



Mr. Randolph "RJ" Joseph Brill

JUN 10, 1938 - MAY 17, 2021



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“**M**an’s time on earth is not his to squander. It belongs to growth, God and our dependents.” – Randolph Joseph Brill, August 1966

Our International man of mystery is now an angel in heaven, raising all kinds of hell.

He led an unbelievable life, 82 years strong. An anti-terrorism engineer and inventor, but a family man in his heart. As the founder of Royal Arms International, RJ created the finest Tactical Breaching, Hostage Rescue & EOD Bomb Disposal Equipment in use by Special Forces and discerning individuals. He not only manufactured the equipment but trained bomb, swat and elite personnel teams in more than 70 countries around the world, for those at peace and those in war including: Canada, Israel, Sweden, Thailand, Korea, Japan, China, Colombia, Brazil, Albania, UAE, Finland, Norway, Kazakhstan, Romania, Germany, Seychelles, Kenya, Iraq, Afghanistan and the UK to name a few. RJ engineered the first carbon-fiber rifle, and invented what would become the industry standard Copper Frangible Breaching Rounds, flash-bang shells, and Gunner’s Choice® Recoil Reducers. He even had product inventions like the Santi-panty. Never at a loss for humor.

"Imagine if one was to know his final direction, the entire pattern and final goal; wouldn't life be an easier toll! Cannot God allow the right to see final sight?" –Randolph Joseph Brill, May 1970

Three children, nine grandchildren and many fur babies later, his legacy will be remembered by the family he created, his kind heart, sharply dry wit, his smile and the innovation he birthed. Randall the Vandal, Rudolf, Rambo, MacGyver, Bah Humbug Santa, Pops, Husband, Father, Friend, Boss, nicknames that suited this man of armor. He lived a whole life before he met the love of his life, Valerie and had children, Rachel and Johnathan.

Raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin born into the extravagance that was Margot & Leonard Brill’s society life. An elegant couple, founders of Brill Brothers a clothing manufacturer supplying leather goods and work wear to military and industrial complexes, and responsible for crafting the first Letterman’s jacket that would land contracts with the NFL and MLB. Randy as he was



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called back then, the only boy in a family of four (Patricia, Cheri his dear sisters that survive him and Bonnie). He would become a star athlete and championship-winning marksman, yachtsman, fullback, Olympic-level speed skater and Giant Slalom racer in his youth. Too many accolades to list. He would don period-costumes for his parents' garden parties, reminiscent of Gatsby affairs. He would live in the cabin on Timberline Farm not attempting to get in trouble but succeeding at it voraciously, with his best friend Bobby Susnar. He would attend University of Miami as a walk-on fullback on the football team only to puncture a lung and have to return home, shattering dreams of playing college football. He completed some courses at Milton before he humorously recalls his parents "buying my way into Marquette University", an acceptable practice nearly sixty years ago. The third school he intentionally failed to graduate.

"The best creativity comes from silence" – R. J. Brill, March 2020

His post-college days would send him to work for his pop at Brill Bros. an experiment that erupted in the misunderstanding of two brilliant minds. Then to Chicago and NYC as an insurance salesman with Northwestern Mutual where he would meet, marry and divorce a Playboy bunny in the blink of an eye, and get engaged to the woman who stole his heart and ran off with their unborn son. (*this which would shine light on a remarkable 23AndMe discovery, fifty years later). He would raise and train Tennessee Walking Horses and fall in love again, only to be shattered when his mother didn't approve of his match. This coming of age chapter in his late 20's and 30's is where he was most creatively inspired. Transferring the pain, anguish and suffering into art. He wrote pottery and short stories, he painted acrylic, watercolor and pen-point. He crafted show-stopping cocktail rings, sculpture, and busts. All of which he proudly displayed years later in our family home. Look but don't touch. Admire from afar was the philosophy. In a fit of clarity in 1976, he moved west to Los Angeles to start over. A place where he could still have his sailboat in Marina del Rey. It was here he met a pretty, younger, woman by the pool and later at a single's party. He had met his match in Val, (and her two sisters, Teri & Pamella) "great teeth, childbearing hips and one not shy from a good argument in her day" were his own words. Val had moved to LA from Florida earlier in the decade. By 1977, they were married on the deck of The Isis, a 50' cruising yacht in the same Marina where they met.

Never one to take the easy way out, Randy gambled his way into winning enough on the blackjack table to buy their first home in a suburb of Los Angeles. At the time, Woodland Hills was a community of orange groves, plum and walnut orchards. A perfect place to raise children. Rachel and Johnathan soon followed, so did teaching them to ski at two years old, soccer coaching, Lake Arrowhead weekends, and far-flung destination souvenirs. Nobody really knew



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what he did and when the kids were little they were teased that he was in the CIA. Little did we know. What was apparent is that he was far away much of the time, building a business out of the garage that would become Royal Arms. And he was tough as nails. We were grounded more than not, but that kind of discipline is what set us up for success. Val worked her tail off into the wee hours of the night at a boutique architectural firm, and together they built an unconventional family life that we today are relishing. Our outdoor time and sporting adventure is what will always be most cherished as that is how they chose to parent. That and the symbolic nature of our first scrambling on the rocks in Topanga Canyon, the St. James waltz at Rachel's debutante ball and walking her down the aisle, with the sage, "you don't have to do it if you don't want to" kind of advice.

"Stability is the result of keeping one's needs and responsibilities in a consciously ordered balance; – Good Luck." – Randolph Joseph Brill, January 1967

Royal Arms would evolve from an office in a garage, to a warehouse, and into a complex that was so expansive in export that the state of California forced them out. (Rules, regulations, be darned!). Johnathan followed his Pops' footsteps and successfully apprenticed and grew into the business, together. Success came calling and so did the television execs (but not, Rachel!). Once approached by History Channel for a father-son doc series, and courted by OC Chopper's Jesse James for an acquisition, Royal Arms declined all and remained a family business, a legacy now carried on by Johnathan. Once an empty nester, San Felipe came calling, and Val & RJ spent a couple decades in Baja at Casa Taco Bell ... an abode off the Sea of Cortez where he and Val became groupies of the race life. Sand rails, dune buggies, fresh lobster and margarita nights cheering on the Baja 1000. Anything to catch the thrill of fast-paced adventure. Pops' creativity and wit for life also lives on in Rachel as her indefatigable tenacity, writing and adventurous spirit manifested in circling the globe for her high-profile television career and mountaineering pursuits. Having reached the summit of more than 17 country high points including Russia, Italy, Australia, Tanzania and France her travels, fueled by the heart of a lion, just like his. Johnathan and his saintly, superwoman wife Crystal would have five babies gifting R.J. the title Grandpa or Pops. Alexander, Olivia, Hunter, Aubrey and now Lincoln, the apple of his piercing blue eyes. He couldn't wait for the outdoor adventures, catching Marlin with Zander in Cabo and fishing with Hunter in the local Franklin ponds. Even if Zander did get sea sick, it was one he treasured.

"My most proud accomplishment is my family." – R.J. Brill, October 2019



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In 2019, a spontaneous miracle occurred when Rachel received a 23AndMe message, “with a 26.5% match, I think you could be my half-sister” and here began a journey to discover a part of RJ’s life that had been buried for fifty years. This match, was his son, John. A man that resembles him in physical presence, creative oration and compassionate demeanor. John’s success story; a beautiful wife Shari, four boys Max, Ian, Spencer, Eli were now a part of his. The blending of families, a story that couldn’t have happened at a better moment in time.

Providing peace and closure to an unanswered narrative. In typical Rachel fashion, she hired a camera crew to document John & RJ’s first meeting at her offices at MGM in Beverly Hills. Nature versus nurture could not have been more apropos. John was all nature ... down to his familiar and impressive Olympic-trials swimming accolades and his love for handmade jewelry.

In the end, he was just Dad to us. Husband to Val. A man that sacrificed everything to provide a home base, adventures for a lifetime, and to give us the platform to become the people we are. He found God in these last couple of years knowing that he was washed with peace and protection. For that gave him a sense of calm.

We miss you already and we love you in the infinite loop of life and death and rebirth of the soul.

In lieu of flowers and kind gestures, the family has designated the following for tributes and donations:

Alzheimer’s Association for the continued fight for a cure to dementia-related brain health illnesses: <https://bit.ly/2TbsPIP>

Catch a Dream Foundation where kids with terminal illnesses can realize an outdoor sporting adventure. CatchADream.org

Stories and photos from your time with him are also greatly appreciated. Memories are all we have. Until we don’t ... #endalz #brainhealth #mentalhealthawareness



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Randolph "RJ" by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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