



## Gerald Paul Lafond

June 8, 1954 - December 1, 2021

Gerald Paul LaFond, age 67, of Kankakee passed away peacefully, surrounded by his sons, on Wednesday, Dec 1, 2021 at his home after a courageous fight with cancer. He was born June 8, 1954 at St. Mary's Hospital in Kankakee, the third child of four to Francis "Barney" LaFond and Lauretta Cruywells.

A born charmer, Jerry gathered friends and family everywhere he went. He had a kind soul, the likes of which one encounters so rarely in life. He made you feel special, loved no matter what, and the ever-present smile on his face lit up each space he entered. Jerry radiated contagious positivity and always looked for the good in everyone and in every situation. His love for life was unparalleled.

Jerry was also a daredevil at heart. At any point in his life, you could find him on his motorcycle, boating, hiking a mountain, waterskiing, hunting, exploring, snow skiing, or biking. Never one content to let life happen to him, he rushed to meet adventure wherever he could find it. He also had a love affair with art, mentored by the late, great Orion Hargett after whom he named his oldest son. Jerry moved to Steamboat Springs in 1982 and fell in love. This love of Colorado remained with him throughout his life.

Jerry married Kimberly Johnson in 1981 and had 3 sons who were the

absolute joy of his life: Orion, Nicholas, and Lucas. For all of the happiness he found in adventure and art, nothing could compare to the love he had for his sons. He translated his adventurous spirit into making their lives full of wonder through weekend camping excursions, snow skiing in Wisconsin, and frequent waterskiing on the Kankakee River and Lake Shafer in Indiana. The boys became his whole universe and he dedicated his life to them. His heart only swelled with the addition of his grandchildren. Jerry's jubilant spirit and his zest for life, love, and adventure live on in his descendants.

Jerry is survived by his sons, Orion LaFond of Kankakee, Nicholas LaFond and Megan Grant of Saint Anne, and Lucas LaFond of Kankakee; two grandchildren, Joaquin Diaz and Rhona LaFond; his sons mother and friend, Kimberly (Marty) Nissen; three sisters, JoRetta (Bryan) Brady, Juanita Curtis, and Lana (Andrew) Denault; nieces and nephews, Jaclyn (Dan) Gordon and family, Austin (Rachel) Denault, DiEnne (Jim) Glover and family; brother-in-law and friend, Rick (Kristi) Johnson and family; sister-in-law and friend, Ginger (Alan) Cook and family; and many, many friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Barney and Laurette LaFond; nephew, Joseph Curtis; and special friends, Tim West and Ray Montalta.

Visitation for Jerry will be held on Monday, December 6, 2021 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Clancy Gernon Funeral Home in Bourbonnais. A funeral mass will be celebrated on Tuesday, December 7, 2021 at 10 a.m. at St. Mary's Catholic Church a.k.a. The "Cathedral of the Cornfields" in Beaverville, IL where he was a member. Jerry's great-grandfather, Philius LaFond, helped build St. Mary's Church. Jerry took extreme pride in this knowledge. If you attend services, look for his name engraved on a front pillar.

Burial will be immediately following the service in St. Mary's Cemetery. Jerry will be laid to rest among many loved and cherished LaFond family members.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to St. Mary's Catholic Church in Beaverville, IL.

# Cemetery Details

## St. Mary's Cemetery

Beaverville, IL 60912  
(815) 435-2006

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 6. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Bourbonnais - Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes, Inc.  
295 Main St., NW  
Bourbonnais, IL 60914  
(815) 932-1214  
cgfuneral@gmail.com

## Funeral Mass

DEC 7. 10:00 AM (CT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church  
Beaverville, IL  
: (815) 435-2432  
<http://www.stmaryschurchbeaverville.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ *I only knew Jerry a relatively short time, but in that time his character and abiding kindness shined brightly. I miss him and my heart goes out to his family.*

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**David Sullivan** - December 17, 2021 at 10:43 AM

BE

“ *Orion & family*

*You are in our thoughts and prayers.*

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**Brian & Julie Ebersole** - December 07, 2021 at 10:36 AM

SE

“ *Lana and family, sorry for your loss.*



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**Sue Eastburn** - December 06, 2021 at 01:31 PM

PZ

“ *Jerry was everyone's friend. And will be missed by all who knew him. We shared some good times and laughs back in the day. My sincere condolences to all of Jerry's family.*

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**Paul Ziemer** - December 06, 2021 at 11:53 AM

CS

“ Lana and family,  
My sincere condolences in the passing of  
Jerry. May God give you comfort in all the  
wonderful memories you shared with him.  
Love and prayers,  
Carla Scheppler



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**Carla Scheppler** - December 06, 2021 at 11:33 AM

BL

“ I have so many fun memories of Jerry. But my hands down favorite  
of all times ... Jerry, Kim, Tom and I previewed a landscape auction.  
We each wanted 3-4 decent size trees. The next day the auction  
was set and just Kim and I went. We didn't know that as we were  
bidding (in the rain) they were actually selling in lots of 3. When we  
went to check out, we found out we'd spent several thousand  
dollars on way more trees than we wanted. When we went to break  
the news to Jerry at his work, instead of being mad, he just laughed  
at our drowned rat appearance and called Tom to sort how to get all  
these huge trees picked up ☐. He made us pose for a photo. It's  
one of my most favorite photos. I have so many memories of us  
raising our kids at the same time and the fun we would have. Orion,  
Nick and Luke ... the pain you're in now will fade and the fabulous  
memories will keep your Dad in your hearts. Stay connected, stay  
enjoying life, that is your Dad's legacy.

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**Barbara Laffey** - December 06, 2021 at 09:07 AM

ST

“ I'm so sorry to hear of Jerry's passing but we can all find comfort in  
knowing his suffering is over. He was a wonderful man, always so  
loving and caring and always had a smile on his face. To say he will  
be missed would be a huge understatement. Love and prayers for  
all of you!

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**Stephanie Travis** - December 05, 2021 at 05:48 PM

JK

“ I am so sad to hear of Jerry's passing. I was a classmate of Jerry's throughout high school at Eastridge and at St. Theresa church. He lit up a room with his smile and his kindness and his HEIGHT! Someone taller than me! Such a handsome man. Last time I saw him was at the last HS reunion we had. Still the same Jerry we all loved! It sounded like he lived life to the fullest and has 3 wonderful sons to carry on his legacy.  
May your memories give you peace and comfort.  
My sincere Condolences,  
Judy Ruder Kella

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**Judy Ruder Kella** - December 05, 2021 at 01:27 PM

PF

“ [T]he ever-present smile on his face lit up each space he entered." This, along with the remainder of the obituary, beautifully capture Jerry as we knew him in the neighborhood where we grew up--I don't think I ever saw him not smile (even when he mowed the lawn for me in exchange for a firework that didn't turn out to be what he expected--he understood I didn't know the difference, told me to forget it; we never talked about it again). It does not surprise that his energy, charm, and love of life stayed with him his entire life. My deepest condolences to his sons and to all of Jerry's family and friends.

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**Patrick Foster** - December 04, 2021 at 12:40 PM

MA

“ I am very sad to read the news, I just heard the news about Jerry a few weeks ago. I was back in town a few weeks ago and thankfully able to see Jerry a couple of times to reminisce about are good times we had in WI and IN. I have been friends with Jerry since 4th grade at St. Teresa, we had some great times starting then and kept going forward. Jerry always lit the room up with his smile and good humor, he will be missed but never forgotten. God bless Jerry and his family.

*A long time friend,*

*Mark Alessandri*

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**mark alessandri** - December 04, 2021 at 11:33 AM

AF

“ I am so sad, and sorry for you loss. Jerry was a great friend and we shared many adventures! May he soon be united with Jesus and hear those blessed words which will call him to his heavenly home: "Come, blessed of My Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

*Rest in Peace.*

*Love Ya*

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**a Friend** - December 04, 2021 at 01:15 AM

SB

“ Jerry was one in a million. He will be sorely missed.

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**Sally (Strufe) Bell** - December 03, 2021 at 07:28 PM

GM

“ My deepest sympathies to the family and all of his friends, I met Jerry in Junior High and liked him immediately. Like everyone else at High School he made a very long and lasting impression with me. Every reunion I needed to make plenty of time to catch up with him. It was difficult because everyone else wanted and needed to talk to Jerry also. He will be missed by everyone who knew him. Rest in Peace Jerry. Here is to a life well lived.  
Gary MulviHill

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**Gary L MulviHill** - December 03, 2021 at 12:36 PM

RS

Jerry and I met in the first grade at St. Theresa's grade school in 1961. A lifetime ago. Always smiling and good humored. I remember that he had an "English racer" as they were called back then around the time we were 5th or 6th grade. He was quite tall and it was a good fit. Amazingly he could ride a wheel stand the length of St. Joseph Avenue that was blocked for recess. A fellow tradesman and a gentleman through and through. Condolences to Jerry's family and friends. Such a tremendous loss.

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**Robert Soucie** - December 03, 2021 at 01:36 PM

MW

“ I first met Jerry at East Junior high school in Kankakee. We became friends immediately. Jerry was one of the most likable, kind, funny, happy, people I ever met in my life. He truly was a Good Guy. He is already sadly missed. The world was a better place with him in it and is dimmed by his loss. Heaven has gained an excellent angel. Thanks for being my friend, Jerry. I will miss you, dude.  
Mark Wegner

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**Mark W** - December 03, 2021 at 11:13 AM

JF

*Jerry LaFond will be fondly remembered as one of the "good guys" from our graduation class of 1973, everyone liked Jerry!!! I'm saddened by his loss. Heaven is a better place with him being there. My deepest condolences to his family and friends RIP my friend, you'll never be forgotten...🙏❤️🙏*

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**Jeff Fortin** - December 03, 2021 at 12:05 PM

KN

*“ My dearest friend, You gave me the three most amazing sons. You were the best dad to these young men and they adored you. We remained a united front despite our differences. Along with my husband Marty, we promise you to stand beside our sons to give them all the love and support we have. We promise you to keep your memory alive in the grandchildren we all share and love beyond words. RIP my friend. I got you!!!*

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**Kim Nissen** - December 03, 2021 at 10:21 AM