



Chester "Chet" Carter

March 20, 1932 - May 18, 2026

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Chester "Chet" Carter passed away peacefully on May 18, 2026, at the age of 94, after a long and remarkable life defined by professional achievement, tireless curiosity, and an adventurous spirit that carried him to the far corners of the world.

Born in Detroit on March 20, 1932, Chet would go on to build a life as expansive as the horizons he chased. A proud veteran of the United States Air Force during the Korean War era, he returned home to pursue what he considered his greatest professional foundation, a business degree from Wayne State University. He spoke of Wayne State with genuine affection throughout his life, crediting its rigorous education with the career that followed. He was a devoted member of the university's "Golden Alumni," a distinction reserved for graduates of more than 50 years, and remained connected to the institution he loved until the end.

That career took Chet to the highest levels of corporate America. As a compensation executive, he brought his expertise to some of the most recognized names in business, Vickers, Rockwell International, Bank of America, Security Pacific Bank, and Levi Strauss, and in doing so, traveled to more than 85 countries across the globe. He continued his international

travels until nearly the age of 92, a testament to the restless energy and genuine wonder that defined him.

While still in Michigan and raising his three daughters, Chet channeled his characteristic determination into one of his earliest and most ambitious projects: building a 22-foot sailboat entirely from scratch, a vessel that slept six. It was the kind of undertaking that set the tone for everything that would follow.

Chet's professional life eventually led him far from his Michigan roots, to Southern California, downtown San Francisco, and the broader Bay Area. In the wine country of Sonoma and Napa County, he undertook the complete restoration of an Italianate Victorian farmhouse in Petaluma, a labor of love that earned the property a coveted place on the Historical Registry, complete with a historical plaque, a distinction few restorations ever achieve. Ever the adventurer, Chet later traded the Bay Area for yet another chapter, relocating to Long Beach, Mississippi, where he settled just eight hours from the Gulf of Mexico, not far from where he had completed his Air Force training decades before. It was the kind of full-circle moment that seemed to follow him naturally through life.

That Long Beach home, so close to the water he loved, was taken from him entirely when Hurricane Katrina made landfall. The house was completely washed out to sea. In the wake of that loss, a gesture from his beloved alma mater became all the more meaningful: the Wayne State Alumni Association honored him with a replacement bachelor's degree, beautifully framed alongside an original watercolor of the campus, after his diploma was lost in the storm. It was a moment he cherished.

Those who met Chet rarely forgot him. He had a gift for conversation, drawing people in with his travel adventures, his sharp wit, and a memory that never seemed to dim. He could recall a favorite bar or restaurant in nearly any major

city on earth, and those who knew him learned quickly that if they tried to fact-check him, they would come up short. He was remarkably spot on. In his professional life, he was well regarded by colleagues across industries and known for investing in the people around him, mentoring many throughout his long career.

Chet is survived by his three daughters, from his late marriage to Patricia (Quatrine), Pamela (Tim) Haase, Gina (Quatrine) Carter-Ellis, and Christine Carter Conway, as well as many grandchildren. He is also survived by his brother, Thomas (Frances) Carter, and his sister, Isabelle (Edward) Goosen, and takes with him the joy of having been reunited with family in Michigan after Katrina, in his later years. He is further survived by several nieces and nephews, and a wide circle of extended family and friends.

Chet was preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Harriet Czepelewski; his brother, Lucius (Alda) Carter; and his sisters, Irene (Harrison) Waymouth and Virginia "Ginni" Chapel.

Arrangements are entrusted to Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home, Plymouth. A funeral mass and celebration of life are to be determined.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Belle Isle Conservancy, 99 Pleasure Drive, Detroit, MI 48207.

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