



Gary Lee Thomforde

May 2, 1951 - July 25, 2020

Gary Lee Thomforde, 69, of Red Wing died Saturday, July 25th, 2020 at Gunderson Lutheran Hospital in Lacrosse, WI following injuries received in a motorcycle accident. He was born on May 2, 1951 in Red Wing, MN to Lloyd and Betty Thomforde. He saw many parts of the country growing up, living with his family in Grand Rapids, MI, Morris Plains, NJ, Warren, NJ, Pompano Beach, FL and back to Minnesota where he lived the rest of his life in the Red Wing area.

Gary was blessed with 26 wonderful years of marriage to Wendy Simonson Thomforde. He had two wonderful daughters, Courtney and Faith, with his previous wife Karen Hicks. Gary held various jobs including, maintenance and groundskeeping at Forest Lodge in NJ, auto repair and restoration, building a retail shop for his mother's Candle Barn business, working with his father repairing and taking down barns for reclaimed wood, and was a chef at a Florida seafood restaurant. Returning to Red Wing in 1977 he helped set up a farm, built a 'barn house', raised goats, and worked at the SB Foot Tanning Company. In 1987 he went to work for the Prairie Island Nuclear Plant and was also an IBEW union steward. In 2001 Gary accepted a position as a union organizer/lobbyist working for a year at the State Capitol. In 2002 he became a Business Representative for IBEW 949 where he worked until his retirement on February 28th, 2014.

Gary thoroughly enjoyed his retirement spending time with his children and grandchildren who lovingly called him "Grandpa with the Orange Hat". While listening to Bruce Springsteen, he could be found working with anything on wheels; cars, trucks, and especially his Excelsior-Henderson motorcycles. He was the director of the Pioneer Chapter Riders Club, and a member of the Excelsior-Henderson Road Club. He enjoyed riding bike with various groups, and traveling to annual motorcycle events across the country, finding many great friends along the way. Wednesdays and Fridays were always reserved for his buddies at "The Shed" in Farmington where they talked smart and worked on any Excelsior needing attention.

He enjoyed annual fishing trips with his IBEW buddies, bird watching, agate collecting, and selling motorcycle parts and 'you name it' on eBay. He could fix anything, even if it wasn't broken. He had a deep faith that guided him throughout his life and was always ready to help a friend, neighbor or anyone in need.

He loved his home in Wacouta overlooking Lake Pepin and enjoyed spending time on the beach watching eagles and barges pass by, while enjoying a good Scotch and cigar. He is survived by his wife Wendy; daughters Courtney Rodriguez, Faith Shepperd (Joey), stepdaughter Emily Mossow, nephew Aaron Thomforde (Laura) whom he loved as a son; grandchildren, Sam, Elena and Josiah Rodriguez, Eliora, Della and Rosie Shepperd; Natalia, Michaela, Trinity and Ava Mossow; siblings Jean Dueck (Jacob) of Florida, Debbie Thomforde (Lisa Lennox) of North Carolina, and Michael Thomforde (Rene) of Hawaii; mother-in-law Suzanne Simonson, brothers-in-law Greg Simonson (Peggy) and Scott Simonson (Lori), uncle Wayne Thomforde, aunt Thelma Fredrickson, and many cousins, nieces and nephews. Preceding him in death were his parents Lloyd and Betty Thomforde.

We wish that everyone who knew Gary could attend his service but due to Covid restrictions a private service will be held on Saturday, August 1, 2020 for the immediate family only. A video of the service will be available on Facebook on the "Remembering Gary" memorial group page.

Comments



“ Tears To Share was purchased for the family of Gary Lee Thomforde.



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