



Roen Lee Tharp

November 28, 1949 - May 25, 2017

Beloved husband, brother and son Roen Lee Tharp, 67, of Traverse City, passed away on Thursday, May 25 after a month long battle with cancer. His loving wife Jo Rocheleau and his sister Ronda Tharp were by his side.

Roen, who spent most of his life in Traverse City, was born to Ray Marvin Tharp and Virginia Marie (Bailey) Tharp in Lima, Ohio on November 28, 1949. He received a bachelor's degree in education at Ferris State University and worked in the unemployment and disability departments for the state of Michigan for over 20 years until his retirement.

Though Roen dealt with polio since the age of one, he never allowed his affliction to affect his outlook. Whenever someone walked in a room, Roen would make a point of getting to know that person and making them feel comfortable, armed with a smile, some questions about their life and maybe a joke or two. Roen tried to relate to people through small talk in a way that seemed effortless and was guided by a genuine interest in other people and their hopes and aspirations. He truly had a heart of gold.

Roen was also an avid fisherman, was a fan of the Traverse City Beach Bums baseball team, played adaptive sports for people with disabilities, loved bike riding, enjoyed crossword puzzles and could play the accordion, flute, piccolo and guitar.

He is survived by his wife Jo, whom he married August 18, 2012, siblings Ronda (Stan) Tharp, James (Mary) Tharp, William (Betty) Tharp and Valma (Dean) Davis, five nieces and nephews and 10 great nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, his sister Lynette and his first wife of 30 years, Kathleen.

The funeral service will be held Tuesday, June 6 at 11 a.m at St Mary's Catholic Church in Lake Leelanau, with a visitation at 10 a.m. A luncheon will immediately follow the service. Roen's final resting place will be Monroe Center Cemetery. In lieu of flowers those considering a donation may do so to the family.

Please visit www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com to share your memories with the family.

The family is being cared for by the Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

Cemetery

Monroe Center Cemetery

5316 County Road 633

Grawn, MI, 49637

Events

JUN **Visitation** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

6

St. Mary's Lake Leelanau

Lake Leelanau, MI, US

JUN **Funeral Mass** 11:00AM

6

St. Mary's Catholic Church

411 S. Saint Mary's Street, Lake Leelanau, MI, US

Comments



“ My uncle was such a kind hearted man. Growing up I always looked up to him. He always knew how to make you laugh and smile. It will never be the same without you uncle Roan. Thank you for all the fun fishing and just going out for a boat ride when I was younger. You will always be in my heart. I love you uncle Roan. Your nephew Troy.

Troy Tharp - June 04, 2017 at 01:35 PM



“ Charlotte Wallace lit a candle in memory of Roen Lee Tharp



Charlotte Wallace - June 03, 2017 at 08:32 AM



“ It is with great sadness that I hear of Roen's passing. He was everything his beautiful obituary says about him!

I met Roen way back in the '70's when we were both students at Ferris State College.

His name was on the ride board, so I called him and from then on, he was my weekend ride to Traverse City. I actually lived in Manistee, but wanted to visit my then boyfriend in TC. I don't think he was very comfortable with that arrangement because those were the days when co-habitation was frowned upon and I think he felt like he was an enabler. Ahh, the good old days!

We had great conversations about everything under the sun in that little VW Beetle of his! One very dark, cold, snowy night we did a 180 right on the highway and landed in a rather deep ditch and no cell phones, of course! I don't remember exactly how he got us out of there, I only remember that we laughed through the whole thing! He was amazing!

In recent years, I was only fortunate enough to run into him in Sam's Club, etc. occasionally. We'd talk like no time had passed between us. What a joyful man! And since marrying Jo, he was ecstatic! I was so happy for him. He was always so kind to Kathleen and I'm sure his castle in heaven is everything he could have ever dreamed!

My condolences and prayers for all of you, especially you, Roen. (I know your listening!)

Charlotte Wallace - June 03, 2017 at 08:31 AM



“ Our prayers and deepest sympathy for Jo and the family. God bless. Gena and Boyd Culver.

GENA M CULVER - June 02, 2017 at 07:52 PM



“ I met Roen in the early 1970's when he lived in Battle Creek for a short while. Then about ten years ago, I was able to have breakfast with him when I was on a visit to TC. I will always remember Roen's openness, kindness, and positiveness. I don't think he ever met a stranger. My condolences to his wife and family. Thank God Roen passed through our lives. Isaac Campbell

ij campbell - June 02, 2017 at 08:41 AM



“ Ronda sorry to read about your bothers daath I hope every thing else is going well for you

fred braun - June 02, 2017 at 07:49 AM



“ I worked w/Roen at DDS. He was such a nice man always with a smile. Having a disability did not every hinder his abilities nor his spirit. My condolences to his family at this difficult time.

Shawn Harrington - June 01, 2017 at 10:15 AM



“ Sending Jo and the rest of Roen's family, our deepest sympathy.
It was our joy and honor to know Roen; one of the good guys.
Love,
Susan Odgers and Tom Mair

susan odgers - May 25, 2017 at 12:22 PM