

Stuart Alan Grinnell  
May 21, 1943 - October 29, 2020



STUART ALLEN GRINNELL  
Basketball 1, Letter 1; Intra-  
murals 2, 3; Junior Class 3;  
Senior Class 4; Sophomore Class  
2.



Stuart Alan Grinnell, 77, retired Director of Tompkins County Mental Health Services, died Thursday, October 29, 2020 at Strong Memorial Hospital, Rochester, NY.

Stu grew up in Fall Creek. He hunted the farms and fields around Ithaca and fished the lake and streams with his father, his brother and his friends. He rode his bike to the golf course, carrying his golf clubs in a wagon behind him. He went to the neighborhood bar, much before he was old enough to drink, where, among others, he got to know the Cornell hockey players and begin his love of Cornell hockey.

From a family that favored work over education, Stu followed his father to work at NCR when he graduated high school. A summer of type setting there propelled him to Ithaca College in the fall where he earned a warning letter his first semester. Over the years he developed into a dean's list student, but he never forgot that incomplete he got in music because the professor wouldn't let him drop the course before the cut off.

Awaiting the draft, he took a job as a Probation Officer and was assigned the task of working with the draft board in preparing presentence investigations. Appreciative of his work, the local

draft board petitioned to have probation officers exempt, a benefit Stu forever felt conflicted about as he heard daily of his friends dying in Vietnam.

At a time when the Tompkins County Probation Department lead the state in innovative programs, Stu became director and served until he felt it was time for him to learn more and enrolled in Syracuse University School of Social Work. From his graduation until his retirement in his 70's, Stu worked with disadvantaged, disenfranchised youth, some of whom surprised his high school aged daughter by telling her they wished they had Stu as their dad. He was comfortable and playful with children; he could absorb their very painful circumstances and give back to them a sense of hope and meaning. For some years he was director of the Tompkins County Mental Health Clinic, and after officially retiring, he continued to provide therapy to children in outlying schools - Groton, Dryden, Newfield.

Stu was not an intellectual. He was intelligent, worldly smart. As one of his grad school supervisors said, "if the world is coming to an end, I want to be with Stu. He'll know what to do." He was a private man, often silent, and completely capable of being a curmudgeon. He loved watching Cornell hockey and wrestling, Ithaca football, and proudly sat through hours of swim meets and Ithaca High tennis matches to watch his daughter compete. He also enjoyed laughing and had that comedian's way of twisting reality to see something surprising and funny. Bryn proudly says that if everyone had a dad like Stu, the world would be a very different place. To be loved by Stu was to be seen for who you are, and at the same time to be loved completely and unconditionally. He had your back, like the warm and all encompassing way he hugged you. And Stu was a caretaker, not only in the manly ways of painting the house, refinishing furniture and fixing whatever needed to be fixed, but by cooking, cleaning and doing the laundry.

Stu is survived by his wife, Joan Lovejoy, his daughter Bryn Lovejoy-Grinnell (Jeff Leibo), and his beloved grandsons Theo,

Beckett and Reed. Also surviving are four nieces Stu treasured; Brenda Crosby (Joe); Diane Burch (Peter); Barbie Rhodes; and Debbie Miller (Tom) and their children. We will have a celebration of Stu's life next summer. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to the YMCA of Ithaca, or Ding Darling Wildlife Refuge in Sanibel, Florida.