



Carl "Sonny" Bongirno

August 9, 1937 - March 5, 2024

Carl "Sonny" Bongirno. Born Aug. 9, 1937, died March 5, 2024. Preceded in death by his wife, Carolyn; parents, Ann and Sam Bongirno; brothers, John and Sam. Survived by his children, Cara (Bret) Griebenow and Chris (Tiffany) Bongirno; and grandchildren, Ryan, Anthony and Jordan. Born and raised in Pueblo, Colo., Carl met his beautiful wife Carolyn in high school. They married and after attending Pueblo Community College they moved to Denver where he graduated from the University of Denver and soon after became a CPA. After several employment opportunities, he signed on with Celebrity Sports Center in Denver which was owned by Walt Disney Productions. After a stint there, he was transferred to Disneyland and the legacy started. After working directly for Walt Disney, Carl held several positions within the company, leading financial departments including vice president of finance for Walt Disney World. He was on the Board of SunTrust Bank in Florida and eventually became the president of Walt Disney Imagineering. He was instrumental in the opening of Tokyo Disneyland, Epcot Center and the initial development of Euro Disneyland. For a decade, between 1979 and his retirement in 1989, he led the Disney Imagineers to unimagined heights of creative achievement, worldwide expansion and unprecedented growth and change, both within the organization and within the themed entertainment industry. He was inducted as a Disney Legend in 2007, forever acknowledging his contribution to the Walt Disney Company and the happiness of families and children everywhere. He was a devoted husband, father and grandfather.

He always ensured the family had exciting adventures, always made time to attend school performances and was the host of many neighborhood and family parties. Many described Carl as never having met a stranger, and he was considered by many to be a part of their family. He was known for checking in with family and friends, and offered support and advice when it was needed. He and Carolyn were avid tennis players in their 30's, and devoted golfers in their 40's, 50's and 60's. He was an experienced private pilot for many years and owned his own airplane, a Moony 201. He achieved his commercial, glider and acrobatic certifications. Flying was a true passion. He was happiest when he was in the skies. He will be missed by family, friends and colleagues, but leaves a legacy of love, compassion, leadership, devotion and excellence. A service will be held at 11 a.m. March 12, 2024, at Roselawn Chapel. Reception to follow.

Previous Events

Service

MAR 12. 11:00 AM (MT)

Roselawn Funeral Home, Crematory & Cemetery

1706 Roselawn Road

Pueblo, CO 81006

(719) 542-2934

<http://www.roselawnpueblo.org>

Tribute Wall

AG

“ So very sorry for the loss of your Dad, even though not there in person my thoughts and prayers are with your family.
Arleyne Glasser

Arleyne Glasser - March 14, 2024 at 02:55 PM

SA

“ Carl always was “real” and never forgot his “roots” and where he came from in the midst of his success.

SamPantleo - March 13, 2024 at 08:49 AM

JM

“ It was such a blessing to have had a chance to meet Carl and to hear his stories. He was always so kind and cheerful even when I knew he was in pain. I’m sending my love and prayers to the Bongirno family. Thank you Chris for bringing your father into my life.

Jocelyn Martinez - March 12, 2024 at 08:08 PM

FB

“ From Jody & Randy Workman & Joe Bongirno planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Carl "Sonny" Bongirno.

From Jody & Randy Workman & Joe Bongirno - March 10, 2024 at 08:26 PM

FB

“ From Jody & Randy Workman & Joe Bongirno purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Carl "Sonny" Bongirno.



From Jody & Randy Workman & Joe Bongirno - March 10, 2024 at 08:26 PM

OB

“ OSMS Birds planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Carl "Sonny" Bongirno.

OSMS Birds - March 09, 2024 at 05:16 PM

OB

“ OSMS Birds purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Carl "Sonny" Bongirno.



OSMS Birds - March 09, 2024 at 05:16 PM

KL

“ Keith Bongirno & Barbara Lindberg purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Carl "Sonny" Bongirno.



Keith Bongirno & Barbara Lindberg - March 09, 2024 at 12:24 PM

KL

“ Keith Bongirno & Barbara Lindberg planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Carl "Sonny" Bongirno.

Keith Bongirno & Barbara Lindberg - March 09, 2024 at 12:24 PM

JP

“ Carl was such an amazing man. I enjoyed playing golf with him at PGA West in La Quinta CA and at the Pueblo Country Club. I have a wonderful memory of the time we were partners in a tournament event at the Pueblo Country Club. On the 6th hole I got a hole in one witnessed by Carl. I actually think that he was more excited than I was. He had a huge smile on his face and kept talking about it for the rest of the round. That is the kind of man Carl was. I am glad now that he no longer has to deal with pain and his other medical issues. The benefit is that he will now be with his high school sweetheart and wife.

john Peters - March 08, 2024 at 01:44 PM

TF

“ The Bolen Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Carl "Sonny" Bongirno.



The Bolen Family - March 08, 2024 at 12:18 PM

BL

“ When you lose someone you love you gain an Angel. It was a joy to be in the presence and care for this amazing Legend Carl wishing you comfort and peace my deepest sympathies 🌸❤️

Bea Lobato - March 07, 2024 at 05:37 PM

BA

“ Carl has been a part of our family since the 1960s. He is a dear friend and a brilliant professional colleague and will be missed but also remain with us forever through his great kindness, sense of humor and brilliant leadership in our Disney careers. -The Allen Family

Bob Allen - March 07, 2024 at 03:27 PM

TB

We only knew Carl for a few months but his kindness and large personality touched our life in a special way by bringing so much joy and excitement to our son, Grant. Carl remained true to what made him a LEGEND in the greatest entertainment business of our lifetime. He was a great man.

Tim and Carol Bolen

Tim Bolen - March 08, 2024 at 12:22 PM