



Charles Cansler

Obituary

Chuck Cansler

Charles Lee "Chuck" Cansler Jr., a retired business executive, died peacefully on July 8, 2023, on St. Simons Island. He had a successful career in corporate turnaround management, usually serving in the role of chief financial officer of the company at risk.

Born on Sept. 13, 1938, in Birmingham, Alabama, he was the second child of Charles Lee Cansler, an engineer with Southern Bell and his wife, Mary Frances Carey. The Cansler family had settled in

Lincoln County, North Carolina, near Charlotte, before the Revolutionary War.

Growing up in Atlanta, Chuck contracted polio, through which he persevered with tender care from his parents and Dr. Leila Denmark at Grady Hospital. He graduated from Georgia Military Academy in 1956 and the University of Alabama in 1960, where he was a member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity. He then earned an MBA in 1962 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He became a certified public accountant as well. In 1974 he married Suzanne Jones "Sue" of Rochester, New York, and a graduate of Sweet Briar College in Virginia.

His financial management career began as an auditor with Ernst and Ernst, CPAs. He was group controller for Fuqua Industries in Atlanta and served as president of the Fuqua subsidiary, Arizona City Development Corp., in Phoenix. As controller and treasurer of Hazleton Laboratories in Northern Virginia, he led the company's successful IPO. In 1990, he co-founded the turnaround management firm, Chamberlain & Cansler Inc. in Atlanta to manage companies in risk of/or in bankruptcy. He and his partner, Frank Chamberlain, won a number of national awards, including the Turnaround Management Associations 1996 Turnaround of the Year Award for their work with First American Health Care on St. Simons Island.

Chuck and Sue retired to St. Simons Island in 2003. Together they enjoyed island life and traveled widely, but also nearby, regularly attending the annual Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina, and the Chautauqua Institute in New York State. Chuck was an active member of Christ Church Frederica. He served as assistant treasurer and then chairman of the board of the St. Simons Land Trust and president of the St. Simons Rotary Club. He was a member of the Ivy League Club and the Attitude Adjustment Club.

As an early leader in the most recent St. Simons incorporation movement and a co-founder of Citizens for St. Simons and Sea Island, he worked to bring community leaders together to address the threats of high-density development, loss of our tree canopy and sea level rise. He

was one of the key players in the movement to take the Brunswick and St. Simons Island libraries out of the Three Rivers System and establish our own Marshes of Glynn Library System.

Chuck was a Southern gentleman with a deep drawl, a warm smile, a hearty laugh and a twinkle in his eye. He remained intellectually curious his entire life and held generally conservative principles. He was beloved by friends and family and greatly respected as "Papa" by his three grandchildren and "Uncle Chuck" by the four children of his sister, the late Carey Roberts of Leesburg, Virginia. He is survived by Suzanne Cansler, his wife of nearly 50 years; son, Charles Lee Cansler III, daughter-in-law, Donna Cansler of St. Simons; and three grandchildren, William, Elizabeth and Catherine.

A memorial service will be held at Christ Church Frederica at 11 a.m. on Saturday, July 29.

Memorials may be made to the St. Simons Land Trust.

Family-placed obituary

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