



**Patrick R. Verigin** April 9, 1948 - February 7, 2014

Patrick Richard Verigin (Patrick “Kostic” Verigin), educator, golfer, scrabbler, and seasoned traveler, died on Friday, February 7, 2014, in Vancouver, B.C. He was 65.

Born to Pat and Helen Verigin on April 9, 1948, in Nelson, B.C., Patrick was a decorated track & field athlete in his youth. Along with his brothers Mike, Perry, and Andy, he worked on their family’s farm and later, at a nearby sawmill. He loved his grandmother’s raspberry pirozhki and Dr. Strange comics.

Pat was a founding student of Selkirk College. After two years, he transferred to Notre Dame University where he received a Bachelor of Science degree. Like his mother, Pat excelled in higher education. An inquisitive student and gifted mathematician, his supervisor advised him to pursue a Master’s thesis and a career within the academy.

A small-town boy, Pat elected instead to see the world. His lifelong fascination with foreign cultures and, especially, those of North and Western Africa, inspired him to travel abroad. At the age of 20, he received sponsorship from the Canadian Universities Service Overseas (CUSO) organization to live and teach in rural Nigeria for two years.

His arrival in Etinan coincided with the end of the 1967-1970 Nigerian Civil War. He taught Grade

13 mathematics and physics at Qua Iboe Mission Secondary School. During his stay, he proudly learned the local Ibibio language and ate the indigenous cuisine. Among his favourite dishes was “garri,” a fermented mash of cassava tubers.

Pat coached and played in the local basketball team, the only white man ever to do so. His students at Qua Iboe Mission each donated 6 pence to gift Pat with a hand-made “agbada,” or formal gown. It was beautifully decorated with numerical tables arranged in traditional patterns. Pat credits this experience with his decision to dedicate his life to teaching students from less fortunate backgrounds.

Upon his return to Canada, Pat completed a secondary education diploma from the University of British Columbia. He was placed at Frank Hurt Secondary in Surrey, B.C., which gave him direct access to students from lower-income households. Pat soon settled into a fulfilling career as a mathematics instructor. He remained at Frank Hurt for over 30 years until his retirement in 2006.

In early adulthood, Pat loved curling, Deep Space Nine, science fiction novels, and his ’68 Midget sports car. He continued to travel widely. Every Christmas break, Pat wintered in Hawaii. In the summer of 1982, Pat visited his brother Perry, who was stationed at the Canadian Forces Base in Lahr, West Germany. From the Black Forest region,

Pat traveled by land to Paris, France and enjoyed riding his motorbike on the meandering motorways of Northern Italy.

Pat coached track & field and ping pong at Frank Hurt. He was a founder of the lunchtime Sardine Club; every Tuesday, Pat and his fellow teachers ate sardines, raw onions, and bread. While rival "high culture" clubs soon flourished, such as a champagne club, only their club stood the test of time. Pat and his close friends also got together once every three weeks to play bridge, often late into the night, a tradition that he maintained for the past 20 years.

Among his colleagues, Pat was known as a devoted teacher who encouraged his students to reach their full potential. He would always devote extra attention to struggling students. In certain cases, he would grade based on effort rather than on results. Little did those students know that he "added up the wrongs instead of the rights" when scoring their exams. This way, they would pass. He retired Department Head.

Pat enjoyed golfing, hiking, and traveling with his son. They hiked the trails on Cypress Bowl every winter and made an ascent of the Coleman Glacier

on Mount Baker. Last year, they sailed down the river Nile together and were observers to the unfolding Egyptian Revolution. Pat said that it was the trip of a lifetime.

Everyone knew Pat as an extraordinarily kind, gentle, and compassionate man. He believed in crossing cultural barriers, in the bonds forged by true friendship, in helping others, and in keeping his obligations. He will be remembered as a devoted husband, friend, and father.

Pat was predeceased by his parents and his older brother, Mike, with whom he had fond memories of hunting and fishing trips. His successors include his wife, Eileen, of 26 years; his "chertiki" younger brothers, Andy and Perry; his son, Sean; and four nephews and one niece.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you make a donation to the charity of your choice located in Egypt, Ghana, Iran, Trinidad and Tobago, or the Congo. Pat had close friends from each of these countries.

A celebration of life will be held in Vancouver, B.C., with family and friends in the summer of 2014. May he rest in peace.



## In Memoriam Vechnaya Pamyat

Preserving the memory of our deceased family members and friends