

C. Perry Colwell

January 23, 1927 - October 3, 2020

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of C. Perry Colwell on Friday, October 2nd, The Triangle Community, especially the Chapel Hill Community, lost a dear friend.

Perry, and his second wife Betty Neese, arrived in Chapel Hill in the 1990s after they both retired from successful careers with AT&T. The move to Chapel Hill was the start of their golden years together, punctuated by a love of travel, a love of motorcycles and fast cars, and a deep commitment to each other.

If Perry was not traveling on a motorcycle across a distant country, taking a road trip around the United States, or exploring the high seas, he was consulting, advising, and guiding many a nonprofit in the region. His talent for leadership and his focus on organizational efficacy made Perry a hot commodity for local boards. During his time in this community, Perry served on countless boards including Planned Parenthood of Central North Carolina, the NC Center for Child and Family Health, Ackland Art Museum, Compass Center for Women, and the Executive Service Corps of the Triangle, among many others. He reveled in helping organizations be as effective as possible in serving the community. One of his great legacies is his work with the Triangle Community Foundation as a board member and as a donor advised fundholder. Giving was Perry's specialty and his deep joy, and beyond supporting many organizations, Perry also created a community fund through the Triangle Community Foundation to support single women (name fund).

Perry had a vision for our Triangle community and worked tirelessly to realize this vision through his nonprofit work. His dedication to women's rights and health made a difference for so many who reside here. He will forever be a hero to many, receiving quite a few community awards for his work including the Triangle Community Foundation's Legacy Award for Lifetime Achievement and the Chapel Hill - Carrboro Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award.

Perry was a community man, but he was also a family man and a friend of many. He is survived by family members, including his loved children, his son Chauncey P. Colwell (Karen Anderson), his daughter Louise Eyes (Paul) and his grandchildren Emma (Justin), Katie and Tommy Eyes. Perry is also survived by his wife, Betty Neese.

His immediate family was central to his heart, but Perry also opened his heart to many friends in the community that will forever be touched by his humor, kindness, and generosity of time and spirit. His passing leaves a hole in the community, but his legacy of working for the community is the example he set for all of us. It is a legacy that we have the privilege of continuing.

If you would like to honor Perry, honor his legacy in supporting women and children in this community by giving time or financial support to one of the following organizations: the Triangle Community Foundation (the fund that Perry created for women), 324 Blackwell Street, Durham, NC 27701, Planned Parenthood of the South Atlantic, PO Box 3258, Chapel Hill, NC 27515, or The Compass Center, 210 Henderson Street, NC 27514.