



Lawrence Wayne Sparks, Sr. (Sparky)

Lawrence Wayne (Larry) died at the age of 79 on March 20, 2019, in Ericson, Nebraska, in his home surrounded by most of his children and wife. Three weeks ago on February 27th, he was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer. He was an only child born to Lelia Aurelia Ray (Billie) in Old Town, Maine, on October 27, 1939. He is survived by his wife Shari Sparks of Ericson, and his children Robin & Thomas Castor of Ericson, Kim & Dana Libonati of McMinnville, OR, Kari & Bill Simpson of Greenwood, MO, Larry & Charlene Sparks of Tuscaloosa, AL, Jeremy &

Susan Sparks of Tuscaloosa, AL, and Jennifer & Gary Goings of Quincy, IL. He was the father of six children and 2 step-children. He was Papa to 33 grandchildren (two of which were waiting for him when he walked through the gates of heaven) and 17 great-grandchildren.

He met Shari McDaniel in 1958, at a roller-skating rink. Dad skated up and asked Mom if she would like him to teach her how to skate backwards. She was 17 and he was 19. No doubt he flashed that smile of his, as he started to spin around he promptly fell on his rear! A few months later they were married in Reno, Nevada, in a little wedding chapel. They stayed married for 20 years. Eventually, life got in the way and they divorced in 1977. Though their story did not end there. After 24 years apart, they found their way back to one another and remarried surrounded by their children in 2001. What a day that was!

He served in the Air Force from 1957 to 1962 when he was honorably discharged. For over 20 years he was one of the most sought-after fastpitch softball pitchers in the United States. He was an amazing salesperson, it was joked that he could sell ice to an Eskimo. The story is told that he sold a newspaper subscription to a blind man explaining that his friend could read it to him. He sold everything from cars to meat for a meat packing company. Most of his career was in yellow page sales and sales management where he excelled like he did at just about everything he ever pursued.

His wishes were that his body be cremated, and his ashes be near where he grew up in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. A Celebration of Life is planned for Memorial Day weekend.