Gary "Gerb" Gerberding

July 30, 1939 - July 16, 2023

GRAND ISLAND, NE - A Celebration of Life for Gary "Gerb" Gerberding, 83, will be held from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm, Saturday, July 22, 2023 at Grand Island Elks Lodge #604, 631 South Locust Street, Grand Island, Nebraska. We all know Gerb is not a "stuffy" guy, so we will not be having a "stuffy" celebration. Many people are probably just realizing that his name was actually Gary and not Gerb! Gerb was passionate about cars, friends and family so that is the order of the day. Dress casual, cruise in with your street rod, come share some stories and maybe a red beer or two! So now for a little bit of the formal stuff.

Gerb was born July 30, 1939 in Gilead, Nebraska to Paul William Gerberding and Opal Mae Taylor and died July 16, 2023 in Grand Island, Nebraska. Gary resided in Hebron when he met his wife Elizabeth "Liz" Phillips from Nichols, Iowa. Gerb and Liz married in Nichols, Iowa on December 24, 1959. They went on to have three children, Dean, Deanne, and Cindy. Gerb always had a passion for cars - hot rods, customs, race cars - if it had wheels and could go fast, he liked it. And anything he could add his personal customized touch to, the better! Gerb started modifying cars when he was 12 years old and continued this profession until he retired in his 70's. He worked for a few different shops doing autobody work until he opened The Body Shop in 1979 in Geneva, Nebraska. He continued doing autobody work while transitioning to being primarily a custom restoration expert. Gerb had many people under

his wings learning the craft, but the two that made him the proudest were his son Dean and Grandson Anthony. Eventually the business was moved to Grand Island. One of Gerb's favorite customizations was louvering. If he could punch holes in it, he would! He was very proud when his son Dean recently decided to takeover The Louver Company business.

Gerb received numerous honors and recognition over the years, including being inducted into the KKOA (Kustom Kemps of America) Hall of Fame in 2011 with the likes of George Barris, Gene Winfield, Darryl Starbird, Hub Harness, Gary Minor, John D'Agostino, Rod Powell, Jack Walker and so many other talented friends. Gerb enjoyed crafting a special recognition trophy for the KKOA Ledsled Nationals in Salina, KS each year in honor of his good friend Eldon Titus. In his younger years, Gerb was a founding member of the "Road Angels". He and Liz were active members in several car clubs including: Tri City Street Rods, The '81 Cruisers, Kustoms of America, and KC Kustoms to name a few. Gerb's restorations were published in numerous national magazines such as Street Rodder, Rod & Custom, and Hot Rod. The 1953 Studebaker Gerb, Dean and Anthony restored for Liz was also displayed in The Garage Museum in Salina, KS. Gerb and Liz even drove the Studebaker from Nebraska to the Mississippi coast for Cruisin' the Coast.

As much as Gerb loved cars and racing, he would tell you his proudest accomplishment was being married to his wife Liz, who he adored, and his children and grandchildren. Gerb was so proud of all of his children and grandchildren and never missed the opportunity to share a funny face or a wrinkle of the nose to let them know he loved them. Family vacations and weekends, for the most part, revolved around cars. The kids recall days of cruising in the 55 Chevy Nomad, the 40 Ford Sedan Deluxe and the 55 Chevy Belair to car shows, rod runs and to see family all over the US. Some of our fondest memories were at the racetrack where Gerb was on the pit crew for Stu Vavra, #35 or at Stu and Janet's farm getting the car ready for racing (and

filling their engines with a few beers!) As much as he didn't like sports of any kind, he actually went to a few Nebraska football games to proudly watch his Grandson Matthew in the University of Nebraska marching band. Gerb passed along his gift of creativity to his daughter Deanne. He loved reading the poems she wrote for him, enjoying painting classes together and their funny sense of humor. Gerb loved visiting his daughter Cindy in Louisiana to partake in all the cuisine: oyster poboys, seafood and other Cajun goodies. Cindy believes her Dad prepared her to be married to her motocross racing husband Stuart with all of the racing and car events they went to in her childhood.

Gerb is survived by his wife Liz; son Dean (Beth); daughters Deanne Fry and Cindy McAvoy (Stuart); grandchildren, Anthony Gerberding (Sarah), Matthew Fry, Kristina McAvoy (Damon); great grandchildren, Emelyn, Allison; sister Donna Prasser; nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that you make a donation to support NRCA Scholarship Fund (Nebraska Rod & Custom Association) in memory of Gary "Gerb" Gerberding. Checks can be written to NRCA Scholarship Fund and mailed to: NRCA Scholarship Fund in Memory of Gary "Gerb" Gerberding, c/o Tim Powell, P.O. Box 187, Kenesaw, NE 68956. Contact Tim for any questions - (402) 460-0039.

Our family thanks you for all of your support and for loving our "Gerb". We will all miss him dearly but know that he will live on through all of the stories and memories we will share. Always remember that Gerb would want you to "Stay Kool".

Previous Events

Gathering of friends and family

JUL **22**. 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Grand Island Elks Lodge

Tribute Wall

Gary "Gerb" Gerberding

October 08, 2023 at 11:02 PM

LW

Sending hugs and prayers to Liz & Family.
Linda Willman

Linda L Willman - July 20, 2023 at 01:57 PM

TO

Gerb, you gave this wet behind the ears 20 yr old kid a chance to work for you and here we are 38 years later and we're still beating fenders. thank you for giving this kid a shot, you will be missed. rip Gerb

Tom Ohnesorge - July 19, 2023 at 07:45 PM