

Clifford Allen Retzke

August 13, 1943 (Chicago, IL) October 3, 2026 (Rockford, IL)

Clifford “Cliff” A. Retzke, of Rockford, passed away on Saturday, October 3, 2026. Born on August 13, 1943, in Chicago, IL, the son of Charles H. and Lenore (Johnson) Retzke. He married his wife, Bette, on August 10, 1984, in Rockford, and remained married for 30 years until her passing on April 13, 2015.



Cliff attended Rockford Public Schools and graduated with the West High School Class of 1961. In High School he ran Track and played Football. After High School, he attended Northern Illinois University and went on to build a long and respected career, working for 32 years at Rockford Acromatics Products as a plant manager. His commitment to his work reflected the same dependability and strength that shaped the rest of his life.

Cliff found joy in the things that brought people together. He loved golfing with his wife, Bette, and enjoyed playing pool and fishing. He had a special fondness for classic cars and was a die-hard Bears fan whose enthusiasm surely never faded with the season. He also loved dogs, especially his Great Dane, Moose, whose companionship held a special place in his heart.

Travel was one of the great pleasures of his life. He loved spending summers in Wisconsin and looked forward each year to a month in Florida, making memories in places that became part of the rhythm of his life. He was also an active member of several clubs, including the SMSF Club, LLL Club, Blackhawk Athletic Club, and Lombardi Club. In service to others, he volunteered for the Fire Department as an EMT, offering his time and care in moments when it mattered most.

Cliff is survived by his children, Jeanne (Chuck) Lee, Tony Rudolph, Kristin (Scott) Free; his sister, Karen (Russ) Oellig; his grandchildren, Nicholas, Autumn, Jaime, Jason, Jenna, Alysia, Kelsie, and Dylan; his great grandchildren, Jayce, Khloe,

Mayson, Everett, Walker, Olivia, Arthur, Nathan, Avery and Clara; his daughter-in-law, Nancie Rudolph; and his numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins. He is preceded by his wife, Bette Retzke; and children, John Rudolph and Michele Thorn.



The family would like to give a thank you to his caretaker, Jaime Posadas.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, November 7, 2026, from 12:30 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. at Fitzgerald Funeral Home and Crematory, 1860 S. Mulford Rd., Rockford, IL, 61108. Please make memorials to St. Judes Children Research Hospital or to the Wounded Warrior Project in Cliff's honor. To share memories and condolences please visit, www.fitzgeraldfh.com.

References:

[Clifford A. Retzke Obituary October 3, 2026 - Fitzgerald Funeral Home & Crematory LTD.](#)