



# **She Made Everyone Feel Loved: Marti Richards Leaves 40-Year Legacy At Nautilus**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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ALTON - Marti Richards leaves a 40-year legacy at Nautilus as a manager. Marti was with Richard Drake, the previous owner when the business opened in 1979 by the old Root Beer Stand in Alton on Elm Street. Manager Matt Schulte, Assistant Manager Kaite Lopez, and Drake said Marti was a key part of the Nautilus business from the beginning until the end of her life. Marti died this past Tuesday.



Drake said Nautilus moved to the Wilson/Coryell Racquetball Club behind Alton Square Mall for its next stop.

“At that time, we also opened Shapin’ Up Health Spa, a women’s only fitness center, on the lower level,” he said. “Marti served as co-manager of the Spa and moved with us in 1981 to the current Nautilus location. Marti continued managing Shapin’ Up, which was located in the Keizer fitness room. She also began teaching aerobic classes. We eventually closed Shapin’ Up & Marti began to work in the Nautilus/cardio center, eventually becoming the manager. She became a fixture at Nautilus, as you all know.

“Marti was the immaculate people person. It came naturally to her because she loved people and had a strong desire to help everyone she came into contact with. For over 40 years, she served the Nautilus members, always with a smile and positive encouragement. “

Today, Nautilus is located at 4425 Industrial Drive, Alton.

Drake said Marti was a dear friend (and employee) for over 40 years.

Lopez said Marti never met a stranger and always made people feel comfortable at the club.

“Everyone will miss her a lot,” Lopez said. “She was here when I started six years ago. I have never been here without Marti; it is going to be hard.

“If you have ever been to Nautilus in the morning, you have probably seen Marti. She has been a staple at Nautilus for the past 40 years. She was always available to help with anything you needed while here. She made people working out for the first time, feel confident. And she made people who worked out their whole lives feel community. I have never met someone that hasn’t loved Marti after meeting her.

“Unfortunately her health took a steep decline these past couple of weeks and she passed away on 8/9/22. Our whole Nautilus community is mourning together right now.”

Lopez continued and said: "We will be closing Nautilus for the entire day on Sunday, August 21, 2022, to host a celebration of life in honor of Marti. The celebration will be open to the public and will be from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Feel free to stop by and share your favorite memory you have of her. A lot of us grew up around Marti. There was never a Nautilus without her. We will never forget what an incredible woman she was. I can speak for all of us when saying the world was better, knowing her.”

Drake closed and said: “On my visits back to Alton, I always looked forward to seeing her in the gym. It just won’t be the same without her.”

**See Richards' Obituary here:**

<https://www.riverbender.com/obits/details/martha-anne-richards-alton-obituary-22800.cfm>