



## Obituary

**Born:** Wednesday, August 1, 1956

**Died:** Thursday, July 26, 2018

Stephen C. Mahan III

July 26, 2018

Wherever he was and whomever he was with, he was always the best looking guy in the room—and, fittingly, surrounded himself with the most beautiful women, his wife Mary Lynn and daughters Riley Virginia and Sadie Grace

Stephen Christopher Mahan III, age 61, passed on Thursday, July 26. Cause of death a ruptured aorta resulting from a motorcycle accident.

A flesh and blood embodiment of The Trickster and The Lover, The Adventurer and The Artist, he bounced around the globe with a song and a twinkle: Arizona, West Virginia, California, Louisiana, Idaho, Utah; The Yukon, Africa, Chili, Patagonia, China, Fiji, Jamaica, Europe, and Tibet.

A master photographer and whitewater oarsman, he shot and rowed the wildest, loveliest rivers the earth has to offer. His pictures, taken as a river guide in Asia and South America, appeared in National Geographic Travel and opened a million eyes in museums and galleries that exhibited his work. His photo monograph of the indigenous people, customs, traditions, and natural beauty of Tibet is a poetic masterpiece waiting to be revealed.

A mixologist of kitchen cupboard renown, he took tremendous delight in stirring, shaking, and serving any cocktail or concoction he discovered or imagined. A slide blues guitarist he was perfectly suited for his basement sofa, where he could drop his guitar for his BB gun to scare squirrels off the backyard bird feeders.

In a makeshift boxing ring set up in his high school gymnasium, he scored a 20 second 1st round knockout to begin and end his successful amateur boxing career. A terror on the motocross track, the flimsy shelf in his bedroom sagged under the weight of trophies with bronzed motorcycles in flight.

As an academic on the edge of the academy, he developed, taught, and directed the nationally recognized, award-winning Photography and Literacy (PAL) Project at Syracuse University—a graduate/undergraduate curriculum that paired Syracuse University students with students from the Syracuse City Schools to create individual, autobiographical artwork using photography and creative writing—culminating in a group show at the SU Warehouse Link gallery.

The many seasons he spent as a whitewater raft guide on the Colorado River through the heart of the Grand Canyon no doubt expanded his own heart into the boundless, joyful, fun-loving badass he was, and shared with everyone lucky enough to come into his orbit.

## Service Summary

### Visitation

5:00 PM to 7:00 PM, Fri Aug 17, 2018

### St. Paul's Episcopal Church

310 Montgomery St.  
Syracuse, NY 13202

### Memorial Service

11:00 AM Sat Aug 18, 2018

### St. Paul's Episcopal Church

310 Montgomery St.  
Syracuse, NY 13202

The son of Stephen and Rosemarie “Riley” Mahan of Geneva, he is survived by his father, wife Mary Lynn, daughters Riley and Sadie; two brothers Michael “Mickey” (Deborah) and Joseph “Go”, and sisters Mary Pat Longstreet (Paul) and Jean Marie Shutter (Steve), and beloved in-laws, nieces, and nephews.

Should anyone wonder what it means to be truly, fully, authentically alive, find someone who knew Stephen and listen to their story. As fearless as he was funny, as tender as he was tough, the twinkle in his eye has found a home in the sky.

Calling hours: 5-7 pm Friday, August 17 at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church 310 Montgomery St. Syracuse. Memorial Service: 11:00 am, Saturday, August 18 at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 310 Montgomery St. Syracuse. In lieu of flowers a 529 College Savings Account has been established for Sadie. Contributions can be made as follows: Checks payable to College America, memo - FBO Sadie Mahan and mail to Mary Lynn Mahan.