



## Richard Freedman

July 21, 1956 - March 31, 2024

Richard “Rich” Freedman died on March 30, with his wife Megan at his side.

Retiring Jan. 4, 2022 after 27 years working as a reporter and editor for the Vallejo Times-Herald, Rich was the son of Bernard Freedman, who died in 2017 at age 99, and Claire Freedman, who died in 2001 at age 81.

Rich’s greatest love was his wife, Megan. The two were married on Sept. 26, 2004, in Vallejo.

Rich is survived by his wife Megan; step-children Toby, Charlotte and Beau (Belisle); son-in-law Mike Payne; and grandsons Baker and Caswell Payne.

He was predeceased in death by his son, Cameron (2020, age 26), his sister, Lynn Weiss, and his parents.

Rich’s accomplishments are numerous, including Benicia Man of the Year, The 2013 Humanitarian of the Year by Theta Pi Chapter, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity in Vallejo, 2009 West Coast Blues Hall of Fame Award as Blues Journalist of the Year, the California Commendation Medal by the Military Dept., State of California in 2003, and the Doctor of Medicine WebMD diploma, compliments of his sister-in-law, Amy Johnson Bax.

Rich was a big sports fan, including the San Francisco Giants, 49ers and Golden State Warriors. He loved baseball the most, having played until he was 16 when a blown elbow and inability to hit a curveball ended his fantasy of playing minor league baseball.

Rich also loved stand-up comedy, comedy movies, and was a big fan of singer Brandi Carlile.

Rich graduated from Ygnacio Valley High School in Concord (Class of 1974), Diablo Valley College, and San Jose State University. His first full-time newspaper job was with the Valley Times in Pleasanton. That building is now a Mexican food market.

At the Vallejo Times-Herald, where he worked for 27 years, Rich was, as his editor Jack F.K. Bungart says, “a legend.” He served as a reporter before becoming the paper’s longtime community editor. He also wrote a weekly column, which entertained his fans with wit, wisdom, cynicism and a healthy dose of snark.

Overseeing the Vallejo-Times Herald’s Community Christmas Card every year, Rich took pride in helping raise nearly \$500,000 to help feed the local hungry.

Upon retirement, Rich received a proclamation from then Congressman Mike Thompson and a Resolution from the California Legislature signed by state Sen. Bill Dodd and Assemblyman Tim Grayson

Rich’s first honor in retirement was serving as the Grand Marshal of Vallejo’s July 4 parade.

Rich would stay busy, taking freelance assignments for Martin Media as road manager for several entertainers, including comedians Paula Poundstone,

Rob Schneider, and the improv group, "Whose Live, Anyway?" Rich traveled to exotic stops as Salt Lake City, Kansas City, KS, and Santa Fe, NM.

#### Visitation

Friday, April 5, 4 - 6pm, Passalacqua Funeral Chapel, 901 W 2nd Street,  
Benicia

Please visit the online tribute at <https://www.passalacquafuneralchapel.com>.

#### Funeral Service

Sunday, April 7, 3pm, Northgate Christian Fellowship, 2201 Lake Herman Rd.,  
Benicia

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR **5**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PT)

Passalacqua Funeral Chapel  
901 W Second Street  
Benicia, CA 94510  
(707) 745-3130  
info@passalacquafuneralchapel.com  
<https://www.passalacquafuneralchapel.com>

## Funeral Service

APR **7**. 3:00 PM (PT)

Northgate Christian Fellowship Church  
2201 Lake Herman Rd  
Benicia, CA 94510  
(707) 747-5855

# Tribute Wall

CJ

“ Sorry that I'm just seeing this now in June 2025.. I moved away from Vallejo in 2012. Rich was a great guy, and I only knew him for a short period of time in 2004, but came to my house twice, in 2004 and 2005 for an interview for the Times Herald. You will be missed buddy! Carl

Carl Johnson - June 30, 2025 at 01:19 PM

SG

“ Susan Cohen Grossman purchased the Ghirardelli Galore Gift Tin for the family of Richard Freedman.



Susan Cohen Grossman - April 13, 2024 at 12:20 AM

RM

“ Rich was a great person who was not only funny, compassionate, and a great friend, but a great writer. From the 90's on I always had to hold my breath and cringe before I read the paper when his articles appeared, knowing something about Vallejo politics would mention my name, my buddy Dan Donahue, and Mayor Exline. Also the fundraisers at the Senior Center, Loma Vista Farms, and him MC ing comedy shows. Mine and Michele love and condolences to Megan and the entire family. Rest In Peace my friend. Ray Martin

Ray Martin - April 07, 2024 at 11:47 AM

KR

“ Kenny Ross planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard Freedman.

Kenny Ross - April 06, 2024 at 07:48 PM

KR

“ Kenny Ross purchased the *Your Light Shines* for the family of Richard Freedman.



Kenny Ross - April 06, 2024 at 07:48 PM

JL

“ Rich, you are already so dearly missed. You left a mark wherever you went. The communities that you have impacted will forever be grateful to you. A part of my heart and mind are at peace knowing you're in heaven sharing laughs and hugs with Cameron again... Both of you are so dearly missed. Love you guys

jlc - April 06, 2024 at 08:31 AM

MC

“ Richard will be missed by everyone. He was always friendly to our family and liked talking about what things were going for us. A true, dear, wonderful friend to all...the Chestnut family.

Merlin Chestnut - April 05, 2024 at 06:53 PM

MC

“ *Monica Carlos sent a virtual gift in memory of Richard Freedman*



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**Monica (Monzie) Carlos** - April 05, 2024 at 04:11 PM

MC

“ *Monica Carlos lit a candle in memory of Richard Freedman*



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**Monica (Monzie) Carlos** - April 05, 2024 at 04:03 PM

KM

“ *Rich! Rich was one of the wittiest people I've ever known. He will be greatly missed. I am so very sorry for your loss Toby & family.*

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**Kelli Moore** - April 05, 2024 at 07:49 AM

FF

“ *From Rocky LaPorte and family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard Freedman.*

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**From Rocky LaPorte and family** - April 05, 2024 at 12:07 AM

FF

“ From Rocky LaPorte and family purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Richard Freedman.



From Rocky LaPorte and family - April 05, 2024 at 12:07 AM

TH

“ Tim and Gina Hiemstra planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard Freedman.

Tim and Gina Hiemstra - April 04, 2024 at 05:39 PM

TH

“ Tim and Gina Hiemstra purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Richard Freedman.



Tim and Gina Hiemstra - April 04, 2024 at 05:39 PM



“ Serene Reflections Bouquet was purchased for the family of Richard Freedman.



April 04, 2024 at 09:51 AM

ME

“ A treasure to his family and this community of Benicia. I knew him as a neighbor on East K Street when Cameron was born. Fond memories of times shared and reading his wonderful jargon in the Times Herald through the years (especially about his Dad Bernie!) and so many Benicia-Vallejo happenings!!! A happy reunion taking place up there!  
My deepest sympathy to his family and to his many, many friends.  
Marie Earp

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**Marie Earp** - April 03, 2024 at 03:32 PM

RL

*Rich, was a great man and very funny. I loved him and Megan and Rich is peace and pain-free. Love u buddy*

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**Rocky LaPorte** - April 04, 2024 at 11:56 PM

ML

*As a New Yorker, I finally met someone in California who got and gave sarcasm as good as myself. Few people have been as generous and supportive as Rich. We will miss him madly. A mensch, indeed. Thank you Rich for everything. We are better for knowing you. xoxox Maureen and The Sicilian.*

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**Maureen Langan** - April 05, 2024 at 02:31 PM

 Lynda McMahan

“ *Rich, though we worked in different mediums in media, I'm glad I was able to know you for a couple of decades. I could always get the liberal side of things from you and enjoyed our time together. I'll miss you.  
I should never have let that excuse for a human being come between us.*

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**Lynda McMahan** - April 02, 2024 at 11:45 PM