

EUGENE EDWIN KWAPNIOSKI



Born January 1, 1945 in Columbus, Nebraska to Peter and Stella Kwapnioski, Eugene (Gene) Edwin Kwapnioski passed away on October 10, 2019 at Baptist Medical Center Downtown Jacksonville. He was recently given troubling news that he had stage 4 cancer but it



seems that our merciful God saw fit to take him before the pain of it could ravage his body further.

Gene joined the US Navy in 1968, enjoying boot camp in Great Lakes, IL, which he proclaimed was the coldest place on earth; and that must be saying something coming from a Nebraska boy. He served aboard the USS Intrepid, CVS-11, as a personnel clerk and ordnance handler during the Vietnam War. During his time in service, he earned "Gladiator of the Month," as well as a Vietnam Service Medal with two bronze stars. When his squadron downsized, he left active duty, went into reserves, did a few odd jobs until he found his calling working for Gold Kist Eggs.

He held a few positions at Gold Kist Eggs, but the most memorable is Feed Mill Manager. Even when accidentally tossed about by the feed mixer and hit in the head by a piece of material dropped from the catwalk from the top of the feed bin (waaaaay up high), Gene was a dedicated employee. He only took sick days when injured at work and when he took vacation days, he would often return early to assist if a phone call came in. Working for Gold Kist did afford an annual perk, going to Walt Disney World for the Egg Producers Conference one weekend a year. He did enjoy detailing the family car and truck! In fact, his truck was the envy of any gas station. This trip was a highly anticipated one where the daughter and teddy bears would slide across the freshly Armor All polished back seat as the Ford Thunderbird made each turn. Gene later admitted he never liked going to Disney, however, his daughter loved it because she got to spend time with her Daddy. He was a STELLAR provider, a man of few words, not much on affection, but when you grow up with nine siblings, that could be a side effect of it. When Gold Kist decided to leave Hilliard, after almost 20 years of loyalty, they offered Gene a job in Alabama. He chose to stay in what was home to him and used his truck driving skills to bring home the bacon. He got behind the wheel of a few log trucks, eventually getting one of his own. In fact, he was so excited when he picked it up he almost forgot how to shift the gears. He drove that truck so much he put over one million miles on it.

Gene leaves behind a daughter Lucy Kwapnioski-Nadeau (Greg Peistrup) of Yulee; his faithful dog Woodski (who he rescued from an area being logged that was six miles deep in the woods); a brother David (Loretta) Kwapnioski of Columbus, Nebraska; his dear friend David (Sue Ann) McCollough of Hilliard; and several nieces and nephews both in the Nebraska area and in Florida.

Memorialization will be by cremation.

The family will receive friends from 12-2 p.m. Saturday, October 26 prior to the funeral service at 2 p.m. at the Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home Chapel.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations in memory of Gene to the Gary Sinise Foundation.

Condolences may be expressed at www.shepardfh.com.

Arrangements by Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home in Folkston.