



Jonathan Andrew Roorda, age 68, of Buena Vista, Colorado, passed away on February 19, 2026. He was born October 9, 1957 in Denver, Colorado to Garrett and Beatrice Roorda.

Jon grew up in Montclair, New Jersey and New Paltz, New York. His love for the outdoors began at an early age, hiking in the Mohawk Mountains of New York with his longtime best friend, Steve Van Ness.

He attended Paul Smith's College in upstate New York, also known as the College of the Adirondacks, and obtained a degree in Forestry and Land Surveying.

After graduation, Jon returned to Denver to begin a career in Land Surveying where he worked his way up to Project Manager at Merrick Engineering. There, he was privileged to work under the tutelage of a renowned expert in Boundary Law and Mineral Surveys, Doyle Abrahamson, an invaluable experience that provided the background to own a business and to become a respected professional in his career of nearly 50 years. In Denver, his favorite exploits included surveying the arc of the United Bank Tower (26 floors) on a scaffold above the city, and his name is commemorated on a plaque at Coors Field as the Project Manager setting home plate. (His dad, a bat boy for the Denver Bears, attended the media event and was so proud!).

In 1993, he and his wife Teresa married, and in 1995, they fulfilled their mutual dream of living in the mountains. They moved to Buena Vista and established Arkansas Valley Surveying. Jon especially loved learning the history of the area through relationships with longtime residents and by following the recorded surveys and notes of his predecessors, often from a century earlier. Perhaps his most unusual project was serving as the lead in Richard Grossman's Torah Ball Project, in which an inscribed crystal ball was buried and documented at a location over 12,000' in elevation. In 2014, he became the Chaffee County Planning Manager utilizing his unique experience and his extensive knowledge of the area's history and land use.

Jon loved the outdoors and the forests, tramping around with his wife and beloved dog, Dancer. He was known to fly down the highway singing at the top of his lungs, and he loved introducing his nieces and nephews to the Colorado mountains. His monuments and records will remain, and like the surveyors before him, his "mark", LS 23904, will be a vital part of the area's history for many years to come.

Jon is survived by his former wife, Teresa Roorda of Rogers, Arkansas, his sisters Judith Metcalf of Louisville, Kentucky and Ruth Stirling of Kaloa, Hawaii. He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, Garrett Roorda, Jr.

A memorial service will be held at a future date in Buena Vista, Colorado.