



Richard Searle Beckhart

NOV 28, 1943 - NOV 2, 2025



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Richard Searle Beckhart

NOV 28, 1943 - NOV 2, 2025

Richard (“Rick”) Beckhart, aged 81 years, passed away peacefully at home with his family on November 2, 2025.

Rick was born on November 28, 1943 in Decatur, Illinois. He attended Illinois State University where he met his wife, Sherry. They married on December 17, 1966. After graduation, with the prospect of being drafted into the Army during Vietnam, Rick made the decision to apply for Navy Officer Candidate School (OCS) with Sherry following suit. They joined together as the first married couple to do so on August 28, 1967. Following their commissioning, they traveled to San Diego, CA reporting to their respective first duty stations, Rick to the USS Cleveland and Sherry to VF 121 at NAS Miramar. From that first assignment, in lock step, they spent the next 25 years serving their country while living in countries like Japan and Korea, places that a farm kid from central Illinois could hardly imagine seeing.

Rick and Sherry retired together on July 1, 1992 after serving 25 years in the Navy. Rick continued a life of service, teaching in the business school at San Diego High School for 17 years. There, he conceptualized and opened a student-run store selling coffee, soda, snacks, bagels and pizzas. The store generated enough revenue to award scholarships to deserving students in the School of Business.

Outside of his work life, Rick was an avid baseball fan from childhood following the Brooklyn Dodgers with his father and older brother, Jim. When Petco Park, the home of the Padres, opened in San Diego, he became a season ticket holder. In addition to baseball, he was a lover of the performing arts - everything from Shakespeare to avant-garde to Broadway musicals. He cherished time spent at the theater with Sherry and passed this love on to his children and grandchildren.



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Rick selflessly served his community, recently receiving his 6,000 volunteer-hour award as a Docent on the USS Midway Museum. There was nothing he enjoyed more than the Saturday morning watch leading tours in the engine room and teaching visitors about steam. He also served as a chair of the Board of Trustees at the First United Methodist Church in Chula Vista and chair of the scholarship committee. He was instrumental in establishing the Men's Maintenance Ministry as well.

Those who knew Rick knew that he was a stickler for physical fitness. Before most were up every morning, he had done his stretches and his twelve-minute planks. He then went to the gym to swim 3,000 yards and still had plenty of gas to walk his black labrador, Pepper, three and a half miles. In the last couple of years, Rick pared down his workout; however, even after his hospitalization, he was still doing four-minute planks! His tenacity was admired by many.

Rick is survived by his wife, Sherry, son, Michael (Christy), daughter, Samantha and grandchildren, Paul and Sydney. He will forever be remembered by his loved ones as a "glass half full" kind of guy who was always "just peachy".

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Rick's honor to the USS Midway Museum.




Events


Richard Searle Beckhart

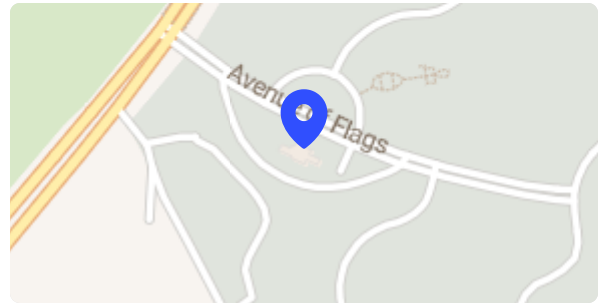
NOV 28, 1943 - NOV 2, 2025

Committal Service with Navy Honors

 **Friday**, January 9, 2026

 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM PT

 **Miramar National Cemetery**
5795 Nobel Drive, San Diego CA 92121





Tribute Wall

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Anonymous sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the Beckhart family.



January 8 at 3:46 PM



Daniel Schmitz lit a candle in honor of Richard.

In 1997, as a 17-year-old exchange student, I had the privilege of spending several formative months with the Beckhart family. Since this time Rick was like a father figure in my life. His positive outlook, deep care for others, and his ever "glass half full" spirit shaped me in ways I still carry today. He taught me that while life isn't always fair, we can always choose how we meet it. I cherish so many memories: our deep conversations while driving endless hours in the car or while doing the dishes every night, trips to the theater, our memorable RV-trip across the US and family celebrations together like my own wedding in Germany, Rick's and Sherry's golden anniversary in New York and —most recently— his 80th birthday and Thanksgiving in 2023. Rick was a remarkable man whose kindness and wisdom touched countless lives. I will forever be grateful for the time I shared with him and for the lasting influence he had on my life.



November 23 at 8:09 AM



Christy Beckhart lit a candle in honor of Richard.

My fondest memory of Daddy B. is my first. I still remember 23 years ago - Dad made me feel welcome into the family immediately. He was warm, funny and sincere. I have watched him over the years have that same effect on others, putting them at ease instantly. What a wonderful quality....Love, Christy B.



November 19 at 1:22 PM



Memories only last if you share them

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



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