



Lionel Kubiak

January 10, 1941 - February 8, 2025

Lionel Anthony Kubiak, 84, of Bellingham, Washington, passed away comfortably, on Saturday, February 8, 2025, under tender care at PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center, approximately two months after being diagnosed with multiple forms of cancer and their complications. Two loving friends were by his side.

Lionel was born on January 10th, 1941 to Ann Marie (Turner) Kubiak and Joseph Stanley Kubiak, in a nurturing Catholic home near the famous Union Stock Yards, on the South Side of Chicago, IL. He spoke highly of the education he received in his youth at various Catholic Institutions. In 1949, when Lionel was 8, he suffered the loss of his father, Joseph, in a traumatic industrial motor vehicle accident. This event greatly impacted him and his family.

He was half Polish, but took pride in the strong, but loving, upbringing he received by his Irish mother and family. His childhood hero, actor Steve Reeves and other WWII veterans, influenced his dedication to physical fitness and inspired him to enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces. In 1958, he briefly served in the Navy, but ultimately enlisted in the U.S. Army. He was stationed at Fort Gordon, Georgia (now Fort Eisenhower), and from early 1960 to 1961, he served as a Radio Teletype Operator in post-armistice South Korea during the upheaval of that country's Second Republic. After his 1958-1962 enlistment,

he returned to his roots in Chicago, IL, where he met and fell in love with Claudia Poremba.

In 1963, Lionel married Claudia, and together they brought four children into the world, two boys, and two girls. Unfortunately, they lost their second born son to birth complications. Ultimately, the young couple's marriage would not endure their tumultuous 20s. These circumstances resulted in Lionel taking on a different life path, separating him from his young wife and surviving children.

By his own admission, Lionel was a "Jack of all trades, master of none". During his varied career, Lionel preferred the physicality and focus of active, hands-on work, to help "quiet a busy mind". He was a skilled machinist, manufacturer, and commercial truck driver. His wandering endeavors took him from Illinois to Florida, Texas, California, and finally to Washington State where he became enamored with the beauty of the Pacific Northwest in 1984.

Lionel was a lifelong learner, a true seeker. In the 1990s, he attended multiple institutions of higher learning, eventually earning his BS degree in Chemistry from Western Washington University in Bellingham – at the age of 62! His remaining free time was devoted to his spiritual journey, which included multiple explorations of various paths, his journeys often returning to, and finally settling on the tenets of his Catholic upbringing. Part of his faith walk was membership in a 12-step recovery program, where he shared strength and hope through his experiences, with countless alcoholics afflicted with the disease. This solidified him as a well-loved fixture in sobriety halls throughout the Pacific Northwest, especially those located in Bellingham and western Whatcom County. "My ego is NOT my amigo!" was an oft-heard Lionel-ism in the rooms of recovery. February 17th, just a few days after his passing, would have marked a celebration of 47 years of continuous sobriety. His simple lessons in healing and truth were appreciated by all those who shared time with him. Lionel's local fellowship in recovery will miss him.

Lionel was preceded in death by his mother Ann Marie (Turner) Kubiak, his father Joseph Stanley Kubiak, and his son William Kubiak.

He is survived by his older sister Joanne (Kubiak) Dobrez, and younger brother Roger Kubiak. He is also served by his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. His son Joseph Kubiak. His daughter Leeann (Kubiak) Yager and her husband Richard Yager with their five children (his grandchildren) Nicole Yager, Zachary Yager, Kenneth Yager, Elizabeth (Yager) Aduddell, and Melissa Yager. His daughter Robin (Kubiak) Fowler, and her daughter Courtney (Fowler) Marcotte. Through Leeann he is survived by seventeen great-grandchildren.

Lionel's funeral mass, and reception will be held at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Bellingham on March 28, 2025 beginning at 10:30 AM, with the reception following at 11:45 AM, which is expected to end by 1 PM. Details regarding his burial with Military Honors, to follow.

His grandchildren would like to honor his Catholic roots, and his passion for science with a "green" burial, using a biodegradable urn approved by Catholic church. The urn will be planted with a tree indigenous to the Pacific Northwest. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the cost of burying his cremated remains. Any remaining donations will be divided evenly between St. Jude Children's Hospital, Catholic Charities, and the global organization responsible for overseeing to 12 step program that he was so passionate about.

Tribute Wall



“ *Lionel was a treasure and will be missed.* ”

Erin - March 21, 2025 at 12:00 AM