

In Memoriam

Reggie Ross

NSS-CDS Training Director, Cave Diving Instructor, Friend

by Max Kuznetzov

On Christmas Eve, my close friend Reggie Ross passed away. He died in the water, which was his element, getting ready to enter his most beloved cave, Ginnie Springs.

For several years, Reggie struggled stubbornly with the last stage of inoperable cancer. He was persistent, and sometimes like a silly child, he resisted the doctors' constantly changing treatments and prescriptions. And when there was a choice—to take the medications that always made him feel worse or to go diving—he always chose the second. We scolded him and called him irresponsible, but he did with manic obstinacy as he saw fit.

Reggie had always felt close to Russia and everything connected with it. Here he had a lot of friends and students. He loved Russian culture, cuisine, traditions, and feasts. He was very fond of the Russian people. I know that if Reggie would have a chance to travel again, the first country he would go to would be Russia.



I have often thought of him lately and inevitably tried on his situation myself. And now I know for sure that if I had a choice between a painful year or two in hospitals and hospices and a couple of weeks (days!) of diving in my favorite caves, I wouldn't think for a minute.



And Charon, don't untie your boat. Reggie himself will cross the River Styx perfectly and under water, which I'm sure no one has done before him. Water has always been his element and his passion. For the love of water, he abandoned his hardware business. For the love of water, his personal life didn't always work out. In the water he died, as I understand, quickly and easily. There could be no more desirable death for Reggie.

We will miss him.



Reggie's memorial service was held on Sunday, December 29, 2019, at the Knauff Funeral Home Chapel in Williston, FL. A gathering at Swamp Head Brewery in Gainesville followed where — in cave diving tradition — friends told Reggie stories and raised toasts to this Viking.