

Ross, Gary

Gary Ross, 57, of Frankfort, died at home on Saturday, July 8, 2006, surrounded by his immediate family. The son of Frank Ross and Jeanette and James Hewitt, he was born November 20, 1948 in Bad Axe. He attended school in Ubly, excelling in high school basketball and football, and served in the U.S. Navy Seabees from 1968 until 1970, when he was honorably discharged. Gary earned a bachelor of science degree in education and social work from Central Michigan University and went on to complete a master's degree in social work from the University of Michigan. Committed to social services and education, Gary worked for Community Mental Health as Program Director for Developmental Disability Services and later for the Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District. During his nearly 20 years with the school district, Gary worked with children and families as a school social worker and later as the director of technology, integrating technological innovations into educational settings. In these positions, he earned multiple awards for his service and leadership. As a hobby and business, Gary and a friend owned and operated Harrietta Wood Products for almost 10 years, a saw mill that produced log home kits and cedar products. In 1991, after building their new log home, Gary and his family moved from the Cadillac area to Frankfort, where they've lived since. He loved spending time outdoors, discussing politics, sharing funny stories and spending time with family and friends. Gary is survived by Donna, his wife of 35 years; daughter, Leslie (Alex) Sarapu, of Washington, D.C.; son, James Ross, of Frankfort; parents, Jeanette and James Hewitt; step-mother, Agnes Ross; eight beloved brothers and sisters; brothers and sisters-in-law; nieces and nephews; and many other loving family and friends. Gary was preceded in death by his father, Frank Ross. Family and friends will celebrate Gary's life during a service at 11 a.m. on Thursday, July 13, 2006, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 955 James Street, in Frankfort. Visitation will be conducted from 6 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday at the McElduff-Jowett Funeral Home's Benzonia Chapel, 7223 South Street, in Benzonia. Arrangements were handled by McElduff-Jowett Funeral Homes and Cremation Service. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to Munson Hospice & Palliative Care, 1105 6th Street, Traverse City, Michigan 49684, 1-800-252-2065; the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 22718, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73123-1718, 1-800-ACS-2345; or a charity of the donor's choice.