



## Richard F. Walsh

March 29, 1946 - May 15, 2018

It is with great sadness that the family of Richard F. ("Dick") Walsh of Lanesborough announces his passing on May 15, 2018. As he had been a man of extraordinary strength and vigor throughout his life, his sudden and unexpected passing came as a shock to all who knew him. In accordance with his wishes, there were no services.

Born in Pittsfield on March 29, 1946 to the late Victor W. and Henrietta Kudlate Walsh, Dick attended local schools and graduated from Pittsfield High School with the class of 1964. He later received an Associate's Degree from Berkshire Community College, a Bachelor's Degree from UMass Amherst and a Master's Degree from Cambridge College. As a commuter, he put on many miles between Pittsfield, Amherst and Springfield during the course of studying for these degrees, often returning home late in the evening and then going to work the next day.

While still pursuing his education, Dick was appointed as the very first safety officer of the City of Pittsfield by then mayor Evan Dobbelle. Subsequently, in 1977, he became employed by the Massachusetts Division of Industrial Safety (now, the Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards). There, under the mentorship of late Director Andrew G. Currie, Dick quickly rose through the ranks, ultimately achieving the rank of Chief Supervising Inspector. Among his signature achievements in that capacity were his service on the drafting committee for the Department's first asbestos regulations and the development of an enforcement program around those regulations. This

included the selection and day-to-day supervision of a cadre of about a dozen field inspectors who served under him. The duties of this inspectional force were eventually expanded to include inspections relating to lead paint hazards and their abatement and, peripherally, to general construction safety, wage enforcement and contract compliance. Dick also served on the Department's Case Review Committee, which reviewed cases brought forward by the inspectors before higher tier enforcement actions were taken. During the early 1990s, he served as Acting Assistant Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industries for a period of time.

As the supervisor of his group of inspectors, Dick proved himself the natural leader that he had always shown himself to be. He exacted high standards from his inspectors, but in return, they could always count on him "having their backs." And in his dealings with the general public, he projected such capability and confidence that people wanted to follow him.

There is little doubt that the seriousness and passion with which Dick carried out the responsibilities of his important office, particularly those relating to asbestos, were heightened by the fact that his own father had died from mesothelioma, a form of cancer directly linked to asbestos exposure.

Dick retired in June of 2009, after 32 years of service with the Commonwealth of Mass.

An avid outdoors man, he loved to visit his brother-in-law, Ted Hoffman, on his 140 plus acre property. Also a craftsman by nature, he assisted Ted in remodeling and building an addition on the property. Dick liked nothing more than traversing the woods of the property on his ATV, and hunting there.

He was also very active in civic affairs, having served on the finance committee of the Town of Lanesboro and as Selectman of that town from 2004 to 2007. Among the projects that he took great pride in helping to bring about during his term as Selectman were the extension of the sidewalks from Lanesboro to Pittsfield and the upgrading of the Narragansett Avenue Playground.

A veteran of the U.S. Army Reserve, he enjoyed the company of many

friends. During his retirement, he loved to cook up new recipes and share the results with his pals. Most recently, he entered the "Best Chili Contest" held at the Madison Cafe and won first prize.

Dick was a larger-than-life kind of guy, whose many acquaintances and friends extended from Lanesboro and Pittsfield across the state to the highest levels of industry, organized labor and state government, and his booming laughter could often be heard everywhere he went. Occasionally, he could appear gruff. But he had a kind heart and would help anyone genuinely in need. Since his passing, many have come forth, expressing gratitude for some piece of advice or other assistance that Dick had given them at a critical juncture in their lives that had made all the difference.

He leaves behind his love and best friend, the former Jane M. Hoffman, whom he married in St. Marks Church on January 23, 1976.

He also leaves: two daughters, Kelly Guidi (Ron) and Tiffinny Siciliano (Rod) ; his sister, Pam Hugabone (Skip); his three brothers-in-law, Ted Hoffman, Michael Moran and Tim Moran, two sisters-in-law, Anne Moran and Kellie Backhaus (Gareth); an aunt, Elizabeth Intelisano; an aunt, Phyllis Kudlate, an uncle, Frank Kudlate, one granddaughter, Talia Guidi; one grandson, Ben Guidi; and one great grandson, Damien Bankers; and several nieces and nephews. A grandson, Christopher Banker, predeceased him in 2016.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or Shriners Hospitals for Children, care of the Dwyer Funeral Home, in his memory.

Dick was very proud of his Irish heritage and the traditional Irish Blessing meant a lot to him. Now, although he himself has now gone on, the words of the Blessing may be a fitting tribute to the good and decent man that he was: "And Until We Meet Again, May God Hold You in the Palm of His Hand." Rest in Peace, My Love.