

Gary Radtke

February 13, 2024



On Friday, Dec. 29, 2023, Gary Dean Radtke, 79, loving life partner and father of two, died due to complications associated with the COVID virus.

Gary was born on Oct. 5, 1944, in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho to Lowell Radtke and Eileen Radtke. He grew up in the small farming town of Lamberton, Minn. His dedication and work ethic were developed early on as he worked in the heavy highway/civil sector of the construction industry. He started his construction career as a laborer and worked his way up to project superintendent.

While working in construction, Gary liked to buy and remodel properties on the side. In the late '70s, he completely tore down and rebuilt Darby Market in Crescent City, Calif. He was a practical problem solver and builder who had an interest in engineering. He tested for and received his Class A – General Engineering Contractor's license in May 1981. This type of license requires specialized engineering knowledge and skill. Passing the test and earning this license is a big accomplishment for someone without an Engineering Degree. Once both of his children had graduated from high school, Gary retired from the construction industry at the age of 46 with 27 years in the Union.

Gary then started buying properties full time, remodeling them, and renting them out to earn a living. A well-rounded set of construction talents, equipment operating ability, hard work ethic and excellent problem-solving skills served him well as he pursued this new living. Eventually, Gary and his partner Linda Derryberry were able to buy larger properties including a ranch and a farm.

More space on the ranch and farm brought new opportunities for Gary. He had always loved animals, especially labrador retrievers and he trained many of these trusty companions over the years. He also loved horses and livestock. So, he and Linda bought some horses and started to raise cattle. He quickly learned how to plant and cut hay and alfalfa for their livestock, and he developed an irrigation system to maximize the farming operation. He would often cut hay for neighbors who didn't have the equipment, knowledge, or desire to do it themselves. He loved to help others in need and was quick to offer a hand to anyone who needed it.

An operator at heart, Gary loved operating and maintaining equipment. He could operate just about any piece of construction or farm equipment efficiently. Without a doubt his favorite piece of equipment was his backhoe. He used it for everything from construction projects to picking black berries and he cherished that backhoe.

Gary Radtke was an honest, hardworking, self-made man who loved to work with his hands and lived life on his own terms. He was competitive, clever, knowledgeable, and never met a problem he couldn't solve. He loved to help others and he lived by a set of moral principles that clearly illuminated his path. He will be dearly missed.

Gary is survived by his life partner Linda Derryberry; his two children Sheryl Weissel (Jeremy) and Kurtis Radtke (Sandy); step-daughter Pam Halley (Rick), grandchildren Tynessa Radtke, Kameron Olson, Taryn Ransom (Jeremy), Victoria Radtke and Brandon Radtke; great-grandchildren Waylon Ransom and Declan Ransom; his sister Jerrine Kettner (Jerome); his brothers Dick Radtke (Marylee), Stan Radtke (Christina) and Donny Radtke (Becky); and several cousins, nieces, nephews and in-laws.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you make a conscious effort to help someone in need, be kind to someone or make a point to be kind to animals. Call a friend or relative you have not reached out to recently. Forgive someone. All acts of kindness will be appreciated.