



Brian Calvin Watkins

March 24, 1958 - November 6, 2024

Brian “Skip” Watkins, 66, died on Wednesday, November 6, 2024 surrounded by his family. He was a beloved father, grandfather, brother, uncle, and friend to many.

Born in Goldsboro, North Carolina, Skip was the son of the late Maylon “M.E.” and Ella Watkins. He moved to Wilmington in 1978 to attend the University of North Carolina at Wilmington (UNCW), where he earned both his Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees. It was at UNCW that he met Valerie, his beloved wife of 38 years, who predeceased him.

Skip was active in the Wilmington area, dedicating much of his time to local organizations and community events. Many knew him as the longtime manager of the Cape Fear Fair and Expo, as well as the co-chair of the North Carolina Azalea Festival Circus Committee. He also proudly served as a New Hanover County Commissioner from 2014 to 2018.

He began his professional life at Hughes Brothers Tires before spending the majority of his career as an investment advisor. He later taught business courses at the University of Mount Olive and was a magistrate for the North Carolina Judicial Branch.

Skip had a lifelong love for Topsail Island, which began when he was a teenager. Throughout his life, he cherished time spent in Surf City, enjoying the laid-back energy of the island and quality time with family and friends.

Skip was a man of many interests and hobbies. He was a proud supporter of his children, attending countless baseball and softball games, orchestra

concerts, and school ceremonies. He also played keyboard and harmonica in a garage band, showcasing his love for music. Skip also had a lifelong affection for dogs, especially Beagles and Labrador Retrievers, who were cherished companions throughout his life.

He is survived by his children, V.J. (Clint) Watkins and Brian (Sara) Watkins; granddaughter, Maylon Watkins; brother, Brantley (Sharon) Watkins; sister-in-law, Anita Stack, brother-in-law, Gary (Deborah) Newlin; niece, Kimberly (David) Younts; nephew, James (Hannah) Webb; niece Candis Fortner; great-nephew, Samuel Younts; great-nephew, William Fortner; great-niece, Gracie Fortner, and many more family and friends.

A celebration of life will be held at the Riverlights Lakehouse located at 4124 Watercraft Ferry Ave Wilmington, NC 28412, on Sunday, November 17, 2024 from 12 - 2 PM. All are welcome to attend and join in remembering Skip's life.

Tribute Wall

AW

“ Dear VJ and Brian, Doug and I just heard the sad news of your father's passing. While reading this obituary, we read that your mother has passed, also.
This is such a shock. They were too young to leave this world. I always enjoyed your parents during school events.
I appreciate all their work and commitment to better the Wilmington community.
May your pain and sadness ease with time. Very sincerely, the Wall family.

Ann Wall - December 30, 2024 at 09:36 PM

LC

“ Today I found Skip on Facebook and wanted to reconnect but learned of his passing. Skip is an old high school friend...one of best buds back then, and I am remembering all of the times we spent together monkeying around at school and the beach.

I have fond memories of Skip because there are people you never forget.

May he find eternal companionship with all that he loves.

Lee Chesson - December 05, 2024 at 09:18 PM

JF

“ I'm glad I got to know u in the short time we met u definitely will be missed and loved.

Jessica Hitz and Michael Fitzgerald - November 16, 2024 at 02:46 PM

BB

“ I knew skip through Val as I was part of the UNCW swimming and Diving team from 1979 -1983. Valerie was a very special part of our team and Skip became one of us as well. I really enjoyed visiting him in Surf City and always enjoyed his company. They both will be missed very very much as they were both great wonderful people. God Rest their soul and my condolences to all the family and friends who knew and enjoyed Skip through the years!

Bob Blum - November 15, 2024 at 11:04 PM

MD

“ I will always remember Skip shadowing his brother and I at Surf City. A good kid and a great man!

MIKE DUBOIS - November 11, 2024 at 11:44 AM

AM

“ I got to know Skip at WCC and really got to know him in Wilmington !
Great guy and fun to hang out with !

Alan moss - November 11, 2024 at 10:24 AM

DD

“ My heartfelt condolences to the family. Skip, Valerie and I have been friends for so many years. We worked very closely when the Cape Fear Fair and Expo was on Carolina Beach Road for so many years. Through our relationship with NHC Coop Extension - Master Gardeners as well the 4-H Department we had Enviro Science Days at the fair for NHC Schools 4th graders. We also assisted with selling tickets at the ticket booths. What a wonderful time we had back in the day! A win-win for us!!! Such treasured memories! Praying with and for each of you doing this difficult time .

Danyce Dicks - November 10, 2024 at 10:43 PM

TJ

“ Heartfelt wishes to the family. God's peace be with you. Skip was a person of exceptional ability, energy, faith and character. He was a blessing to our community. He is missed.

Thomas Michael, Jr. - November 09, 2024 at 10:07 PM

DB

“ Skip and Valerie were a large part of our younger life..spent many nights listening to the garage band..loved his energy..so sorry for your loss.

Deb and Bobby Boyd

Debora Boyd - November 09, 2024 at 07:36 PM