they offered up their home to our family of four and our four dogs. We stayed in their home for the next three weeks and then when they returned from California we continued to live with them for over a month. During this incredibly stressful time their tremendous act of kindness made everything so much easier for us. We also got to know this incredible warm, caring, fun loving couple.

When most people I know in our neighborhood talk about Hurricane Harvey they talk about all stress and struggle that the Hurricane brought there family. Our family had some of that but my number one memory is the wonderful friends we made who are like family to us.

Thoughts and Prayers go out to Judy and the rest of your family!

As a fellow Wisconsinite I wish I could enjoy another beer with you and Ella would love to make you a chocolate cake!

We will miss you Roger!

The Thurow Family

**Anthony Thurow** - December 04, 2020 at 09:40 AM

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“ I knew Roger for about 57 years, since we met in the doctoral program at Princeton University. When I finished, I joined Shell in California, and Roger followed a year or two later. Our careers followed separate courses, but we stayed in contact. Finally, our careers came back together in Houston, and for my last years with Shell, Roger was my boss. He was a good friend and a good boss.

I will never forget the time I told him he had made a stupid decision. It was a foolish thing to say, but it was uttered in a moment of passion, and Roger understood that. Under pressure to reduce the engineering research budget he had made the decision to terminate one of the major programs in my department and to reassign the staff. Looking back, and knowing the pressure he was under, it was probably the right decision, but I sure couldn't see it that way at the time. Roger never lost his composure, I regained mine, and we went on with the actions necessary to implement his decision. Over all of the subsequent years that we worked together, he never once brought it up. That was Roger.

After years of budget wrangling, I had enough, and when I was told to offer a "golden handshake" to staff in my department, I asked Roger if he would offer one to me. He said that he would if he could find a way to reorganize the directorate to operate with one less manager. He could, and he did, and I have been grateful ever since.

Our friendship has continued in the years of our retirement. Adele and I are devastated by the news of his loss. Judy, our thoughts and prayers are with you. You have lost a good man, but you had him for many years, and we know he enriched your life as he did for so many.

Paul (and Adele) Nelson

Paul Nelson - December 04, 2020 at 12:53 AM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Carol Gloeckler Macon - December 03, 2020 at 10:13 AM



“ Carol, I remember many of those faces! Thanks for sharing. Sally Rolke Burke

sally burke - December 04, 2020 at 12:33 PM



“ You're welcome, Sally. We all shared years of playing, studying and growing up together. It was a close and happy neighborhood, and I'm thankful for the memories. Roger was a dear friend.

Carol Gloeckler Macon - December 04, 2020 at 01:52 PM

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“ Judy and Family, I met Roger when he was brought into our men's movie group. While most of the time we met at Chris Carmouche's home, a couple of times we came together at my home where he enjoyed my wife Lorrie's spaghetti and meatballs, straight from Sicily.

Roger was so easy to be with, insightful, and considerate. He radiated his faith in Christ and love of others, and especially through his hope and endurance in his stroke, learning to walk again, and the loss of your daughter. He is no doubt enjoying the presence of God and will take care of us in our journeys. My sympathies go to you and family. Please know that you and your family are in my prayers. Jack Kehoe.

**Jack Kehoe** - December 02, 2020 at 11:01 PM

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“ We are so sorry to hear about Roger's passing. He was such a kind man and I will always remember his bright smile, great laugh and the times I spent with your family as a kid. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Kim McGrath and family

**kim McGrath** - December 02, 2020 at 06:31 PM

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“ With deep sympathy from one of the Driftwood krewe..Sarah Howell  
PS Roger Turner shared the news with me.  
Your are withme in thought and prayer.

**sarah Howell** - December 02, 2020 at 05:50 PM

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“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



**Burt Rothenberger** - December 02, 2020 at 03:22 PM



“ This is the way we will always remember Roger - full of life and joy and always spreading that joy to others. He was a dear friend, who will be greatly missed but fondly remembered. Our hearts go out to Judy and her family.

Gail and Burt

**Burt Rothenberger** - December 02, 2020 at 03:42 PM

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“ Judy, so very sorry to hear about your husbands passing. Please accept our sincere sympathy from our family to yours. You had a beautiful marriage and you were the perfect couple. Cherish your memories always! Prayers will continue to be Sent! May Roger Rest In Peace!  
Condolences,  
Lee, Corinne and Brent Vela  
Sugarland, Texas



**Corinne Vela** - December 02, 2020 at 12:43 PM

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“ Rest in peace Roger. Our deepest sympathies to Judy and family.

Fouad and Elida El-Gawly

**FOUAD GEORGE EL-GAWLY** - December 02, 2020 at 11:25 AM

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“ Roger was my date for the Junior prom and made it very special for me.

**Nancy A. (Lugar) Weiler** - December 01, 2020 at 12:31 PM

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“ I loved all of the stories that Roger would tell us when we were kids - gitchee gumies and peanut butter and jelly wars.

**Erin Abdelnour** - November 30, 2020 at 08:33 PM