



## Cecil A. Collins

June 8, 1936 - December 23, 2016

Cecil Allen Collins, cherished by his family and countless friends, is remembered as a loving husband, father, grandfather, father-in-law, uncle, and devoted friend. He passed away on Friday, December 23, 2016 at the age of 80.

Cecil was born to parents Blanche and Ray Collins on June 8, 1936 in Detroit, Michigan. He grew up the youngest of four siblings and married Mary Louise Grzena in 1953, sister of his close friend, Jack.

Cecil "fibbed" about his age when he hired into Fisher Corporation at age of 17 because with a wife and the first of 10 children to support, the word "lie" just doesn't seem to fit. Cecil started in the pressroom, doing whatever job he was assigned, eventually becoming the Director of Research and Development, working for the company for 51 years. For many years, after finishing the first shift at Fisher Corporation, he worked the second shift at various gas stations in the area.

In 1957 Cecil moved his ever growing family from Detroit to Waterford, Michigan.

In 1964 Cecil got the idea of a push button seat belt buckle. He built a prototype that he took home, placing it on the refrigerator until he was able to

work out some crude sketches which he took to the president of Fisher Corporation, Robert Fisher. Robert immediately saw the merit of Cecil's idea and applied for a worldwide patent with him. The issued patent was the start of an innovative business for the Fisher family, Fisher Corporation, and General Safety Corporation.

In 1969, Cecil decided to enlarge the 900 square foot house the family of 12 lived in by building a family room, two more bedrooms, and a 40 foot carport/garage. Money was still tight and he decided to do all of the work himself. He spent a lot of time at the library learning the basics of home building and then began a two-year long project, digging footings by hand, mixing and pouring concrete, and pounding nails. He approached this project as he did all projects, never allowing himself to be overwhelmed by its size but dissecting it into small, manageable pieces. This approach served Cecil well over the years because even though he left school in eighth grade he absorbed knowledge like a sponge and with his intuitive mechanical ability, he had 25 U.S. patents issued in his name. He continued to love tinkering and creatively solved problems until his death, e.g., taking apart an umbrella and using the opening/closing mechanism as a tool to pull up his socks.

In the early 1980's, Cecil moved with Mary and his youngest five children to Jupiter, Florida to become the Vice-President of Rybovich Boat Works, owned by Robert Fisher. After 10 years Robert sold the boatyard. Cecil returned to Michigan to become Director of Research and Development at General Safety Corporation where he remained until his retirement in 2004, At that time he moved back to Jupiter, Florida.

Once, a dear nephew, wisely observed that Cecil could enter a room of strangers, walk out with multiple lifelong friends, and be admired and respected by the remainder of those present.

In 2012, Cecil's loving wife of 58 years, Mary Lou passed away. Cecil grew close to Joan Miga who became his dear and constant companion, an unexpected but welcome blessing at this time in their lives.

Cecil is survived by his children, Allen (Kara) Collins, Kerrilyn O'Connor, Kelly (Gary) Brown, Daniel (Kimberly) Collins, Connie (William) Oblaczynski, Chris Pittman, Colleen (Thomas) FitzGerald, Michael (Melody Hackett) Collins, Carol (Linda Unwin) Collins, and Karen (Frederick) Porter; 34 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces, nephews, and friends.

In lieu of flowers, please make a contribution to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in memory of Cecil Collins and his special love for children. A Funeral Mass will be held 10:00 am Friday, December 30, 2016 at St. Peter Catholic Church, 1701 Indian Creek Parkway, Jupiter, FL. Committal service will follow in Riverside Memorial Park, Tequesta, FL.

# Tribute Wall



“ Cecil A. Collins

October 22, 2023 at 10:17 AM



“ *I will never forgot flying into Orlando for a vacation in the Keys with Cindy Reeves, to discover the hurricane had destroyed so many local cars that rentals were not available to us. We were both devastated. The next thing that came to mind was to see if Uncle Cecil had a solution via his large population of immediate family. Well, Uncle Cecil directed us to his son, who worked for a rental company in the Jupiter area. We got a cab, and Dan had our new vehicle ready to go. At that moment, both Uncle Cecil and Dan, became the closest connection we had to the higher power who takes care of all of us. Having Uncle Cecil in my life for 70 years, I have never seen any other expression on his face, but love and a gentle peace. I trust he is being cared for now by that same greater love that directed his life. May His peace fill all of the Collins' family in the big hole left by this wonderful man. Thank you, Connie, for sharing his video, which I keep watching. Love, Carl and Kathy*

**Kathy Provost Woloszyk - Green Valley, AZ - Family** - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

WF

“ Cecil, we loved you deeply. Your home was never without your warm and smiling face. We are so glad that we got to meet your wonderful wife and children. May you be resting peacefully in the arms of our beloved Lord. Our sympathy to your family, Joan and friends that loved you as much as we did. We will never forget you and your sense of humor and love for all kinds of wonderful gadgets. Cecil, you will truly be missed and remembered always..  
God Bless You

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**Wil, Mary Rose & Jimmy Fleurant - Jupiter, FL - Friend** - December 28, 2016 at 12:00 AM

DF

“ I have been blessed to be able to call Mr. Collins oldest child, Karen Porter, a dear friend and colleague for more than 20 years. Karen is a testament to the loving Collins family. I know from hearing Karen speak of her family over the years that they represent all family should be - loving, devoted, kind and honorable. And I know from Karen that this a tribute to her parents. Mr. Collins could have left no more important legacy than his amazing family.

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**Debi Cain - West Bloomfield, MI - Family Friend** - December 28, 2016 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ To Joan and the Collins Family.....we had the pleasure of meeting Cecil in Rhode Island. We found him to be so interesting, so personable, such a gentleman. We are saddened by his passing. Our thoughts, and prayers are with Joan and the entire Collins family. May he rest in peace.....

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**Cam Malone-Allen - Rotonda West, FL - Friend** - December 28, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JN

“ So very sorry to Cecil's family and Joan. Cecil was a lovely man and super neighbor. His kind spirit will be missed in our cul-de-sac. May god guide you all through this difficult time.

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**Jennifer and Ryan LaVoie - Jupiter, FL - Neighbor** - December 28, 2016 at 12:00 AM

NF

“ Based on our relationship with daughter Kerrilyn, we can only imagine the man that Mr. Collins was. Sending our deepest sympathy and wishing you love and light in this difficult time.

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**Nicole Milligan - Port St. Lucie, FL - Family Friend** - December 27, 2016 at 12:00 AM

TA

“ Sending my deepest sympathies and prayers to my Collins cousins and their families. I always remember seeing Uncle Cecil with a big warm smile. My parents were always so happy and relaxed when visiting your home so it was one of my favorite places to visit. May he be escorted by loving Angels to Heaven

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**Toni Merucci Montreuil - Maricopa, AZ** - December 27, 2016 at 12:00 AM

TC

“ Cecil was my boss at General Safety when I started my career in design back in 1987. He was kind and patient, a bit demanding, and just plain brilliant. I leaned so much from him and will never forget the wonderful mark he left on my life. All I am today has so much to do with what he was able to see in me all those years ago. I will miss you Cecil, and you will always have a special place in my heart. Rest in peace.

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**Tammy Korona - Clinton Township, MI - Coworker** - December 27, 2016 at 12:00 AM

BC

“ Heart felt condolences to the Collins family. I work for Cecil for many years at Fisher Corporation. I have great memories of working on special projects that next great idea Cecil came up with.

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**Ben Stroich - Troy, MI - Coworker** - December 27, 2016 at 12:00 AM

LF

“ Only met Cecile a couple of times through Joan but thoroughly enjoyed being in the company of such a delightful person. I pray all of the wonderful memories you have made with him will sustain you through this difficult time. I know that God will be with all of you. My prayers go out to all of you. God bless Lucille

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**Lucille Stewart - Mansfield, MA - Friend** - December 27, 2016 at 12:00 AM