

Iconic Television Personality Regis Philbin Dies at 88

(Editor's Note: This story has been updated to reflect additional comments posted on social media.)

Iconic television personality Regis Philbin, who was best known as the host of the morning talk show *Live! with Regis and Kelly*, died Friday night, July 24, at the age of 88 from natural causes, Fox News reported. Philbin's family confirmed the news.

"We are deeply saddened to share that our beloved Regis Philbin passed away last night of natural causes, one month shy of his 89th birthday," Fox reported that his family told *People* in a statement. "His family and friends are forever grateful for the time we got to spend with him—for his warmth, his legendary sense of humor and his singular ability to make every day into something worth talking about. We thank his fans and admirers for their incredible support over his 60-year career and ask for privacy as we mourn his loss."

"REGIS. There will never be another," Philbin's longtime co-host, devout Christian and Oral Roberts University grad Kathie Lee Gifford, tweeted out Saturday evening. Fox News reported that Philbin began his legendary television career in 1985 on *Live! with Regis and Kathie Lee*. In 2000, Gifford left the ABC show, but reported that the pair remained close after her departure.

REGIS. There will never be another.

– Kathie Lee Gifford (@KathieLGifford) July 25, 2020

Gifford's heartfelt tweet followed a Saturday-morning one in which she quoted 1 Timothy 4:12, "fight the good fight of

faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called. 1 Timothy 6:12,” adding, “LORD give us the strength we need to persevere on our journey. Hold us up by Your righteous right hand and deliver us from despair.”

Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called. I Timothy 6:12 LORD, give us the strength we need to persevere on our journey. Hold us up by Your righteous right hand and deliver us from despair.

– Kathie Lee Gifford (@KathieLGifford) July 25, 2020

Cody Gifford, son of football great Frank Gifford and Kathie Lee Gifford, tweeted out a photo of his famous father with Regis, adding “Gone, but not forgotten. Rest in paradise, cherished friend.”

*Gone, but not forgotten. Rest in paradise, cherished friend.
#regis*

– Cody Gifford (@CodyNGifford) July 25, 2020

Philbin, a graduate of the University of Notre Dame, also made a name for himself as host of the popular ABC game show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, helping move the network into the No. 1 spot in 1999-2000 and drawing audiences of 30 million to a game show that aired first three, then five times a week, per Hollywood Reporter. The Catholic News Agency posted on Twitter, “Regis was a Catholic who attributed his success in show business to the lessons learned in Catholic schools.”

Regis Philbin died Saturday at 88.

Philbin was a Catholic, who attributed his success in show business to the lessons learned in Catholic schools.

– Catholic News Agency (@cnalive) July 25, 2020

Fox also reported that Philbin logged more than 15,000 hours on the air, earning him recognition in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for the most broadcast hours logged by a TV personality, a record previously held by Hugh Downs. Philbin's Twitter account had updated that number to 17,000 hours.

Industry friend and Christian filmmaker Roma Downey posted this on Twitter about Philbin's passing: "So sad #RegisPhilbin .," repeating his family's words about his memorable personality and career.

So sad #RegisPhilbin . "His family and friends are forever grateful for the time we got to spend with him – for his warmth, his legendary sense of humor, and his singular ability to make every day into something worth talking about," the Philbin family

– Roma Downey (@RealRomaDowney) July 25, 2020

President Donald Trump tweeted, "One of the greats in the history of television, Regis Philbin has passed on to even greater airwaves, at 88. He was a fantastic person, and my friend. He kept telling me to run for President. Holds the record for "most live television", and he did it well. Regis, we love you."

One of the greats in the history of television, Regis Philbin has passed on to even greater airwaves, at 88. He was a fantastic person, and my friend. He kept telling me to run for President. Holds the record for "most live television", and he did it well. Regis, we love you...

– Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) July 25, 2020

"Regis was a legendary figure in TV," tweeted television journalist Maria Shriver. "There was no one like him. I used to love watching him. He was always up, always genuine, always real. God bless, Regis."

Regis was a legendary figure in TV. There was no one like him. I used to love watching him. He was always up, always genuine, always real. God bless, Regis. #ripregis #RegisPhilbin

– Maria Shriver (@mariashriver) July 25, 2020

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