



J. Gary Clifton, age 77, of Traverse City, Michigan, died unexpectedly at his home in Traverse City, Michigan on September 20, 2023.

He was born on July 21, 1946 in Manistee, Michigan and was the son of the late John and Alexina (Tebo) Clifton. He was a graduate of Manistee High School with the class of 1965. During high school, Gary participated in playing football and basketball, and was named captain of his basketball team. He served in the United States Navy during the Vietnam War from June 2, 1966 till February 28, 1970. He attended Central Michigan University and received his Bachelor's Degree of Science, and attended Grand Valley State University receiving his Masters of Social Work.

During his working career he had been employed with the Manistee City Parks Department, at the Packaging Corporation of America and the Fitness Center and was also the Sports Director at Manistee Catholic Central School. Upon moving to Traverse City, he was employed with Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District from August of 2003 until his retirement in 2009. He also did social work for Third Level 24/7 Counseling and Crisis Services also of Traverse City. Gary volunteered his time with counseling people at Michaels Place Grief and Support Center in Traverse City as well as volunteering with helping and working with the veterans in the Grand Traverse area.

He was very caring person and would always help anyone who was in need. When going out to eat, he would always ask his server if they were attending college and if so, he would leave an extra big tip to help them out. He was the type of man that never showed anger and was always in control of his feelings. He enjoyed spending time with his family, especially during the holidays, this meant a lot to him, and he was always interested and proud of his nieces and nephews and what they had accomplished in their lives. Gary also enjoyed dancing and was very good at it, loved riding his motorcycle with his buddies, as well as driving his corvette.

Gary is survived by two sisters and brother's in-law, Julie and Leo Niezgucki and Susie and Kenneth Bauman, his nephews, Michael (Teri) Bauman, Kevin Bauman (Karen), Gary (Jane) Bauman, Shawn (Kelly) Bauman and Aaron Niezgucki (Heather). He will also be missed by his dog "Billie", who is being well taken care of by his family members.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Alexina (Tebo) Clifton and by his grandparents George and Nellie (Cavanaugh) Clifton and Felix and Cora (McNamara) Thibeault.

The family would like to thank his best friends Walley Eaton and Skip Olson, for everything they have done for Gary's family and also a thank you to Mindi Buell for helping us get thru this difficult time.

Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated, on Saturday, October 28 2023 at 10:30 a.m. at Guardian Angels Catholic Church in Manistee with Reverend Mitchel Roman Celebrant. Burial will follow at Oak Grove Cemetery in Manistee where the members of the Manistee County United Veterans Council Ritual Squad will conduct Military Honors. A funeral luncheon for family and friends will be held at the St. Joseph Parish Center in Manistee, following the services at the cemetery.

The family will receive friends at the church on Saturday morning, from 9:00 a.m. until the time of the funeral mass, at 10:30 a.m.

Those wishing to remember Gary, are asked to consider a donation in his name, to Michaels Place Grief and Support Center in Traverse City. Envelopes will be available at the church on Saturday.

The Herbert Funeral Home of Manistee is in charge of funeral arrangements.

