



Brian Delaney

April 23, 1943 - June 24, 2022

Brian Joseph Delaney, 79, of Washington, DC, died in his home at Grand Oaks Assisted Living Community in Washington, DC on Friday, June 24, 2022, after a lengthy battle with Parkinson's Disease. He was surrounded with love by his family, his life partner, old friends, and dedicated caregivers.

Born April 23, 1943, in Ridgewood Queens, NY to Luke J. Delaney and Margaret O'Donnell Delaney, Brian was the eldest of three brothers. The family eventually moved to Knollwood Beach in Huntington, NY where Brian began his lifelong love of the water with a childhood spent swimming and clamming on the Long Island Sound.

Following graduation from Harborfields High School in Huntington, Brian moved to Pittsburg, KS where he earned his BA in 1966 and his MA in 1968, both in English, from Kansas State College, now Pittsburg State University. From there, he was able to join his love of people and the written and spoken word during a 40-year career as an English professor. From 1968-71, he taught at Memphis State University and from 1971-98 at Blue Ridge Community College where he chaired the Faculty Senate and was a founding member of the Virginia Community College Association. From 1998-2008, Brian taught at Northern Virginia Community College where he was an Associate Professor of English and Assistant Dean of the Humanities and Social Sciences Division. Brian's knowledge of literature and composition, his

quick wit and his mentorship were gifts to generations of students and colleagues, and in 2009 he was named Professor Emeritus. For several years following his retirement he continued to teach part-time.

For many years, Brian organized and led programs that gave him the chance to travel with his students. He took students from the Shenandoah Valley to see plays on Broadway in New York and escorted students from NOVA to the Globe Theatre in London. While there, he would invite students to join him for a morning run through Central Park or a pint in an English pub after the theatre. He loved sharing his awe of these dynamic cities, but he called the Shenandoah Valley and Washington, DC home for most of his life.

Brian was politically active, starting in 1967 when he campaigned door-to-door for Eugene McCarthy in Beatrice, Nebraska while still a student in Kansas through 2008 when he campaigned in the Shenandoah Valley for Barack Obama. While in the Shenandoah Valley, Brian volunteered as a local ACLU contact for prison inmates and was elected to the Town Council in Mt. Crawford, VA. Brian corresponded with Pulitzer Prize winning biographer Robert Caro during which Brian encouraged the author's persistence on his much-loved multi-volume installments covering President Lyndon Johnson.

During a sophomore poetry class, Brian met Judith Johnson, a pretty and bookish farm girl from Kansas. They married and were graced with the birth of Sean Edward Delaney in 1965. Jessica Catherine Delaney completed the family in 1969. Raising his children in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia afforded him many opportunities to share his appreciation of nature and the outdoors, from after school stops at swimming holes to planting the annual garden. Sean and Jessica were often happily exposed to local theatre and avant garde cinema through their father's interests and teaching.

Brian wholeheartedly loved his family, from his three grandchildren Evan,

Madeleine and Harrison to his brothers and niece and nephews. Brian and Evan enjoyed outdoor adventures together mountain biking, canoeing, white water rafting and hiking. He enjoyed walking Maddie and Harrison to school through Brooklyn's brownstone streets, camping with them in state parks and spending a day with each of them in New York every Christmas. Brian never missed a chance to travel or check in with an old friend or acquaintance. He was always on the move – long bike trips, competing internationally with the Washington Canoe Club, yearly beach vacations with Jessica's family and getting to London and Ireland whenever he could. Patriarch of the Delaney family for decades, Brian gave an annual invocation to the boisterous Thanksgiving table with a rendition of John Berryman's Minnesota Thanksgiving complete with Yippee!

On January 21, 2000, Brian met his life partner, Jan McCarthy, after responding to her personal ad in the Washington Post. Brian described that day as one of the most important in his life. For the next 22 years, they loved each other fully. They shared each other's friends and many interests, traveling the world together, camping, cycling, hiking, volunteering at Arena Stage, rooting for the Nats, and much more. With Brian, Jan learned to dance again. Most importantly, they became part of each other's family. Brian shared his grandchildren with Jan. Later when Jan's two daughters, Megan and Rachel, had children, Brian became the beloved "Baba" to Flora, Iris, and Oscar. Brian was loved dearly by Megan and Jeff, Rachel and James, and Jan's brother Jim. As Parkinson's took its toll on Brian these last years, Jan was at his side, loving, caring, and advocating for him to the end.

Brian was preceded in death by his parents, his brother Michael, his son Sean, and his second wife Paula Delaney. Brian is survived by his life partner Jan McCarthy, his loving daughter, Jessica Catherine Delaney (Blair Wallace); their children, Madeleine and Harrison Wallace; grandson Evan Delaney

(Jessica Bourque), and great granddaughter, Lillia Delaney, his devoted brother John Delaney (Jenny) and sister-in-law Jamie Delaney (wife of late brother Michael) and their children Hallie, Luke and Ryan Delaney.

Those who knew him will continue to treasure having known Brian for who he was: a caring teacher, father, grandfather, brother, partner and friend who will remain in their hearts.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to help fight Parkinson's Disease to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research at michaeljfox.org. A celebration of Brian's life will take place at the Arena Stage in Washington, DC on October 22, 2022. As per his request, Brian's ashes will be spread in the Long Island Sound.