

# Stephen R. Perls

Stephen R. Perls, D.Ed. of Albuquerque, New Mexico passed away on March 10, 2023. He was preceded in death by his wife of 60 years, Rae Perls, Ph.D. He is survived by his children Bob and Nancy Lynn, daughters-in-law



Joan Findley-Perls and Brenda Broussard, grandchildren Aaron, Tasha, Alex and Zoe, and great-grandchildren Amaya, Aleena, Tailor and Troy, as well as his sister Renate and nieces Alison and Leslie.

Stephen was born in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1935 to German therapists Frederick (Fritz) and Lore Perls, who left Germany two years earlier due to the Nazi occupation. In 1947 they left South Africa as apartheid was on the rise and moved to New York City where he played all-city varsity soccer and sang with the NYC Interracial Chorus. Stephen graduated from Antioch College in Ohio where he met Rae and married. They moved to Chicago where he earned a master's in psychology from the University of Chicago, then to Eugene, Oregon where Steve completed his doctorate, after which they moved to New Mexico with their two children.

Stephen worked and taught most of his professional life with the UNM Medical School, coordinated continuing medical education programs for the Department of Psychiatry, developed an AA degree for mental health workers, and trained several generations of psychiatric residents in group therapy techniques. He was active with the New Mexico, Southwest, and American Group Psychotherapy Associations, all of which led to lifelong friendships.

He was a devoted hus-

band, attentive father and grandfather, committed to spending quality time with the people he loved. Outside of work, Stephen and Rae loved to travel and together were able to visit 35 countries. He coached the kid's soccer teams and

drove them to rehearsals and lessons. He filled his home with music, art, and ice cream. He loved sports, and always had season tickets to UNM basketball. He loved musical theater and dance; shows in New York, summers at the Aspen Music Festival, and the same seats at Popejoy Hall for decades. He made lifelong friends through school, work, club soccer, and other sports, and was the social committee chair for years at La Luz. Later he was elected to represent the independent living residents once he moved to Palmilla Senior Living, where they had moved when Rae was ill. He was active at Palmilla and made many new friends through a podcast discussion group, chorus, play and poetry reading groups; including friend Diane, with whom he went to sports games, played Wii golf, did puzzles and crosswords, and who comforted him in his final weeks. Steve had a knack for being quiet, reserved, and thoughtful at the same time while being the most popular person in the room. He was attentive and kind. He will be missed.

There will be a memorial gathering this Sunday, March 19, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. at Palmilla Senior Living, 10301 Golf Course Rd. NW, Alb. NM 87114. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains, an organization Stephen felt strongly about.