



Donald Philip "Paco" Pelky

July 28, 1949 - October 7, 2020

Donald Philip "Paco" Pelky, 71, of Traverse City, died Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at Munson Hospice House after a courageous six-year battle with cancer. Don was born in Traverse City on July 28, 1949. He was the middle child of the late Philip and Kathryn (Bivins) Pelky. As his journey in this life has come to a close, we, his family, believe that his adventuresome spirit of his childhood years will continue on into his next chapter. Don attended grade school at Oak Park and St. Francis. He was a 1967 graduate of St. Francis High School and briefly attended Central Michigan University. He was drafted into the U.S Army in 1969 serving during the Vietnam era. He rarely spoke of his time of war but he served in combat with the same bravery of his final days here on earth. Don spent a couple of years in Colorado when he returned to the states where he enjoyed the great outdoors and spent a good amount of time skiing. Returning to Traverse City in the early 70's, Don enjoyed working outdoors for a few years in the oil fields of lower Michigan. Changing careers, he became a die maker and spent the majority of his working years at Pinecrest Engineering. Don's favorite pastime for many years was fly fishing, especially on the property he owned on the Rapid River. He also enjoyed bowling, watching NASCAR, and working crossword puzzles. He is survived by his sisters, Sandy John and Janis Glassner, both of Traverse City; brother Ted Pelky of Brunswick, GA; and nephews Michael Kearney, Ryan Farage and Garrick John. Don is preceded in death by his brother Rick Pelky and brothers-in-law Jerry Glassner and Gary L. John. A memorial is planned for the spring of 2021 with his ashes being spread at a couple of Don's favorite places. The remainder of his cremains will be buried at St. Philip Neri Catholic Church in Empire. The family extends its heartfelt thanks to the nurses and staff of Munson Hospice House who eased Don's and our family's pain during his final week.