

## Keith A Pamper

February 20, 1959 - June 22, 2017

Keith A. Pamper, born Feb 20, 1959, died June 22, 2017.

Beloved son, brother, uncle and cherished friend to many.

Loved by all who knew him: humans, animals and fishes.

Keith was an employee of the Shedd Aquarium for nearly 30 years, acting as the Dive Safety officer, volunteers coordinator and many other roles. He also worked as a scuba instructor at Scuba Systems and as a home inspector for RFH & Associates. He was an accomplished underwater photographer, with recognized works in many publications.

Keith loved nature, and found his niche in Marine biology as a young boy. He followed that passion to University of Florida, Coral Gables and started at the Shedd as a volunteer.

He was an advocate for the Coral Reefs and worked continually to research and preserve the Reefs and their inhabitants. He travelled the world with the Shedd and with friends to pursue his love of diving and of the ocean's beauty. Keith was a kind and loyal man, and an adventurous and fun friend and family member. He was always there to help anyone in need.

His knowledge and passion for his work showed in all that he did.

Keith is survived by his parents, George (Marianne) Pamper and Phyllis Pamper(Gerry Parilli), sisters Kristyn and Kim, and nephew Jim and nieces Terri, Melissa, Jessica, Carly, Annie and Marielle. Preceded in death by brother Kirk.

Donations in Keith's name may be made to the Shedd Aquarium at [http://ww](http://www)

[w.sheddaquarium.org/Support-Us/Donate-Online/make-a-difference-for-animals/](http://w.sheddaquarium.org/Support-Us/Donate-Online/make-a-difference-for-animals/) or the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention at <https://afsp.donordrive.com/campaign/KeithPamper> >>> Feel free to use Barr Funeral Home as the next of kin if you don't know the family's address, and we will forward it on. Keith's life will be celebrated at a memorial on Sunday, August 27, 6:30 to 9:00pm at the Shedd Aquarium, 1200 S Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60605

# Previous Events

## Memorial Celebration

AUG 27. 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM (CT)

Shedd Aquarium  
1200 S Lake Shore Drive  
Chicago, IL 60605

# Tribute Wall



“ *rest in wealth* ”



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**Tiffany Changel Gray Travel Nurse** - November 04, 2025 at 03:22 PM



“ *Keith A Pamper* ”

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October 08, 2023 at 11:31 AM



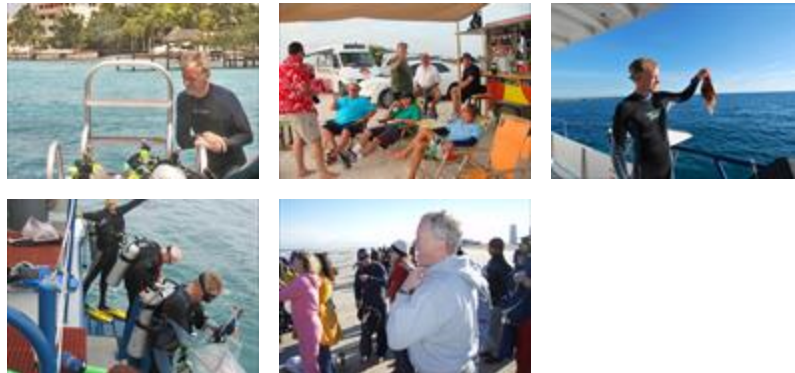
“ *Whether it was fun times like the New Years Day North Avenue Beach Polar Plunge or being the float victim in Whale Harbor for one of Keith's safety classes; an adventurous event like collection trip diving off the Coral Reef II in the Bahamas or vacation diving in Bonaire; or just mundane times like the countless Tuesday and Thursday lunches over the years, there was something you could always count on, Keith always had your back. Keith my troubled friend, you are missed.* ”

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**Mitch Mitchell** - July 09, 2017 at 11:43 AM

MM

“ 5 files added to the album New Album Name



Mitch Mitchell - July 09, 2017 at 11:34 AM

MW

*Mitch, I'm so sorry to learn of Keith's passing. I knew him through the Shedd as a volunteer and a traveler on a Shedd Cozumel trip. What a very sad loss. He was an incredible person. Thank you for the photos.  
Michele Walker*

michele walker - July 21, 2019 at 07:58 AM

RH

“ *I met Keith through Scuba and he helped me to get in the dive program at the Shedd. He was a great person who would help any and all, without bias. I was shocked and devastated to hear of his passing! My heart goes to his family as they need to be strong through this trying time. Please know that Keith was a great man with a big heart and will be missed by all he touched along his journey!!!*



Robert H. Hughes - July 05, 2017 at 07:14 AM

PM

“ I want to express my sincere sympathy to Keith Pamper's family. I met Keith 14 years ago doing my check out dive with him for Marine Mammals at the Shedd Aquarium. I enjoyed it so much that I also joined the Wild Reef diving with Lou Nessler. We got along great with Keith. Lou organized some dives at Lake Geneva hooking up mooring buoys. Keith, Lou, George Musz. and I dove and became friends and starting having lunch together. The conversations were awesome, talking about diving, shipwrecks, boating, Our World Underwater and of course the Shedd Aquarium. When Keith was out on the Shedd's boat we would fill the tanks. When he returned he would share great stories about the collection trip or conservation efforts such as tagging and monitoring Groupers in the Bahamas. I am thankful for Keith sharing his knowledge and will miss him as a friend.

*Shedd volunteer diver Paul Morris*

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**Paul Morris** - June 30, 2017 at 11:33 PM



“ So sad to hear the terrible news. I was a dive volunteer over the last few years and Keith was the friendliest most wonderful person I've ever met. He would go out of his way to help and never asked for a thing in return. When I came up shivering from a long dive in the schooling fishes tank one too many times, he found me a nice warm 5mm suit to wear. I'm just in shock that he's gone.

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**Jordan Brock** - June 30, 2017 at 08:52 PM

ED

“ I met Keith long time ago at the Shedd Aquarium and since the first day I call him my friend. He was a mentor, friend and an example to follow. It really hurts to know that he departed to other seas, but I am sure that he is all surrounded by the Greatest Love. Fair winds my friend.



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**Ernesto De** - June 30, 2017 at 06:50 PM

KN

“ My deepest condolences to Keith's family. My dad, Lou Nessler, considered Keith to be one of his best friends. My dad was a volunteer diver at the Shedd for many years. Keith and dad had lunch together almost every week for years. My dad died of a heart attach back in December. Keith was incredibly generous with his time for our family. He took us on a private tour behind the scenes and all throughout the Shedd. It was incredibly gracious of him. My heart breaks that the world has lost such a dear man far to soon. I love to think of Keith and my dad Lou, up in heaven scuba diving and having lunch together. My his soul rest in peace.

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**Kristine Nessler** - June 29, 2017 at 07:24 PM

CN

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



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**Chris Newman** - June 29, 2017 at 09:13 AM



George Pamper

*There he is in the background with his thumb in the air.*

**George Pamper** - June 29, 2017 at 10:37 PM

HL

“ *I first met Keith 14 years ago when I started training for the CRD. Keith was so supportive and made me feel a home at the Shedd. Several years later I was lucky enough to join Keith and others on my first collecting trip. I was really a novice at catching fish and getting them into my catch bag. On one dive Keith took me alone and was determined to guide me to the art of cornering and then catching fish. Although I never really became proficient it was because of his support, good nature and patience that I felt comfortable enough to go on several other collecting trips always enjoying Keith's friendship along with all the other trip participants. until recently I was a regular weekly diver on the CR and now am a substitute diver. I always looked forward to visiting with Keith and hearing about the many great diving trips he had been on. I can't imagine what it will be like at the Shedd without him. I will miss him as I know all other members of the Shedd family will*

*Henry Loeb*

**Henry Loeb** - June 28, 2017 at 07:40 PM

MD

*I was Henry's dove buddy on 2 of those collecting trips. IT would have been difficult without Keith on board to repair my BC and instruct me how to apply green goop he has to relieve my encounter with a fire coral. He took me aside for a couple of longish dives. One for photos (really, me modeling with lionfish!?), and another for "collecting" them. Great cerveiche back on board. Recent he has shared his chips with me lunch Wed.nI come in for a volunteer CRD shift then. It is going to be tough without him. Marilyn Diller*

**Maryn Diller** - June 30, 2017 at 03:21 PM

AK

“ *The divers and friends of Keith will miss his smiling face and good nature. I got my first dive mask from Keith at Scuba Systems. Keith always had a solution whenever there was a problem on The Caribbean Reef with a smile. I was proud to work with him for the past 10 years. My deepest condolences to his family and friends. He will be missed. May he Rest In Peace.*

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**Allan Kaufman** - June 28, 2017 at 05:45 PM



“ *I am so sorry for this incredible loss. Keith was a wonderful and warm person and I was so happy that I sang to him on his birthday this year. He will be missed. I send you love and healing thoughts.*  
*Spidie Saloff*

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**Spidie Saloff** - June 28, 2017 at 03:58 PM

TN

“ To Keith's entire family, but especially to Mom and Dad: I am so incredibly sorry for your loss. It is one of life's hardest experiences to lose your child; and to have lost two is beyond comprehension.

*I send you both, as well as the entire family, my sincerest wish of comfort and peace to you during your abs to help you through your grieving.*

*I hope you witnessing how much your son touched others and is loved and mourned by so many is of comfort to you. He was a beautiful, gentle, loving soul. What a gift. Thank you for bringing him into this world.*

*My deepest condolences and my sincerest wish for your healing to be filled with Grace.*

*Sincerely,  
Trish Norman*

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**Trish Norman** - June 28, 2017 at 01:23 PM



George  
Pamper

*Thank you for the piece about Keith. It is a treasure. I have witnessed the stories and feelings that Keith invoked.  
Thank you again.*

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**George Pamper** - July 05, 2017 at 12:13 PM

CS

“ While I have known Keith for just shy of two years, he has been a mentor and a friend throughout that time. I look up to his accomplishments and always admired his kindness and humility. The memory of when he told me, at a scuba meetup, that I was one of the quickest learners he'd ever worked with, continues to fill me with pride. I am still looking for the Millennium Falcon that he hid inside the Caribbean Reef! Sending much love and respect to sister Krystin and Keith's family. He is a great man.

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**Cyrus Sethna** - June 26, 2017 at 07:12 AM

JA

“ I had the honor of knowing and working with Keith at the Shedd for over 10 years. What a wonderful human being. To say he is irreplaceable would be an understatement. Miss you today and for many more to come. You and your family are in my prayers.

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**Jean Adams** - June 25, 2017 at 06:57 PM

KG

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Kristyn Gresham** - June 25, 2017 at 08:23 AM

KG

“ My brother, Keith, was my protector, my confidante, my go to for so many things. He was my rock when we lost our brother, Kirk, ten years ago.

We were born eleven months apart, "Irish twins" and we never were separated by more than a few miles distance (except for during his many travels.)

He was one of my children's Cool Fun Uncles, and they relished every visit with him. He was a buddy to our dogs, who loved him too.

From the time we were toddlers playing "pillowcase monsters" until just a few days ago when he helped me with a problem at my house, he was my pal. He will always be my beloved brother, and I am lost without him.

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**Kristyn Gresham** - June 25, 2017 at 08:20 AM

CH

“ My heartfelt condolences. I worked with Keith from 1990 to 1994 at the Shedd as the Diver Manager of the Oceanarium. He and I were a team and were great friends. ONE fond memory I had of Keith was that he and I flew to North Carolina with Vic Joyner, Dick Jacoby of Nauti and Jim Robinett of the Shedd to dive with Sharks on some deep wrecks. It was the trip of the life time for all of us being such great friends and being so in love with the sport of diving. North Carolina did not let us down and we had a wonderful time. Beautiful clear water, lots of sharks and just plain fun. I will always treasure my memories of Keith and my time at the Shedd Aquarium. He was loved by many and will be missed.

God Bless you all and God bless Keith

Chip Harshaw

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**Chip Harshaw** - June 24, 2017 at 05:31 PM

TH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Tim Harrington - June 24, 2017 at 04:38 PM

KM

*So sad. Keith, you will be missed ny many. You touched so many lives. Your love of the ocean and its critters will live on. Thank you for being a part of our lives.*

Karen McBeath - June 24, 2017 at 07:33 PM



*I am so sad, Keith you will be missed. The world is a lesser place without you in it. May all of us divers and those who love the underwater world carry on your legacy. Peace.*

Karen Bordner - June 24, 2017 at 09:19 PM

BR

*I've known Keith for nearly 20 years at the Shedd. We've gone on fun dive trips, numerous collections trips with the Shedd, and weekly connections every Thursday morning. In all that time he was never short, cross, upset, angry, or anything like that*

*Every single time I was with Keith, he was up, funny, clever, thoughtful, considerate, and helpful. The finest guy I know. I will miss him for the rest of my life. And I'll take all the pain that goes with losing him, because I get to know him in my life. For that, I'm eternally grateful.*

Bob Ryan - June 25, 2017 at 12:01 AM

VL

*We extend our deepest condolences to the Pamper family. With his camera lens Keith documented many family moments, may those pictures and memories bring you comfort. Vera & JD Lenderts*

Vera Lenderts - June 25, 2017 at 02:22 PM

MS

*My deepest condolences to Keith's family. I have known Keith for 25+ years and had him both as a student for Dry suit classes at the Shedd and co instructor at Elmer's Watersports for several years. He was a thoughtful and caring diver, teacher and human being. He will be missed by many. We have collaborated on many projects from servicing gear for his divers to continuing education for Shedd staff. I'm very sad to see him go. The Scuba world lost a dear friend.*

*Myron Siciak*

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**Myron Siciak** - June 26, 2017 at 10:05 AM

CH

*To Keith's family and dear friends...my husband and I met Keith in 2011 when we traveled to Papua New Guinea and Hong Kong together. Keith instantly made us friends as he so easily has, it seems, with so many. We had so much fun for three weeks exploring and laughing and learning so much about our beloved underwater world from Keith. We were in touch with him a few times through the past few years, wish so much we had a chance to tell him again, how lucky we were to have gotten to know him. Our sincerest sympathy to you all, for the loss of such a special and caring man.*

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**Carol and Lou Helmer** - June 26, 2017 at 04:11 PM

ES

*He was the best of the best. I will miss him for all eternity*

*Love you Keith, and everything you stood for. Rest in peace my friend.*

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**Eileen Semeniuk** - June 27, 2017 at 12:35 PM

TC

*A great and mighty high-five to a good friend and great man. He is and always will be remembered as a fun, courageous, adventurous, daring, and true friend. My prayers and thoughts are with the Pamper family, and to our Shedd family. r.i.p. MY BROTHER.*

*Tony C.*

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**Tony Copeland** - June 29, 2017 at 06:08 AM

CN

*A great loss for the Shedd, its community of divers, and the Chicago dive community in general. From working half a dozen Burnham Harbor cleanup dives to 10 years of trading jokes, stories, and equipment maintenance advice at the Shedd with Keith (and playing his floating diver in the Oceanarium during staff safety training), I don't think I can remember a single unpleasant interaction. He will be greatly missed by me and everyone else he intersected with.*

*Chris Newman*

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**Chris Newman** - June 29, 2017 at 09:11 AM

ES

*Thanks for being a part of our lives. Ernie and Kathy Lee Sawyer*

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**Ernie Sawyer** - June 29, 2017 at 12:25 PM



George Pamper

*To all of you who became Keith's friends during his life. Thank you, thank you for sharing the pieces of the framework that was Keith's life.*

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**George Pamper** - July 05, 2017 at 12:23 PM

SE

*May I offer my sincere condolences to Keith's family and friends. I knew Keith for about 13 years when I stated at the Shedd as a Wild Reef diver. He was a kind and gentle man. We often had lunch on Monday's and Thursday's. The bag of chips was always a joy. He will be missed.*

*May his memory be for a Blessing.*

*Steve Eaton*

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**steve eaton** - July 07, 2017 at 11:16 PM