



John Michael Carter

February 11, 1942 - November 16, 2022

John Michael Carter "Mike", 80, of Crawfordville, passed away at his home with loving family November 16, 2022.

John Michael Carter "Mike" was born February 11th, 1942, at the Dale Mabry field hospital in Tallahassee, Florida. Mike lived with gusto from the beginning—hunting, fishing, and gallivanting around the Big Bend. He and his family moved to Jacksonville when Mike was 12, where the fun continued!

He was a leader throughout his school years, holding various positions as a student body President, captaining many clubs and civic organizations, and excelling as a student athlete. Mike played basketball, was a champion diver, and played football as a powerful and dynamic running-back. A true "Renaissance man" it was on the shores of Lake Ellen in Wakulla County, around a campfire one night, that Mike realized the power of the written word. He discovered the book *Walden Pond* by Henry David Thoreau, and for the rest of his life, had a great reverence for learning and nature. The woods and water were his home.

Mike graduated from Robert E. Lee High School in Jacksonville, in the class of 1960. He loved his high school classmates, helping to plan and coordinate many reunions over the decades. Upon graduation, he worked as a garbage man in Yellowstone National Park, before enrolling at the University of Florida. He spent one semester at U.F. before he was off again—this time traveling to New York City where he worked as a mechanic, then earned his seaman's license and began working on ships. Aboard a freighter to France, he made a

new plan. Disembarking, he enrolled at the University of Madrid for a year, before returning to the U.S. to graduate from the University of Florida with a degree in Latin American Studies.

With the assistance of his grandfather Jerry W. Carter, a prominent Florida politician, and Governor Leroy Collins, Mike gathered letters of entry into numerous Central and South American countries. Forever thrifty, he began saving his money. Interrupting a history lecture one day, he offered to buy his professor's old motorcycle. Within the year, he was touring Latin America on the BMW. Mike kept incredible journals of all his travels, mailing his writings home to his parents periodically. He rode his motorcycle through cities and villages, making friends and recording what he saw. During his 13 month trip, he spent the most time in Brazil, believing he might even live his life there. When he returned to the U.S., he taught seventh grade history. Mike went from testing limits, to grading tests—a period in his life where he “never drank so many martinis.”

A new plan was formed... Mike enrolled at Cumberland Law School of Samford University in Alabama graduating in 1970. While in law school he earned his master's in History. He referred to law school as one of the best experiences of his life. He won awards for his skill in oratorical arguments and was admitted to the Florida and Georgia Bars. While living in Georgia, he married and welcomed two beautiful twin daughters, Andrea and Julia. In Atlanta, Mike worked as Assistant District Attorney, handling over 342 felony cases. He also worked as legal house counsel for the Life of Georgia insurance company. Craving adventure again, Mike began his plans for an even bigger international journey. In 1973, Mike backpacked throughout Europe, Africa, India, and Asia on a budget of \$3.00 a day. He again mailed home letters and journal entries. He climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro, swam in the waters of Victoria Falls, climbed the ruins of Greek and Roman civilization, danced in the Taj Mahal by moonlight, touched the walls of temple and shrine. He spent nights at fancy diplomatic parties, nights in jails, but mostly, he spent nights under the stars in the jungles, deserts, hills, mountains, plains, in the

woods, and on the water that he loved. After a year and a half abroad, he returned to the United States, 40 pounds lighter and ready to settle down. The President of his law school knew of two jobs for Mike—one out in Alaska which never panned out, and one in Tallahassee, Florida. Mike began practicing law at a Tallahassee firm but was soon moved to a new branch the firm was starting in Wakulla County. Mike's mother, Maxine Smith had relatives in Sopchoppy, and his parents had owned property around Lake Ellen for decades. When the law firm decided to close their Wakulla branch, Mike bought the building. In 1975, he began his own private law practice. Located directly across the street from the Courthouse in Crawfordville, he could represent his clients and file his motions, then slip over to Lake Ellen for duck hunting before the sun went down. Mike designed and built an eccentric yet altogether commodious bachelor pad high in the trees. His permed afro, bright green eyes, his love for the outdoors, and razor wit won him many friends.

Mike threw himself into Wakulla County civic life. He was a founding member of the Wakulla Men's Association and remained active in the Optimist Club to the end. He served on the Board of the Wakulla County Historical Society, was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, and helped compile the history of Wakulla County for the Wakulla Bicentennial Exhibition. Mike helped to entrust the property for the Sopchoppy Myron B. Hodge City Park, and donated his legal services to help numerous churches, non-profits, and community organizations. It was an early morning meeting of the Wakulla Optimists where Mike first met Andrea. In 10 minutes, he knew. Four years later in 1982 (Andrea needed time to consider) they married at Friendship Baptist Church, in Medart.

By this time, Mike was serving as Wakulla County Judge. He earned the nickname "Landslide Carter" in 1978 when he won his first election for the judgeship by 2 votes. After all, he'd won by double the votes necessary—you'd only need one to win. He served three terms as County Judge,

continuing his civic roles in the community. He was the Recreation Department's Easter Bunny, a neighborhood Santa Claus, hosted Brain Brawls, Spelling Bees, and spoke to history classes at Wakulla High School. Mike and Andrea had three daughters, Maria, Elena, and Lucy. His daughters Andrea and Julia came back into his life, and so, there he was—surrounded by women. Naturally, in any spare time, he was out in the woods or on the water. In 1990 Mike returned to his law practice. He became a soccer dad, science project dad, performance dad, and always a hunting and fishing dad. His devotion to Andrea was boundless. He was her consummate teammate in her career and her passions as an educator in Wakulla County.

In 2007, he retired from the practice of law. In retirement, he and Andrea sailed most of the major lakes in the United States. Mike loved sailing and would trailer his 26 foot MacGregor "The Vision" to any destination. He loved camping, fishing, and rafting in the mountains of North Carolina, and enjoyed excursions out West. He once owned a covered wagon. He'd eat his fish with scales on. His bucket list was long, and at the end, his bucket was full. Mike lived the biggest life.

Mike Carter is preceded in death by his parents, Maxine Smith Carter and Robert Gordon Carter, by his siblings: Frances Hollified Carter "Holly", Robert Timothy Carter "Tim", and by his daughter, Julia Ellen Carter. He is survived by his beloved wife, Andrea Faza Carter, and his daughters, Andrea P. Carter-Mundel (Sam Mundel), Maria Carter (Aurelia Aubert), Elena Myhre (Rick Myhre) and Lucy Carter. His two grandsons Bobby and Chesley Myhre, are the boys he always wanted. His chocolate lab, BC, remained devoted to the end.

Mike was a founding Board member and former President of the Wakulla Academic Boosters. The organization, a passion of Mike and Andrea's, endows and awards scholarships to deserving Wakulla County students. Tax-deductible contributions may be made to Wakulla Academic Boosters, Inc. at wakullaacademicboosters.org. Checks may be mailed to P.O. Box 448 Crawfordville Florida, 32326.

A Memorial Service will be held at Family Funeral Home in Harvey Young Chapel. The family will receive friends Friday, December 9, 2022, at 4:00 pm, service will begin at 5:00 pm and a reception will immediately follow the service at the Shiner's Club.

Skip & Trey Young with Family Funeral Home are assisting the Carter family.
850-926-5919 Familyfhc.com

Previous Events

Gathering of Friends

DEC 9. 4:00 PM (ET)

Family Funeral Home-Harvey Young Chapel
3106 Crawfordville Hwy.
Crawfordville, FL 32327
paula@familyfhc.com

Memorial Service

DEC 9. 5:00 PM (ET)

Family Funeral Home-Harvey Young Chapel
3106 Crawfordville Hwy.
Crawfordville, FL 32327
paula@familyfhc.com

Reception

DEC 9. 6:00 PM (ET)

Shiner's Club
Crawfordville Highway
Crawfordville, FL 32327

Tribute Wall



“ I’m so sorry to hear of Mr. Carter’s passing, but what a fulfilling and lovely life he lived! I worked in Mr. Carter’s office, while in high school, transcribing deposition tapes, filing paperwork and helping with billing. I learned a lot there and vividly remember how he’d eat a can or two of sardines before a deposition. Sending positive thoughts and my deepest condolences to his family and loved ones.

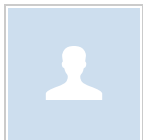
Sarah Carr - December 10, 2022 at 09:18 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of John Michael Carter.



December 09, 2022 at 12:14 PM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray* was purchased for the family of John Michael Carter.



December 07, 2022 at 02:12 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Michael Carter.* ”



December 06, 2022 at 11:03 PM



“ *Lorrie & Bo Carter purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of John Michael Carter.* ”



Lorrie & Bo Carter - December 06, 2022 at 10:57 AM



“ *Virginia, the Radigans, Keens, &Grices purchased the Serene Reflections Bouquet for the family of John Michael Carter.* ”



Virginia, the Radigans, Keens, &Grices - December 06, 2022 at 09:45 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of John Michael Carter.* ”



December 06, 2022 at 07:23 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of John Michael Carter.



December 05, 2022 at 02:30 PM



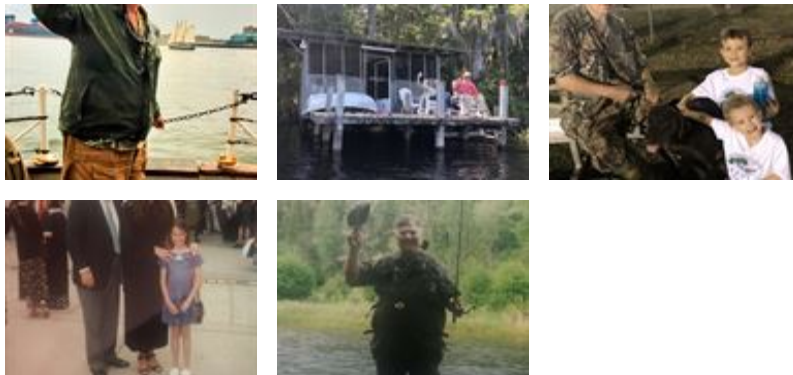
“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Michael Carter.



December 04, 2022 at 07:57 PM



“ 147 files added to the album LifeTributes



Family Funeral Home and Cremation Services - November 30, 2022 at 04:21 PM



“ 17 files added to the album Life Tributes



Family Funeral Home and Cremation Services - November 29, 2022 at 04:17 PM

HK

Over 20 years ago, while meeting Judge Carter, I thought, this is not your average judge. Mike was a force you could not ignore. He was a friend to Anne and me and that meant that his enthusiasm for life and his desire to help friends and the citizens of Wakulla County was always in plain sight. Mike was the best of friends.
Howard Kessler

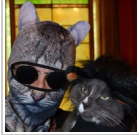
Howard Kessler - December 03, 2022 at 08:06 AM



“ Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of John Michael Carter.



November 28, 2022 at 09:07 AM



“ Mike Carter was all about making this county a better place to live, especially for the youth. He was one of the founding members of a group that began raising funding for academic scholarships for local deserving students. He supported many causes and had many passions. I was fortunate enough to have three of his daughters in the theater program @ Wakulla High and so I saw him frequently as he came to every performance. He would often press money in my hand when I went to shake it after a show and say "use this to pay for something nice for the graduating seniors", often the cost of their banquet or some other fee that perhaps they needed help with. Through the many years I knew him and his amazing wife Andrea he was always willing to help and support our program, long after his daughters had all graduated they still came to so many events. My husband & I swapped some fun stories with Mike about the "old days" when we first came to this county and many other enlightened subjects. He loved music and again was a big supporter of our music group, Wakulla, coming to many gigs. We will miss seeing him all around this county. We will miss his open & cheerful heart, but he will always be a part of this place. Sail on dear friend into the beautiful blue horizon. Respectfully, Susan & Snorri Solburg

Suzie Slobug - November 24, 2022 at 12:48 PM

AT

“ Mike was an inspiration to live life 100%, to dream dreams and then do them, and to love your family fiercely. He did life right! He will be so missed!

Anne Thurmond - November 19, 2022 at 07:07 PM