



Richard K. Knoblich

January 21, 1953 - June 29, 2024

Richard Knoblich was crowned the biggest liar in the state of West Virginia, and he'd gleefully show you his golden shovel trophy to prove it if he hadn't died this week. And if the death of a famed liar sounds dubious, we get it. Just to be sure, you can visit him on Tuesday, July 2 from 5-7pm at Grisell Funeral Home and Crematory, 400 Jefferson Ave., Moundsville, where funeral services will be held Wed., July 3 at 10:30am with Rev. John Morrison officiating.

Richard grew up the middle child between beloved sisters Libby and Nancy, and dedicated a significant portion of his life to entertaining and teasing them in equal measure.

He married his high school sweetheart, Sharon. For 48 years they had an amazing marriage ... even if Richard was more popular at parties and her friends always looked a little disappointed if he couldn't make it. He could liven a room up, even in his final days.

They had a son, Trevor. Richard remembered that as a child, Trevor would concoct increasingly complicated schemes for family road trips. Richard would initially say no, absolutely not, but somehow *always* ended up taking Trevor on these adventures.

Trevor once interviewed him for a school project. More than anything, Richard loved talking, so he was eager to participate. When asked what having a kid was like, Richard told Trevor that children expand your heart, growing your capacity for love immeasurably.

And that's the thing about Richard: While he was usually irreverent and occasionally an impatient grouch, he could stun you with his sentimentality. This was especially apparent spending time with his granddaughter, Eva, daughter of Trevor and his wife, Elizabeth Price. Richard brought terrific Grandpa energy to reading Eva bedtime stories and was always making her laugh.

Like Sharon, Richard spent his career as a public elementary school teacher with Marshall County Schools. He earned his own way through college at West Liberty by working in the cafeteria and other odd jobs. Richard was especially interested in specific scientific fields: geology, astronomy and physics. Richard would translate his love of physics into grade school lessons, and was famed for his classroom closet full of things that made noise or moved in a wave motion or whatever else might be interesting to kids *and* offer a sneaky lesson to boot.

Biology, however, was not in his top three, which was super unfortunate because Sharon and Trevor were always dragging some kind of weird animal into the house. Some were part of Sharon's classroom teachings, and he'd put up with various critters living in the garage until they could be released safely into the wild. Trevor brought home creatures for more permanent residence from the Marshall County Animal Shelter: dogs, parakeets and a memorable ferret, Merv. Merv was a petty thief, dragging potatoes, Christmas ornaments and other objects to stash under a bed. Richard loved Merv's chaotic energy, and any other mischievous animal for that matter.

That was kind of how it went. Richard grouched about every shelter pet the family adopted. Yet inevitably, he would form the closest bond with each one, irritating Sharon and Trevor who'd been more excited to have a pet around in the first place.

Richard had too many hobbies to recount, among them photography, kite flying, woodworking, and architecture, which included dragging his family to every stupid lighthouse on the East Coast. He loved music so much that after marrying Sharon, he spent all the money they had on a really nice stereo. Newlyweds take note: this is extremely bad financial planning. But you know what else? That stereo still works, and it still sounds *great*, so you might hear some Rolling Stones or Paul Simon blasting over the next day or two in his memory.

Richard was handy, too. With Sharon's help, he planned and built a beautiful two-story deck on the side of the family house, and a play fort for Trevor, which even included a zip line before they were cool! Richard laid a brick sidewalk around the house, as well. When it finally had to be redone, this time by professional contractors, the contractors were amazed at the craftsmanship. Richard learned how to do all of this from books at the Wheeling Public Library, one of his favorite spots.

As he neared retirement, his proclivity for a good joke and a long story evolved into telling increasingly exaggerated tall tales. He began performing traditional Appalachian storytelling all around the region, and won multiple awards. It made his family proud, at least as much as, "I'm related to the biggest liar in West Virginia" can make one proud. Even his mother, Jean, loved it, and she was a tough sell! Richard eventually self published a book of his stories, one of his proudest accomplishments.

In perhaps the most memorable incarnation of his work, he wrote a story about the historical collapse of the Wheeling Suspension Bridge for local publication Weelunk. It was so amusing and strangely plausible that a historian contacted him to ask for his sources. When Richard explained he made most of the details up, the historian laughed and asked if she could include the story in a history book anyway – clearly labeled as fiction, of course. It got published, and Richard boasted about that until his dying day.

He became increasingly obsessed with the history of Wheeling and nearby resort park, Oglebay. Being Richard, he managed to turn his hobby into a paid gig. He gave lectures on the history of the park to anyone who would listen, including bus tours at Christmas time at Oglebay. Buses were great for this; after all, there's nothing better than a captive audience. To his family, Richard would report how well his terrible puns were received on each tour.

If you're still reading this, it's important to know that in his final years, he developed a love for sassy obituaries full of personality. Hopefully, we met his standards.

He was born January 21, 1953 and died at 71 years old on Saturday, June 29, 2024 at WVU-Wheeling Hospital, surviving his parents, Albert and Jean Clouston Knoblich. He said he was ready, but a bunch of us were not, including his sisters Libby and Nancy, wife Sharon, son Trevor (Elizabeth), granddaughter Eva and several nieces and nephews.

Memorial contributions may be made to any of the following:

American Cancer Society
P.O. Box 6704
Hagerstown, MD 21741

Marshall County Animal Shelter
37 Animal Shelter Dr.
Moundsville, WV 26041

The Strand Theater
811-5th Street
Moundsville, WV 26041

Sympathy expressions at grisellfuneralhomes.com.

Cemetery Details

Grisell Crematory

Moundsville, WV

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 2. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Grisell Funeral Home
400 Jefferson Ave.
Moundsville, WV 26041

Funeral Service

JUL 3. 10:30 AM (ET)

Grisell Funeral Home
400 Jefferson Ave.
Moundsville, WV 26041

Tribute Wall



“ *Grisell Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Richard K. Knoblich*



Grisell Funeral Homes - July 02, 2024 at 04:01 PM

DA

“ *Mr. Knoblich was my favorite teacher in grade school. He was so down to earth, fun, and not judgemental. He was the one who really got me into drawing. In his class, everyday at 2, we would watch the imagination station. We would have to draw with him & turn it in. As a kid, that was so cool. We all used to love to listen to him tell stories. I wish every teach could be like him! I will always cherish those memories. □*

Dana - March 30, 2025 at 09:53 AM

IE

“ Dear Rich,
The empty seat next to me is softened with my tears. The news of your passing was heart wrenching. Please know that you are sorely missed. Your smile, your wry dry sense of humor, your lies upon lies that charmed and tickled our fancy, our imagination flew along rivers of possibilities that only you could shape. You were a dreamer, a carpenter, a father, a magic maker – sometimes with words, sometimes with a hankie that turned into a bunny rabbit. I looked forward to the times we would get to tell stories at a concert, or a workshop. Sometimes we were naughty together and giggled in the back of the hall. Sometimes we shared news or recipes, even politics. I got to visit your third grade class once. What a treat that was. You are woven deeply in our hearts and minds. I hope you are at peace and still telling ridiculous jokes and high-faluting stories. You were a good friend. You knew what it meant to me to see Barak Obama elected and brought me home little items (pens and posters) from the inauguration. I will treasure our friendship and most of all your kindness. You are loved and remembered.
With all my heart, Ilene

Ilene Evans - July 23, 2024 at 08:37 AM

BL

“ This is for Nancy----THIS IS a friend from long ago Barbara Fisher--- I live in Wheeling now as Barbara LOHR. So sorry to hear of your loss.

Barbara A LOHR - July 05, 2024 at 01:41 PM

KC

“ Rich could make you laugh while teaching you to think again. Even if the idea was far stretched, he made it real. He was a good friend, storyteller and teacher for me. He will be missed. I hope my times with him as special times that I will remember. I sending healing to his family. Kevin Cordi

Kevin Cordi - July 05, 2024 at 01:00 PM

LK

“ I did not know Richard. I have a friend and she always looks at the obituaries because she's from West Virginia and she knows a lot of people. So she came across Richard and she forwards me some good ones that she has seen out of West Virginia and this one was very beautiful and I wish I would've known them blessed a lot of people, family and friends and touched a lot of lives so that was good.

It made my heart sing, and when it started off about being a big liar, I just about cracked up.

He deserves his great obituary and my prayers and thoughts go out to the family and friends who have such a great loss.

He's a special angel up in heaven and now he's making everybody laugh and tell stories to all his friends and family in heaven. Take care.

Lisa Kozlowski My son used to play football for West Virginia you it was a punter. His name was Scott Kozlowski. We still go back to West Virginia once or twice a year for games or we travel to where the games are so we love West Virginia so My family lives in Florida and my son came back from West Virginia you to be back in Florida and my friend who's from West Virginia she lives in Florida.

So thank you

lisa kozlowski - July 05, 2024 at 05:45 AM

MM

“ I am so sorry to hear about Rich. I knew him well. We told stories together back in the 1990s at the former nature center at Oglebay and at other venues. I extend my deepest condolences to his family.

Maria McKelvey - July 03, 2024 at 08:58 PM

AK

“ Sharon, Trevor, Elizabeth, Eva, Libby, and Nancy - Wonderful memories of Richard are in our hearts. He reached so many people. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. (Can you hear the story he's telling St Peter about his life???) Bruce and Ann

Ann Koegler - July 03, 2024 at 09:46 AM

DB

“ I loved his stories about the Wheeling area. He always was enthusiastic about the craft. I can see the old bridge in Wheeling and the house moving toward it during a flood.

Dave and Candy Brauer

Dave Brauer - July 02, 2024 at 06:30 PM

P'

“ Sharon and family,
My fondest memory of Rich was when I commuted to West Liberty my freshman year and shared rides with my friend, Ann. We picked up Rich, who was hitching a ride to WL and thus began our traveling threesome. Poor Rich, when Ann drove her two-seater Karmann Ghia to classes, Rich stuffed himself into the back window. I think we were the first to have a human bobble-head in the car. He always kept us entertained. You departed this earth way before your time. Keep things hopping until we meet again...that's assuming that you ascended rather than the other way

Patty Yankavitch Byrd WHS '71 - July 02, 2024 at 05:22 PM

JB

“ When I began dabbling in storytelling in 2002, I was the youngest member of the West Virginia Storytelling Guild. I was all of 26, and I wasn't sure what I was doing as I had only an inkling of what storytelling actually was. At the time, Rich made a joke that I was within a hair's width of becoming known as "The Kid".

All these years later, this kid still doesn't know what he's doing, but I have a better idea what storytelling is thanks to Rich and all the others who kept the tradition alive.

Jason Burns - July 02, 2024 at 01:51 PM



“ 42 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Grisell Funeral Homes - July 02, 2024 at 10:58 AM

MP

“ Rich was a teller of tales. As a member of the West Virginia Storytelling Community I had the good fortune to share an event or three with him, often getting together afterwards to recollect this or that tale or event.
He was quick to smile and share laughter. He has left the stage and taken his stories with him, but shared many along the way. Thanks Rich. I'm pleased to have known you. Your story continues.

Mike Perry - July 02, 2024 at 09:19 AM

LM

“ I didn't know Richard at all, but he did have the best obituary I've ever read. It made me smile. I hope to be able to share his love of life and fun. May his family always smile with his memories. What a blessing to have shared his life with him.

Linda Mason - July 01, 2024 at 06:40 PM

BI

“ It was a pleasure working with Rich at Marshall County Schools years ago. It was also fun to run into him at various places over the years. Our deepest sympathies to Sharon and family.
Bob & Marlene Ingram

Bob & Marlene Ingram - July 01, 2024 at 04:08 PM

AC

“ Aunt Charlie purchased the Love's Journey for the family of Richard K. Knoblich.



Aunt Charlie - July 01, 2024 at 02:42 PM

AZ

“ I feel compelled to tell you about his gray secret. That his alter ego was a midwest bank robber that was styled after Robin Hood; using his ill-gotten gains to overtip wait staff and fund his research into AAI (Artificial Artificial Intelligence). His idea of AAI was to make Intelligence more natural. Plagued with Human Error. But, we know different. He was a genuinely kind character, and an excellent Liar. It was a pleasure to know you sir. Now, go see if you can entertain in the courts of The Gods. For, you will be missed here.

AJ Zambito - July 01, 2024 at 12:36 PM

SL

“ I will never forget the time my car was in the shop and Rich said he'd pick me up and take me to work. That was so kind of him. He gave me a lot of materials and I still use some of them. I got moved around a lot when I first started teaching, but he didn't hesitate to mentor me and help me adjust to teaching something new. He was fun and caring, and I'm sorry to hear of his loss. My prayers are with his family and friends. By the way, the obituary is excellent. It captures his sense of humor perfectly. <3

Stephanie Lyons - July 01, 2024 at 11:55 AM

SP

“ Sheila P. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard K. Knoblich.

Sheila P. - July 01, 2024 at 11:55 AM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Richard K. Knoblich.



July 01, 2024 at 10:15 AM



“ Cathy,Phil,Alisha,Joyce,andSuzanne. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard K. Knoblich.

Cathy,Phil,Alisha,Joyce,andSuzanne. - July 01, 2024 at 10:15 AM



“ Getting a chance to tell”his story” to the biggest audience of all.

Mark Vieweg - July 01, 2024 at 08:39 AM



“ I taught with Richard at Washington Lands. What a fun guy and friend.

Judy Smith - July 01, 2024 at 08:12 AM



“ John Gensor purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Richard K. Knoblich.



John Gensor - July 01, 2024 at 06:41 AM

JG

“ John Gensor planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard K. Knoblich.

John Gensor - July 01, 2024 at 06:41 AM

PW

“ A Marshall county (and West Virginia) classic will now entertain heaven. Prayers for your comfort in the passing of this great man.
Patricia Wylie
“ Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal”

Patricia Wylie - July 01, 2024 at 06:05 AM

JF

“ So sorry for your loss. He was a light in a dark world and definitely could liven up any gathering! Sharon and Trevor, may God hold you both close and fill the empty spaces with a lie or two. Prayers for good grieving. Love, Pastors John & Judy Flynn

Judy Flynn - July 01, 2024 at 12:10 AM

BD

“ Bernie Doyle lit a candle in memory of Richard K. Knoblich



Bernie Doyle - June 30, 2024 at 10:32 PM

ST

“ so sorry prayers for the family ...i never knew richard only thru his sister libby we worked together many years and heard many storys about him and trevor when he was young and growing up libby spoke of them often...so sorry for the loss of your family member...

sharon r teyssier - June 30, 2024 at 10:21 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Richard K. Knoblich.



June 30, 2024 at 06:56 PM

DG

“ Sharon, Trevor & family,
Deepest sympathies to all in Richard's passing. Worked at Sanford Elem for a number of years w/"Mr Knoblich" - a true experience. He always brought a smile when passing thru the office for mail, making copies, whatever, but always took time to share something funny. He will sorely be missed by all whose lives he touched -- a "special one-of-a-kind" gift from God. Prayers for strength, comfort & healing for all. Hugs ❤️

Dave & Mae Gill - June 30, 2024 at 06:25 PM

CK

I've so enjoyed Richard all through Warwood Grade School and Warwood High, as well as Sharon. I couldn't have asked better, caring friends! I was so proud to have "fixed them up" for the prom ❤️ Although Sharon went through WVU and Richard West Liberty, (driving me MANY times from Wheeling which I so appreciated), they stayed together as destiny would have it. True friends like that are so cherished!! 🥰🥰

Connie Huggins Knuth - June 30, 2024 at 06:34 PM



“ *Memories 44" Sonnet was purchased for the family of Richard K. Knoblich.*



June 30, 2024 at 04:49 PM



“ *Mark Jo Jessica Miceal Connor and Ryan planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard K. Knoblich.*

Mark Jo Jessica Miceal Connor and Ryan - June 30, 2024 at 04:49 PM



“ *Sharon and family so sorry to learn of Richard's passing. He was an amazing teacher that wanted every child to succeed and find their passion. The lives he touched and the lessons taught will be carried by each and every student into the future forever.*



Holly L. Woods - June 30, 2024 at 04:45 PM



Sharon, replace your tears with prayers thanking God for sharing Richard with you and Trevor. Love and prayers, Billie Jo

Billie Jo Falcon - June 30, 2024 at 05:01 PM



Hugs to you, Trevor and Sharon and deepest sympathy to the whole family. Rich was a beacon in a foggy world. He will be missed! - Jody and Ken

Jody Oelschlager - July 01, 2024 at 06:20 PM

DM

“ He taught both my kids at Washington Lands! A fun teacher he was. Prayers for his family and many friends

Diana Magers - June 30, 2024 at 04:38 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Richard K. Knoblich.



June 30, 2024 at 04:12 PM

GG

“ Gary, Dianne, Adam and Bryce Gellner planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard K. Knoblich.

Gary, Dianne, Adam and Bryce Gellner - June 30, 2024 at 04:12 PM

NK

“ Richard was a wonderful brother to me. He was the family member who managed to teach me how to tie my shoes and he taught me more about how to drive the old Volkswagen bus we had in one day than my dad in months. What can I say! He was a born teacher. I will miss him.

Nancy Knoblich - June 30, 2024 at 04:00 PM

LP

“ My deepest condolences to Sharon and all his family and friends.

Lori Prascik - June 30, 2024 at 03:52 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Richard K. Knoblich.*



June 30, 2024 at 03:51 PM



“ *His loving sisters planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard K. Knoblich.*

His loving sisters - June 30, 2024 at 03:51 PM



“ *I'll miss my little brother; he was such a fun person. He used to call me and Nancy every week to check on us and make sure we were ok. He will be missed by many family and friends. Just won't be the same without him.*

Elizabeth Knoblich Turek - June 30, 2024 at 03:34 PM