



# Merrick Franklyn Harding

SEP 20, 1944 - JAN 24, 2024



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# Table of Contents

<b>Obituary</b> .....	Page 3
<b>Events</b> .....	Page 5
<b>Tribute Wall</b> .....	Page 6



# Merrick Franklyn Harding

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**M**errick Franklyn Harding, 79, of Pinellas Park, was born on September 20, 1944 in Washington, D.C. as the middle child to older brother Brooks Harding and younger sister Hope Harding Soukup. The family moved to St. Petersburg in June, 1959 where Merrick attended Lealman Jr. High and then Dixie Hollins High School, having graduated in 1963. Merrick then went on to attend St. Petersburg Junior College for his Associate's Degree, USF in Tampa receiving his BA & MA in Education. He then attended Nova University to receive his Doctorate of Education degree.

Merrick taught school for 35 years ranging from Social Studies, Civics, American and World History, Geography, Psychology and World Affairs among others. He touched a lot of lives throughout the county having taught history at Bishop Barry Catholic High School, 8th grade social studies at Pinellas Park Middle School, social studies at Meadowlawn Middle School, Clearwater High School adult education in social studies, Gibbs High School adult education in social studies. After retiring, he then continued to substitute teach for another 7 years.

Merrick met the love of his life, Theresa Rigby, while in high school in 1960. They were later married on July 15, 1965. They went on to have two daughters Yvette Marie in 1970 and Colette Renee in 1974.

Working on home projects and yard projects was a favorite pastime but none was more important than spending time with his family, going to the local Florida State Beaches and Parks, and once a year, go to the Don Cesar for a weekend of pool, beach and family time. He also loved all the pets the family had throughout his life. He enjoyed attending Gator games at the University of Florida, "GO GATORS!", being a season ticket holder for 22 years. Merrick was also a fan of all Tampa Bay sports attending USF games, "GO BULLS!", Buc games, "GO BUCS!", Rays games, "GO RAYS!", Rowdies, "GO ROWDIES!", and Lightning, "GO LIGHTNING!". When



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not attending in person, he would make sure to watch the games on TV.

Merrick is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, Theresa Rigby Harding; daughter Yvette Harding Elizondo and her husband Frank Elizondo and daughter Colette Harding, as well as sister Hope Soukup and his brother Brooks Harding.

Services will be held at a Memorial Park Cemetery on Friday, February 16th at 11:00am. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to some of Merrick's favorite local charities, Seaside Seabird Sanctuary,

<https://seasidebirdsantuary.org/donate>, or Clearwater Aquarium,

[https://give.clearwateraquarium.org/campaign/animal-care-fund/c478771?](https://give.clearwateraquarium.org/campaign/animal-care-fund/c478771?c_src=website&c_src2=footer)

[c\\_src=website&c\\_src2=footer](https://give.clearwateraquarium.org/campaign/animal-care-fund/c478771?c_src=website&c_src2=footer)




# Events


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## Graveside Service


 **Friday**, February 16, 2024


 11:00 AM ET

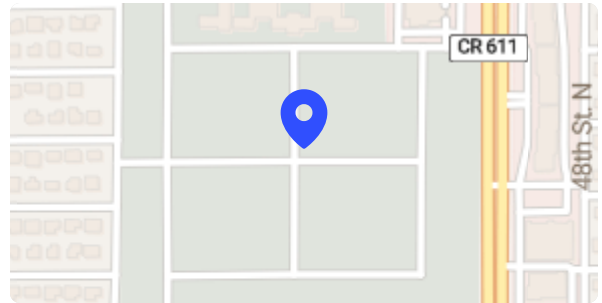
 **Memorial Park Cemetery**  
5750 49th Street North, St. Petersburg FL 33709



## Cemetery Details

 **Memorial Park Cemetery**  
5750 49th Street North, St. Petersburg FL 33709

 **(727) 369-8228**





## Tribute Wall

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**Anonymous** sent an Ocean Breeze Spray to the Harding family.



January 31 at 2:35 PM



**Kinsey, Chris, Aaron, And Calvin** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Merrick.



January 31 at 2:35 PM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Merrick by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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