



Raymond Nihlean

March 3, 1963 - November 11, 2022

Raymond Nihlean, 59, An Inspirational Life

Raymond Nihlean believed in the goodness of every person, and the Edgewater community is so much the better for it. When you heard his contagious laugh, you knew his generous spirit would soon fill the room. His efforts resulted in tangible improvements in people's lives across every generation and background. 'Raymond was a landlord with heart,' said community activist, Clare Tobin. 'He helped residents thru the pandemic. He and his team connected renters with programs such as rent grants and resources for food.' For one elderly tenant in particular, after finding supportive senior housing and 24/7 caregivers, Raymond even made funeral arrangements with her pastor.

In classic Raymond fashion, when a teenager threw a rock that dented his classic 1975 Lincoln Town car, he called the school instead of the police, and when Raymond learned the boy had a court date, he accompanied him. With such support, the young man received probation instead of a sentence. Always sensitive to youth needs, Raymond mentored many young people sparking their creativity, building self-confidence, and making them laugh. At neighborhood events, kids and grown-ups alike delighted in his convertible King Midget, a tiny red racing car with headlights that squirted water.

"Imagine you're at a restaurant and start singing happy birthday to your daughter. From across the room an energetic man with a booming voice and a gentle smile stands up and joins in. He's much louder than anyone else, with energy and body language that take over, inspiring everyone in the restaurant to join in. Your daughter will never forget the joy of that moment, and neither will you. The man who created that moment was Raymond," remembered cousin Sim from years of family gatherings.

His devoted wife Tina recollects how excited Raymond was when heavy snow fell. He had such fun riding his red ATV snowplow over two miles of sidewalks and alleys so neighbors could safely reach shops and public transit. "I always heard from neighbors how much they loved Raymond. Some didn't know his name, but they loved him because he plowed their sidewalks. They never asked, he was just always there with love and joy in his heart," according to former State Senator Carol Ronen. For fifteen years, he was a familiar early morning good Samaritan.

Former 48th Ward Alderman, Mary Ann Smith, recalls that "Raymond's \$35,000 donation was the lynch pin that got city funding for Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management training program. It was attended by local business owners who wanted to take their company to the next level." Raymond was a philanthropist who continued to provide resources to help other entrepreneurs flourish, including the Edgewater Uptown Builders Association (EUBA) and other community organizations. "Raymond was always generous with his time and resources and always knowing when and how to pitch in to fill a need. He personally provided and engineered state-of-the-art sound and visual equipment to help people communicate more effectively. Raymond is a one of a kind. Truly a prince of a man." added Jim Byrne, past EUBA president.

A lasting tribute to Raymond's love for his community is the beautiful mosaic

'bricolage' at the gateway to the Bryn Mawr Historic District. He brought the student artists lunches and treats, as well as donating money and materials. Raymond and Tina's wedding photo is memorialized in the art wall too, forever sharing their joy and love.

Raymond's bravery inspired his medical team. "I will always use Ray as an example to my staff and patients what support and advocacy can do," remembers Dr. Samman Shahpar, Shirley Ryan Ability Lab. He further remarked at an international symposium, "Put aside whatever you know about brain injuries, because there is Raymond." To Dr. Jeffrey Raizer, neuro oncologist at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, "Raymond was indeed an inspirational person who fought hard against his GBM and by all measures Raymond had a wonderful life up until his passing."

Throughout his six year and three month survival with brain cancer, Raymond never lost his humor, his optimism, or his zest for life. "Every day is precious, each moment was the only moment we were sure that we had", said Tina. "In the hospital, we created our own world with natural sounds of birds singing and falling water. The smell of lilies would fill the room. We were content. Patient through the pain and the healing process, attentive to the details, giving and receiving kindness, hopeful. The Zen like quality, peacefulness and good will was conducive to healing for everyone entering the room. And after 21 years of marriage, Raymond's devotion to his wife Tina, never dimmed. Their friend, Ellen Pritsker knew, "They spoke to the beauty in one another." On his final day, he and Tina were looking out of his hospital window at the place by the Lake where he proposed so many years ago. Then, with a smile on his face, he took his last breath. Raymond freely shared his love and his time with all who knew him. His generosity of spirit and deeply felt joyfulness will stay with us always. Raymond-we cherish the gift of your continuing

presence in our lives.

Remembering Raymond with special joy are his devoted wife of 21 years, Tina Travlos Nihlean; sister-in-law Elaine Travlos; brother Damian Nihlean; sisters Mary Henry and Juli Harmon; nephews Samuel Henry and Bentley Aiden Joyner; nieces Colleen and Amanda Nihlean; cousins Suzanne Cosgrove, Linn Nihlean and Cathy Kubo; his service dog Baby Ray and many more family members, friends, and colleagues. Raymond was preceded in death by his parents Raymond and Colleen Nihlean and his father- and mother-in-law Gus and June Travlos. Raymond was born in Chicago, on 3-3-1963 and died on 11-11-2022.

A celebration of his life will be held on Saturday, January 21 2023 at 11:00 a.m. at Old St. Patrick's Church, 700 West Adams Street, Chicago. Parking across the street. Donations in lieu of flowers may be made in Raymond's honor to BrainUp, a non-profit dedicated to funding research for a cure for brain cancer. <https://brainup.ngo/sunflower-memory-wall/raymond-nihlean/>

On-line condolences may be shared with the family at nihlean@gmail.com. They would be so pleased to receive your memories of Raymond and thank you for sharing them..

Previous Events

Memorial Gathering in Church

JAN **21**. 11:00 AM (CT)

Old St. Patrick's Church
700 W Adams Street
Chicago, IL 60661
<http://oldstpats.org>

Tribute Wall



“ Raymond Nihlean

October 08, 2023 at 11:31 AM



“ Raymond Nihlean, 59. He Lived An Inspirational Life

Reflection - December 04, 2022 at 02:22 PM



“ From: Clare Tobin, Community Activist

Raymond Nihlean believed in the goodness of every person, and the Edgewater community is so much the better for it. When you heard his contagious laugh, you knew his generous spirit would soon fill the room. His efforts resulted in tangible improvements in people's lives across every generation and background. 'Raymond was a landlord with heart,' said community activist, Clare Tobin. 'He helped residents thru the pandemic. He and his team connected renters with programs such as rent grants and resources for food.' For one elderly tenant in particular, after finding supportive senior housing and 24/7 caregivers, Raymond even made funeral arrangements with her pastor.

Clare Tobin - December 04, 2022 at 02:18 PM

PM

“ From: Pat Martin, Life Long Friend

In classic Raymond fashion, when a teenager threw a rock that dented his classic 1975 Lincoln Town car, he called the school instead of the police, and when Raymond learned the boy had a court date, he accompanied him. With such support, the young man received probation instead of a sentence. Always sensitive to youth needs, Raymond mentored many young people sparking their creativity, building self-confidence, and making them laugh. At neighborhood events, kids and grown-ups alike delighted in his convertible King Midget, a tiny red racing car with headlights that squirted water.

Pat Martin - December 04, 2022 at 02:16 PM

TN

“ From: Dr. Sim Barhoum, Cousin

"Imagine you're at a restaurant and start singing happy birthday to your daughter. From across the room an energetic man with a booming voice and a gentle smile stands up and joins in. He's much louder than anyone else, with energy and body language that take over, inspiring everyone in the restaurant to join in. Your daughter will never forget the joy of that moment, and neither will you. The man who created that moment was Raymond," remembered cousin Sim from years of family gatherings.

Tina Travlos Nihlean - December 04, 2022 at 02:13 PM

TN

“ From: *Former 9th District Illinois State Senator, Carol Ronen*

His devoted wife Tina remembers how excited Raymond was when heavy snow fell. He had such fun riding his red ATV snowplow over two miles of sidewalks and alleys so neighbors could safely reach shops and public transit. “I always heard from neighbors how much they loved Raymond. Some didn’t know his name, but they loved him because he plowed their sidewalks. They never asked, he was just always there with love and joy in his heart,” according to former State Senator Carol Ronen. For fifteen years, he was a familiar early morning good Samaritan.

Tina Travlos Nihlean - December 04, 2022 at 02:09 PM

TN

“ From: *Former 48th Ward Alderman, Mary Ann Smith*

I recall that “Raymond’s \$35,000 donation was the lynch pin that got city funding for Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management training program. It was attended by local business owners who wanted to take their company to the next level.”

Tina Travlos Nihlean - December 04, 2022 at 02:04 PM

TN

“ From: Jim Byrne, former President of EUBA

Raymond was a philanthropist who continued to provide resources to help other entrepreneurs flourish, including the Edgewater Uptown Builders Association (EUBA) and other community organizations. “Raymond was always generous with his time and resources and always knowing when and how to pitch in to fill a need. He personally provided and engineered state-of-the-art sound and visual equipment to help people communicate more effectively. Raymond is a one of a kind. Truly a prince of a man.”

Tina Travlos Nihlean - December 04, 2022 at 02:00 PM

TN

“ From: Elaine Travlos, Sister-In-Law

A lasting tribute to Raymond’s love for his community is the beautiful mosaic ‘bricolage’ at the gateway to the Bryn Mawr Historic District. He brought the student artists lunches and treats, as well as donating money and materials. Raymond and Tina’s wedding photo is memorialized in the art wall too, forever sharing their joy and love.

Tina Travlos Nihlean - December 04, 2022 at 02:00 PM

TN

“ From: Dr. Samman Shahpar, Shirley Ryan Ability Lab

Raymond’s bravery inspired his medical team. “I will always use Ray as an example to my staff and patients what support and advocacy can do,” remembers Dr. Samman Shahpar, Shirley Ryan Ability Lab. He further remarked at an international symposium, “Put aside whatever you know about brain injuries, because there is Raymond.”

Tina Travlos Nihlean - December 04, 2022 at 01:58 PM

TN

“From: Northwestern Memorial Hospital neuro oncologist, Dr. Jeffrey Raizer

“Raymond was indeed an inspirational person who fought hard against his GBM and by all measures Raymond had a wonderful life up until his passing”.

Tina Travlos Nihlean - December 04, 2022 at 01:56 PM

TN

“From: Wife, Tina Travlos Nihlean

Throughout his six year and three month survival with brain cancer, Raymond never lost his humor, his optimism, or his zest for life. “Every day is precious, each moment was the only moment we were sure that we had”, said Tina. “In the hospital, we created our own world with natural sounds of birds singing and falling water. The smell of lilies would fill the room. We were content. Patient through the pain and the healing process, attentive to the details, giving and receiving kindness, hopeful. The Zen like quality, peacefulness and good will was conducive to healing for everyone entering the room. And after 21 years of marriage, Raymond’s devotion to his wife Tina, never dimmed. Ellen Pritsker knew, “They spoke to the beauty in one another.” On his final day, he and Tina were looking out of his hospital window at the place by the Lake where he proposed so many years ago. Then, with a smile on his face, he took his last breath. Raymond freely shared his love and his time with all who knew him. His laughter, and generous spirit will always fill our hearts.

Tina Travlos Nihlean - December 04, 2022 at 01:52 PM

PM

“ From Life-Long Friend Pat Martin:

In classic Raymond fashion, when a teenager threw a rock that dented his classic 1975 Lincoln Town car, he called the school instead of the police, and when Raymond learned the boy had a court date, he accompanied him. With such support, the young man received probation instead of a sentence. Always sensitive to youth needs, Raymond mentored many young people sparking their creativity, building self-confidence, and making them laugh. At neighborhood events, kids and grown-ups alike delighted in his convertible King Midget, a tiny red racing car with headlights that squirted water.

Pat Martin - December 04, 2022 at 01:43 PM

CT

“ From Community Activist, Clare Tobin:

Raymond Nihlean believed in the goodness of every person, and the Edgewater community is so much the better for it. When you heard his contagious laugh, you knew his generous spirit would soon fill the room. His efforts resulted in tangible improvements in people's lives across every generation and background. 'Raymond was a landlord with heart,' said community activist, Clare Tobin. 'He helped residents thru the pandemic. He and his team connected renters with programs such as rent grants and resources for food.' For one elderly tenant in particular, after finding supportive senior housing and 24/7 caregivers, Raymond even made funeral arrangements with her pastor.

Clare Tobin - December 04, 2022 at 01:40 PM