

Obituary: Michael F. O'Neill

On January 19, 2024, Michael F. O'Neill of Northport, NY passed away at the age of 69 following a short illness. He was the son of Francis Xavier O'Neill and Mary Carney O'Neill. Michael received an associate degree in business management from SUNY Delhi and, following a short stint in the insurance industry, was a professional photographer for over 40 years. His work included creative projects for Fortune 500 companies, publications in the motorcycle, travel and motorsports industries, and thousands of weddings and other creative assignments on a local retail level.

Michael was also an invited speaker at a wide variety of venues from small local amateur photography clubs to the annual convention of Wedding and Portrait Photographers International (WPPI), where he also served as a photography awards judge. In addition, he was a FAA certified drone pilot and frequently used drones in his photographic work, which was recently featured in *Blue Ridge Motorcycling* magazine.

In recent years, Michael directed most of his creative energy towards computer-generated imagery, combining traditional photographic techniques with contemporary photo manipulation and compositing methods. He also became a nationally recognized pioneer in the development of artificial intelligence (AI) image generation. His [company website](#) contains a "Digital Magic" section where hundreds of AI generated images are on display. Michael is also the author of the Amazon #1 Bestseller book, *Road Work: Images and Insights of a Modern Day Explorer*, which combines his two passions of photography and motorcycle touring. In it, he describes his two-wheeled adventures across the U.S. and Canada accompanied by breathtaking photographic images captured during his travels.

Some of Michael's favorite road trips included the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia; Lancaster, Pennsylvania Amish country; the Great Smoky Mountains; Ohio's [Windy 9](#); and Nova Scotia, Canada. His BMW motorcycle was frequently included in location shots while traveling and his photos were shared with related quotes on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn. His final AI enhanced photo was posted five days before his death with the following quote: "The more you can appreciate the gifts you are receiving while the tide is out, the more rapidly the tide will come back in. Focus on the abundance you have" -Sanaya Roman

Following up on the success of his book, Michael also launched an online resource, the [RoadcraftUSA](#) website, where he provided valuable information and inspiration for photographers, motorcyclists, travelers, and adventurers. Dozens of posts provided helpful information to motorcycle enthusiasts about challenging roads to ride, locations with great scenery, the use of AI in modern photography, favorite restaurants to try on road trips, "bucket list" motorcycle rides, how to stay warm and safe in bad weather rides, recommended photography and motorcycle equipment, and more. He also urged Roadcraft USA readers to pursue their motorcycle touring goals [sooner rather than later](#), noting that nobody knows when their "last ride" will be and that "Life is unpredictable...illness, accidents, and unexpected life events can disrupt our plans and leave us unable to do the things we once hoped to do."

Michael was preceded in death by his parents and is survived by his loving life partner, Vivian Hunter, of Northport, NY and his sister, Barbara O'Neill, of Ocala, Florida. Cremation arrangements were under the supervision of Economical Cremation Services of Long Island.