



Wayne Douglas Benson

December 13, 1950 - July 2, 2020

Wayne's final wish was to have a celebration of life which will take place when current events allow for a responsible and appropriate time for family and friends to gather. Arrangements are with the Shelley Funeral Chapel of Onamia.

Wayne Douglas Benson lost his battle with ALS on July 2nd, 2020 at 69 years of age, alongside his special friend, Diana. He passed at his home of more than 40 years, in the house which he and his family built together. This was one of his final wishes. Wayne was born December 13th, 1950 in Princeton, Minnesota to Gunnar and May Benson. Wayne lived in Onamia, Minnesota for most of his life as this was where he was happiest. Wayne attended Onamia Public Schools and graduated in 1968. After graduation, Wayne met his first wife, Anita, and had two boys Brian and Chris who he was very proud of. In 1974 Wayne then met his 2nd wife Paula with whom he had his daughter Amanda. Wayne cherished his little girl. Wayne had many jobs throughout his life. He raised livestock for many years, worked with the MN DNR as a smoke chaser, and he even owned a small manufacturing business. Wayne decided that he wanted to help young kids who were struggling and began working at The Mille Lacs Academy in Onamia where he worked for nearly 20 years. Upon retiring, Wayne was able to show his creative side by making items such as wooden duck calls and pens along with designing and dealing in metal artwork. Wayne was very proud of his creations and was even more proud that he was able to share his work by selling these at different events. Wayne

had many passions throughout his life. He loved to collect and restore old cars. He would take those cars to many car shows and he enjoyed meeting others that were also interested in this hobby. For many years, there was a Benson family tradition of entering the Onamia Day's demolition derby. The entire family worked hard on getting an old car ready for the derby. There were many years that trophies were given to Wayne for winning the best painted car. He also enjoyed hunting, especially deer hunting. Wayne loved connecting with friends and family through his numerous hobbies, including most recently the people with whom he interacted at his fruit and vegetable stand. In his later years, Wayne reconnected with an old high school friend, Diana Hanson. In 2015 she joined him in Minnesota and they were able to enjoy his last years together, traveling and visiting places from his bucket list. Wayne made so many friends along the way and was so grateful for everyone who came into his life. Wayne touched many lives and those who knew him will forever remember his awesome smile and his sense of humor. His children could always tell his long time friends from others because they all called him by his nickname, "Wiener". This would eventually turn into "Grandpa Wiener".

Wayne is survived by his three children Brian (Becky) Benson, Chris (Jenny) Benson and Amanda (Kyle) Helmin along with his brothers Dean Benson, Rick Benson, Gunnar (Bill) Benson his sisters Shirley Kuschel and RuthAnn (Chet) Thomas. Wayne had 15 grandchildren who loved him very much. Wayne is preceded in death by his parents Gunnar and May as well as his brothers Chuck and Bob along with his sister, Dorothy Johnson.

Tribute Wall



“ *Wayne Douglas Benson*

January 21, 2023 at 11:59 AM



“ *Wayne was a member of OHS Class of 1968. We celebrated our 50th year of graduating from high school in 2018 and we shared that connection with him. We all knew each other as children. From what others have said, he maintained the personality of his youth in making friends easily and enjoying his life.*

Marie Z Norman - July 13, 2020 at 08:48 PM



“ *I worked with Wayne at MLA for 8 years. He was a great guy and always made work interesting!!! I am very privileged to have known him!*

Jessie Berger - July 08, 2020 at 01:46 PM



“ *Our sympathy to all, He was a great guy..will miss him! mel & nettie*

mel & nettie Buessler - July 08, 2020 at 10:29 AM