

Steven Robbins
1956-2016

Steven Robbins, who spent his entire working career in the fast-growing Equipment Leasing and Finance Industry, and was the Founder and President of Tiger Leasing, died peacefully at his farm in Ghent, NY, on February 15, 2016. The cause was colon cancer. He was battling the disease since his diagnosis in 2014.

He was hired by a law firm in the summer of '79 to start an East Coast-based equipment leasing association. He knew nothing about the industry and used the Yellow Pages to call over a thousand industry executives. By the end of the summer, the Eastern Association of Equipment Lessors was born with a growing membership that eventually became the National Equipment Finance Association.

He did his master's thesis on the industry and found his calling. He was first hired by United California Bank in Los Angeles, but before taking the job, took almost a year off to work on a kibbutz in Israel and travel throughout Europe. His love for adventure continued during his entire life as he and his family would visit exotic locales such as Bhutan, Bali, and the Seychelles Islands. A certified diver since college, he found being underwater a near mystical experience and being within earshot of the ocean's crashing waves to be soothing and meditative.

Steve lived in Venice, California, in a tidy bungalow, a few steps from the beach. Although his conservative bank colleagues joked about his living in the "debris by the sea," as they called Venice, he replied that he had found heaven.

On Mother's Day, May 10th, 1981, while swimming at Zuma Beach in Malibu, he spotted his future wife, Ellie Dylan. After a disastrous first date, and a courtship that began with a letter, they married in 1982. "You thought they were brother and sister, as they looked so much alike," a friend remarked, "but they were so divergent in their views on many things, and both very passionate at the same time." They both described their marriage together as a magical love affair.

Steve was recruited in 1982 by Ira Wasserman, the founder of Wasco Funding Corp. to join the firm. He moved back to New York with Ellie and worked at Wasco Funding for the next 19 years. "It was a great time in the industry – I would walk down Third Avenue and over to Rockefeller Plaza and, unlike today with security at high alert, just pop in unannounced at the sales offices of Burroughs, NCR, Sperry Univac, Wang Labs, Basic 4, and countless other computer vendors. I would hand out purchase orders, deliver checks, and get leads. Later in the day, I would visit customers and pick up a bunch of signed contracts and checks."

After two years at Wasco, he and Ellie took a much-needed vacation to Belize. Without being able to communicate with his office, he sent a Telex, letting his boss know that there was nothing but ocean and jungle all around. Upon his return, he

found a note telling him that if he ever thought of going away again without staying in touch with the office, he should quit now. And so began the vacations of never disconnecting with the office. It did teach him, however, how to conduct business anywhere in the world with simply a cell phone and a laptop. He left Wasco at the end of 1999 and began operations at Tiger Leasing on 1/1/2000, which continues today.

Steven Robbins was born July 7th, 1956 in New York. His mother was a dancer and ballerina and his father was an owner of a watch importing business. His father got him interested in business and the markets at an early age while they studied the stock tables together.

“Steve,” as he was known, was an avid athlete from an early age, competing in varied sports such as baseball, soccer, track & field, swimming, tennis and golf. At the University of Pennsylvania, he rowed on a championship crew team. He later trained for over 10 years as a boxer at Gleason’s Gym in Brooklyn. After a back injury, he started swimming in a local pool, which led to competing in races on the Hudson River for as long as six miles. Triathlons followed swimming. He competed in many Olympic distance events as well as a Half-Ironman distance. Ironically, he would say that extreme exercise will make him live forever.

Their home and farm in the Hudson Valley was a sanctuary for Steven and his family as well as the animals that live there. Two Scottish Highland cows, a donkey, three sheep, a goat, 30 exotic chickens, and four cats all received and gave love. It’s the most beautiful place in the world to have cancer, he would joke.

Steven is survived by his wife of 33 years, Ellie Dylan, an award-winning media producer and host, and a daughter, Skyler Dylan-Robbins, a video journalist at *The New Yorker* magazine.

A Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/997191870328070/>) has been established for you to connect with others and share fond memories and stories of Steve.

To honor Steve's love of animals (particularly cats and tigers), donations may be made to the Columbia-Greene Humane Society at <https://cghs.org/donate/contribute>.