



Dennis W. Gustafson

January 15, 1944 - May 5, 2015

Dennis Wesley Gustafson, 71, of Kearney, died Tuesday, May 5, 2015 at the CHI Health Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney. Graveside services will be Saturday, May 30, 2015 at 10:30 a.m. at the Moses Hill Cemetery near Holdrege with Pastor Brad Gustafson officiating. Memorials are suggested to the family to be designated later. Cards will reach the family in care of Horner Lieske McBride & Kuhl Funeral and Cremation Services in Kearney, P.O. Box 777, Kearney, NE 68848.

Denny Gustafson was born in Holdrege, Nebraska on January 15, 1944. He was the firstborn of Wesley LaVerne Gustafson and Lenore Ellen Hendricks, who were missionaries and had several pastorates with the Evangelical Free Church of America. When he was two, Denny traveled with his parents to China. They returned to the states when Denny was four. Growing up as a minister's child, Denny lived with his family in Chicago, California, Minnesota, and Nebraska. He has three siblings: Nancy Maitzen, Doug Gustafson, and Julie Jeffery. He graduated from Fullerton Union High School in Orange County, California in 1962. And it was in high school where Denny met his first love . . . motorcycles.

He also met his (first and only) wife Beki (Seal) in California. They married in 1969 and spent 15 years together. They had two children, Benjamin Wesley and Isaac Dylan. In 1975, Denny graduated from Harley Davidson Mechanical School in Milwaukee. After graduation, Denny moved his family back to Nebraska and worked on a family farm. The following year he moved to Kearney and worked in various shops, garages, roadsides, living rooms, and backyards in a lifelong quest for the perfectly tuned motorcycle.

In 1978, Denny facilitated the first Narcotics Anonymous meeting in the state of Nebraska. He was pivotal in the development of NA within the region and helped bring many folks to sobriety.

Denny stopped working on bikes in the 80's, but continued to ride for the rest of his life. He collected knives and did some leatherwork and painting, but mostly Denny loved riding his Harley and spending time with his family and friends.

He will be remembered by many as the sponsor who brought them to sobriety, a good road partner, a good friend, a great dad, the best grandpa and great grandpa. Denny was loved by everyone who knew him... Right now he's on the fastest cycle, on the windiest road, with a huge smile on his face... and no helmet. You will be sorely missed Grandpa Tattoo...Dad. Love you.

Dennis is survived by his sons, Ben Gustafson and his wife Heidi of Kearney, Isaac Gustafson and his wife Melissa of New Baden, IL; sisters Julie Jeffery and her husband Rick of Holdrege, NE, Nancy Maitzen and her husband Curtis of Garden Grove, CA; brother Doug Gustafson and his wife Denise of Holdrege, NE; grandchildren Elias Gustafson and his wife Cyclesie Gustafson, Solomon, Dylan, Abbigaile, Jordan, Samuel Gustafson, Morgan "Abe", Matilda, Molly, Maggie; great grandchildren Lyla and Rhythm Gustafson; and many nieces and nephews

Dennis was preceded in death by his parents, grandson, Sven Gustafson, and nephew Abraham Gustafson.

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Tribute Wall



“ *Dennis W. Gustafson*

January 29, 2023 at 11:14 AM



“ *Denny turned me onto Harley's in the early 70's, and I'm still riding em. I visited him 2 times in Kearney. Once when I wasn't serving Jesus and once when I was. Sorry to hear about his passing. I loved him.*

Charley Johnson - April 19, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CD

“ Uncle Denny; you loved to ride and you loved to laugh. I won't ever be able to adequately thank you for all of life's lessons I've learned from you. At a time when I thought I knew everything, you showed me that I hadn't even scratched the surface. Learning something new everyday keeps you alive and sometimes there are no answers are two lessons I'll always remember. Thank you for passing along your passion for all things that are greasy, oily and produce copious amounts of horsepower. Thank you also for teaching me about the power of family. Family is number one. At a time when I believed it was me against the world, I always knew you had my back. It took me awhile but it finally sunk in. I understand what you'd been telling me all those years. It's not necessarily just the love we have for our family. It's also the love that our family has for us. The love and support from family and friends are what truly makes us wealthy individuals. From the time I was little, I always kind of thought you where indestructible. You where larger than life and I assumed you would be around forever. But I know that all warriors have to eventually answer the roll call in Valhalla. Some of us sooner than others. I'm thankful for the time God granted you here. I'll miss you like hell, but I know one day, I'll see you again.
Long May You Ride

Colin Donoghue - May 28, 2015 at 12:00 AM

TW

“ Denny was a friend and mentor when I was young and helped 'galvanize' my life long love of motorcycles. He was always kind and answered my many questions. I've thought of him often over the years and I'm very sorry to learn of his passing. My condolences to the family.

Tannis Watson - May 11, 2015 at 12:00 AM

IG

“ Simple, gentle until it was time not to be, honest, trustworthy. Taught me to stand and fight for what's right. Was always right along side me flying my missions into the darkest holes on the planet. God speed dad, i'll keep the iron head running and be as scary looking as I can on it for you. Love Ize

Isaac Gustafson - May 09, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DK

“ I pray his beautiful soul soars to the highest heights. Denny was an angel to me at a time of my life when I was very sick and lost. His loving guidance has been a foundation upon which I built 34 years of recovery. God Bless my friend.....

Dena Kuhnel-Crankshaw - May 06, 2015 at 12:00 AM