

IN MEMORIAM



Erik Riedel – 52, of Scituate, MA, passed away on June 30, 2024, leaving behind his loving family: his wife Cheryl LG Riedel, his beloved children Emma, Jonah,

Elena, and Ani, his parents Juergen and Gerda, and his brother Jens Riedel, as well as many friends among the PDL.

Erik was a builder and an innovator. His goals, through the companies and organizations he worked with (IT Renew, EMC, Dell, Seagate, HP), some of which he helped found (Works Together, Flax Computing), were to advise and assist companies and individuals through the challenges of developing complex, scalable distributed systems. He achieved successful results through effective and consistent everyday collaboration. Most recently, with Flax Computing in Boston, Erik's mission was decarbonization of data center computing - increasing efficiency, lowering costs, and reducing carbon footprints. Earlier in his career, Erik was Senior Director of Technology & Architecture in



the Cloud Infrastructure Group at EMC in Cambridge, MA. He worked to build cloud storage technology for deployment in private and public clouds. Before joining EMC, Erik was Director of Interfaces & Architecture at Seagate Research in Pittsburgh, PA. The group he founded and led focused on novel storage devices and systems with increased intelligence to optimize performance, improve security and reliability, and enable smarter organization of data. The technology targeted both large-scale enterprise storage clusters and ad-hoc collections of consumer and mobile storage devices working together.

Erik held B.S., M.S.E. and Ph.D. degrees from Carnegie Mellon University. His thesis work was on Active Disks as an extension to Network-Attached Secure Disks (NASD). Among us, Erik was honored for his accomplishments in 2010 when he was named a PDL Distinguished Alumni.

Erik's accomplishments are many, and the list above is limited. More important than his education, or his career, or where he lived and when, is HOW he lived; the ineffable qualities that have connected all of us here now, in collecting our fondest memories and in sharing our sorrow. There are no words that can convey the shape and weight of the loss we are processing, but we are comforted in knowing that his compassion, his infectious laugh, and his willingness to jump in and help have impacted so many others. Just like us, we know that many of you will think of him when you look up and notice the clouds passing by; that you'll smile



remembering his infamous moves on any available dance floor; that you'll miss his seemingly-endless patience while providing free tech support; that you'll feel some of his joy at finding a really good empty box that's the perfect size to recycle something... somewhere... at some point in time. We know you'll perform small acts of kindness that often go unnoticed to honor his commitment to making this world a more tender and caring place. We know that you'll look at his children and see the pride and ferocious love he breathed into them and wonder at the strength of the bonds he built with each of them, bonds that will sustain us all while we learn to navigate our lives without him. We know that when things look dark and scary, you'll remember Erik's favorite quote, Look for the Helpers (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LGHtc_D328). We know you'll reflect his eternal optimism, lend a hand, provide a soft shoulder, and step up to be the helper someone needs in his stead, to offer a glimpse of the hope he provided each of us, while he rests.

