



Stephen Champagne

September 21, 1952 - September 5, 2024

Stephen Champagne, 71, of Canton, Michigan, passed away peacefully at Monroe Regional Hospital on September 5, 2024, after an incredibly courageous and hard fought battle with heart and kidney disease.

Steve was born in Providence, Rhode Island on September 21, 1952, the son of Henry and Patricia Higgins Champagne. Steve grew up in a rollicking, rambunctious and loving family of, eight, landing smack dab in the middle. He is survived by sisters Patricia Martin, Kathleen Cullen, Christine Babbidge, and Paula Greene, brother Gerald (Debra) Champagne, and many nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews. In addition to his parents, Steve was predeceased by two brothers, Brian Champagne and William Champagne, and his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Charles and Dorothy Nader.

On April 3, 1982, Steve married the love of his life, Janet Nader, who also survives him. Steve served Jan faithfully as her most loving and caring husband, friend and caregiver. Together, Jan and Steve celebrated over 42 years of marriage, enjoying taking trips together, visiting with their family and friends, and lovingly and humorously bickering over everything under the sun, giving Archie and Edith Bunker a true run for their money. Steve and Jan's love for each other was indeed a storybook love and that story continues without end. Steve's marriage to Jan brought him into the embrace of the

Nader family, who loved him as their own son and brother. Steve also served as the most devoted godfather and uncle, delighting in the many accomplishments of his nieces and nephews and enjoying the time he spent with them. There was simply no one prouder than Uncle Steve and he loved to brag about their achievements.

An avid hockey player in his youth, Steve was a star player on the Cranston East High School team, where he graduated in 1971. He continued his education at LaSalle University, graduating with a degree in Human Resources. Steve began his career with the Southland Corporation/7-Eleven, Inc. in 1976 and remained with the company for over 45 years, rising to the ranks of Regional HR Manager and overseeing operations in several states. During his time with 7-Eleven, he took on the very special duty of serving as co-chair of the Bill Lambeer/Isaiah Thomas Muscular Dystrophy Golf Outing for several years, working tirelessly to raise money for the charity and appearing at the Muscular Dystrophy telethon. Steve loved his colleagues at 7-Eleven and considered many of them part of his extended family.

Steve was also blessed with a devoted and caring contingency of friends and neighbors whom he loved like his own family, including his best buddy Richi Johnson, and the Thomas, Earl and Piazza families. Steve was deeply appreciative of their continual kindness and help over the years, and they could not have bestowed their generosity and affection upon a more grateful recipient.

A lifelong Detroit Red Wing and Tiger fan, Steve could often be heard swearing up a storm while watching the games, openly berating the umpire or referee's bad eyesight. He loved college football and was a die hard Ohio State Buckeye fan....so much so that Steve gleefully enjoyed displaying his red and grey team spirit with a myriad of Buckeye lawn ornaments, undaunted by the fact he was surrounded by a sea of maize and blue Michigan fans.

Always a child at heart, Steve loved the magic and wonder of Christmas. In his younger years, Steve thoroughly enjoyed lighting up his neighborhood with the most stunning and vibrant holiday display of decorations and lights. Most significantly, Steve even outdid Clark Griswold by miraculously managing not to shut down the local power grid, much to the relief of his neighbors, the Canton police and fire departments, and the Detroit International Airport.

Steve also loved to decorate his home and lawn with owls, to such a degree that his wife often threatened to kill him if he brought home another owl decoration. Brave man that he was, Steve continued to collect his owls, often deploying all manner of stealth, albeit unsuccessfully, to hide his newest acquisitions. Taking such chances on his life was second nature to Steve, who greatly enjoyed all types of gambling.

Steve also enjoyed watching and playing golf, spending countless hours traveling to and playing on the greatest golf courses around the country. He was never happy with his score, and could deliver the most colorful array of cuss words every time he missed a putt.

Indeed, as a consummate king of curmudgeonry, Steve excelled at being irascible, turning the air blue with epithets, and demonstrating a spectacular lack of filter. Such behavior, however, failed to disguise a man whose heart was two sizes too big, who loved beyond measure, and who was the most loyal and devoted husband, brother, uncle, son and friend. For those who had the privilege of knowing and loving Steve, he will be deeply missed but remain forever in their hearts.

Special thanks to Tony Nader, Kathi Cullen and Roberta Cullen for remaining by Steve's side and being fierce advocates for his comfort and care during his

final journey. Per Steve's wishes, cremation has taken place and a memorial service will be planned at a later time.

For those wishing to honor Steve's memory, donations may be made to a charity of their choice.

To share a memory, please use the Share a Memory tab on this webpage.

Tribute Wall

JL

“ I have just heard of the loss of Steve. I worked with him at 7-Eleven from 1984 to 2011 as his admin and co-worker. I remember interviewing with Steve and his office being covered with owls. Till this day, when ever I see an owl figurine, Steve enters my thoughts. Both Steve and Jan were more than co-workers, they were family. They were around for me and my son during some difficult times and for that I'll be forever grateful. He was an amazing man, friend, boss and co-worker. Jan, you are in my thoughts and prayers. Please let me know when the memorial is, I wouldn't miss it. Rest in peace Steve, you will truly be missed my friend. Jeanette (Stefanski) Lamoureaux

Jeanette Lamoureaux - October 23, 2024 at 11:45 AM

CF

“ What can I say that someone hasn't already said. WOW, AWESOME, KIND are just some of the words that describe Steve He was a great friend to me along with Jan. They both loved and cared for each other. Just gone way to soon. Will miss you and your smile and laughter. Rest in peace forever friend. Cheryl Funke

Cheryl Funke - September 16, 2024 at 11:00 AM

MM

“ Steve was my fearless leader that was a wonderful human being to me but I did enjoy pushing his buttons quite a bit and he deserves it in those times. He believed in everyone's capabilities and was fair. He loved Jan & always spoke how she was his secret weapon finding all the gadgets for him on the internet. It wasn't only a month ago him and I touched base and I will miss him dearly. 🙏

michelle morgan - September 13, 2024 at 04:44 PM

KE

“ Steve you are deeply missed. Even though it has been years I can still see us laughing so hard in your office. It has been a pleasure to share some of your life.

Keith - September 11, 2024 at 09:04 AM

BJ

“ I am saddened learning that Steve has passed. He was kind and well respected by all. Rest in peace my Friend.

Brad Jenkins - September 10, 2024 at 10:50 AM

JA

“ Steve loved 7-Eleven memorabilia, any time I had anything with a 7-11 logo, I would save it for Steve no matter what it was, pen, shirt, bag, etc and he would be so excited. He will truly be missed!
Condolences to Jan & the family!

Jennifer Ash-McCall - September 10, 2024 at 10:44 AM

JL

“ Steve was a very special guy for sure. Had the privilege to be a fellow HR associate at The Southland Corporation/7-Eleven in Dallas. Glad we crossed paths.

Janie Linders - September 10, 2024 at 10:39 AM

JA

“ I met Steve many years ago working with him at 7-Eleven. He was a kind crusader, often bringing up issues to improve end results. He would occasionally share personal stories and had a wicked but caring sense of humor. He shared stories of what he said was the best thing that ever happened to him ... his love of Jan. He, also, shared stories of his love of his nephew, and nieces, golf and gambling. He will be missed but his spirit will echo among us.

Judy Affek - September 10, 2024 at 08:55 AM

JO

“ My heartfelt condolences to all of Stephen’s family. I was fortunate to have grown up with great Aunts, Uncles, and many Cousins. Steve was one of the many I admired and respected. I will always remember his humor and sly smile. Another good man gone but never forgotten. ❤️

John OBrien - September 10, 2024 at 12:19 AM

JO

“Jan, condolences from the Janet and Steve Telego, Sr., family. Although we did not know your husband his obituary was very descriptive of the story of his life, accomplishments, and love of you and your family.



I enjoyed the following comment in the obituary “Steve excelled at being irascible, turning the air blue with epithets, and demonstrating a spectacular lack of filter.” I just loved that creative use of words in describing Steve.

*I wish I would have met Steve!
I think we could have had many interesting discussions.*

May he rest in peace and be greeted at the gates of heaven into the loving arms of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Janet and Steve Telego, Sr., Niles, Ohio

Janet and Steve Telego, Sr. Niles, Ohio - September 09, 2024 at 11:00 PM

MW

“I worked with Steve from 1983 to 2000 as his admin and I left to have a baby and never went back to 7-Eleven. Most recently, I reached out to Steve after 23 years went by and he opened his house and arms to me and I was able to visit with him and Jan. The time apart was gone the very second I saw him. He was always so kind and sweet. Very sad to hear he is gone but I know in my heart Heaven gained a good man! I know he will be Jan’s guardian angel and will watch over her! I am blessed to have known Steve and Jan!
Xoxo

Melynda Wendell - September 09, 2024 at 06:19 PM

JH

“ My condolences to all members of Steve’s family, and especially his beloved Jan. Steve and I were colleagues at 7-Eleven HR for 37 years, and retired in the same week. We remained dear friends and stayed in touch via regular phone calls for the past 4 years. Steve was one of my dearest friends. We laughed and cussed a lot together! When I went through a long illness, Steve and Jan were so supportive of me, helping to keep my spirits up.

Steve always told pretty much anyone he was talking with that he was “the luckiest man in the world” to be married to Jan, the love of his life. So wonderful!

It’s hard to believe that big heart finally gave out. RIP, my dear friend!

Janet Henry - September 09, 2024 at 05:14 PM

KM

Jan, I'm so saddened to hear of Steve's passing. I'll never forget him from our 7-Eleven days in Livonia. He was key in my being hired into one of the best group of people I've worked with. Steve was so kind and funny, ripping off some colorful language from time to time. I remember having the pleasure of seeing him one day at Richardsons drug store in canton and we spent time catching up, which I so enjoyed! He will be sorely missed by all that knew and lived him. I remember how much he loved you Jan, but he is now your angel. Rest in paradise Steve, you will not be forgotten. Please let me know when his memorial service is. I would be honored to attend.

Kathy Meister

Kathy Meister - September 09, 2024 at 06:26 PM

TC

I worked with Steve between 2004 and 2010, at 7-Eleven. He helped me numerous times navigate around some situations and transfers as I bounced around Divisions and jobs. I even left 7-Eleven for a short time and decided to seek a return, and Steve fully supported that and found a spot for me.

While working remotely in the New England markets, Steve fought for a spot back in Chicagoland for me in order for my wife to complete her studies in the region, with me by her side :)

Steve was good to me. Steve cared. His approach to people was very old -school. He had a tough gig running the HR department in a vast region and he did this while making sure the company's objectives were met, all while taking care of people at the same time.

I offer my best thoughts to his family and former SEI cohorts.

Rest In Peace, Steve.

Tim Clifford.

Tim Clifford - September 09, 2024 at 09:38 PM