



Ralph Shortley

February 11, 1953 - July 30, 2013

Ralph Plumb Shortley, age 60, of Milford, passed away on Tuesday, July 30, 2013, at the Milford Nursing Center in Milford, Iowa, after fighting courageously for ten months with stage four lung cancer. He was born on February 11, 1953, in Spirit Lake, to Rush and Helen (Huff) Shortley II. Ralph was known around the Lakes Area by many people. He was a barge operator with Danbom Lakeside Engineering for over forty years. Every spring out on the lakes putting the boat hoists in and taking them out in the fall, enduring all kinds of weather. Ralph also worked a couple of years as a waiter at Maxwell's in Spencer.

Ralph is survived by his two sons, Hayden and Luther Shortley of Milford; his friend, Michele Shortley of Milford; brother, Rush M. Shortley III of Iowa City; sister, Elsie June Malone, and her husband, Carl of Rio Rancho, New Mexico; and many friends. He was preceded in death by his parents.

A memorial visitation will be held Sunday, August 4, 2013, from 2:00P.M. until 4:00P.M. at the Schuchert Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be given in Ralph's name.

The Schuchert Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

JL

“ I’m working on my autobiography and currently writing about the summer I spent on the barge with Ralph. It was nearly 20 years ago, but I can still picture him vividly, playing the role of a pirate and shouting “Arrrr Matey!” at the customers on the docks. Whenever it was time to work, he’d call out to me, “Chain monkey! Get up there and hook those chains!” Ralph had an incredible collection of stories from a life well-lived. Rest in peace, old friend.
Jeff Luft the Cain Monkey

Jeff Luft - January 25, 2025 at 05:13 PM

MD

“ If this is the same Ralph we knew in the Park Rapids area of Northern Minnesota in about 1975, we are saddened to hear of his passing. He was a hilarious friend and we still remember and use some of his jokes, like singing the song, “Lemme Help..” It must be the same Ralph because of the year he was born and going to Shattuck School. We had so much fun with him.
Muffie and Geoff Davidge, now living near Crosslake.

Muffie (Martha) Davidge - February 26, 2024 at 11:27 PM

OJ

“ Take care, Ralph. We had many memorable adventures at Shattuck School and you will be greatly missed.

Owen E Jones - June 06, 2021 at 10:29 AM

DG

“ *RIP Ralph I just looked you up while I was visiting here in Okoboji and I see you are gone from this earth. I remember the good times we had way back in the late 70's. I hope you had a great life and are in heaven! Good bye old friend!* ”

Donna Glover - August 18, 2016 at 09:53 AM

TV

“ *Ralph Shortley* ”

Tricia Combs Vredenburg - February 07, 2015 at 05:52 PM

SJ

“ *Ralph Shortley* ”

Scott Johnson - January 04, 2015 at 01:35 PM

BC

“ *Ralph Shortley* ”

Bill Campbell - January 04, 2015 at 11:56 AM

RN

“ *Rest in Peace my friend. I will always remember the fun times we had on the lake!* ”

Robin Noel - August 05, 2013 at 09:30 PM

CS

“ *Ralph Shortley* ”

chad szaflarski - August 03, 2013 at 03:39 PM

LS

“ *Ralph Shortley*

liliana strange - August 03, 2013 at 03:38 PM

JH

“ *RIP RALPH! I remember when Ralph lived next door to my mom and dad (Erin & Jerry Dyhrkopp). I needed to make a private call so I asked Ralph if I could use his phone, He said yes. Well while I was there he showed me how he could take apart & put together a small pistol within seconds. Then he asked me to try, he started talking and so I quickly brushed the gun under the rocker recliner and left. He came over to Mom and Dads with a military coat and rifle (like a soldier) and said "Your daughter took my Gun!" Well I walked back over to Ralph's and moved the chair and he seen the gun. :) It's kinda funny thinking back on a memory,,Ralph's RRRRmatie will be missed!*

Jami (Dyhrkopp) Hassett - August 03, 2013 at 12:39 PM

JM

“ Unfortunately I will not be able to join everyone on Sunday, and so I will share my favorite memory of Ralphie. You may not know that he participated in theatrical productions while he attended Shattuck for his high school years. The memory that to this day makes me laugh the hardest has to do with a play he was in. The family traveled up to Shattuck to see him in this play, so we were all there for his most choice line. He was to say, "The shot came from here." as he pointed up. Well, he substituted the 'o' in shot with an 'i' and brought the house down. It was several minutes before the play could resume. To this day I don't know whether it was an accident or not.

When ever I think of Okoboji, it will always include Ralphie. He and my dad had a love for the lakes that transcended all else.

Rest in peace, Ralphie Baby.

Sis

June S Malone - August 02, 2013 at 08:31 PM

KB

“ Such a loss -- he will be missed by so many

Katherine Becker
Chelsea Villas

Katherine Becker - August 02, 2013 at 04:22 PM

BR

“ Ralph was born, raised and lived his life on Lake Okoboji. It was his dream, the life he saw for himself. He realized his dream, living with honesty and gusto, and made many wonderful friends who will remember him as long as his sister and I will.

Brother Rush - August 02, 2013 at 05:58 AM

JN

“ *RIP Ralph! Will miss seeing you spring and fall fueling the barge.*

Jason Nissen - August 01, 2013 at 10:15 PM

SS

“ *My sympathy to Ralph's family. He was one of the true characters of the Iowa Great Lakes Area. It will be a long time before Ralph's memory will be forgotten. He worked hard and played hard and if he was your friend you had a true friend. Rest in Peace my friend Rest in Peace,*

*Steve Stanford
Uncertain, Texas*

Steve Stanford - August 01, 2013 at 01:35 PM

1"

“ *Growing up with Ralph was a definite treat!! There is no one or ever will be anyone like our Ralph. It seemed like he was just part of the family. Our thoughts go out to Michele and the boys. See you on the other side buddy!!!!!!!!!!!!*

1 of the "UNDESIRABLES"EABLES" - August 01, 2013 at 12:48 PM

JW

“ *Words can't begin to describe what Ralph meant to us all at Danboms. My sympathy and condolences to his family and friends. Ralph was one of a kind and I will always miss him, a true friend. It just won't be the same out on the lake without him.*

Justin Woodall - August 01, 2013 at 11:52 AM

PF

“ RALPH PLUM SHORTLY AN ICON ON WEST LAKE OPERATING HIS BARGE. A DEARLY LOVED FRIEND, HE ALWAYS HAD THE GIFT TO MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH AND FORGET THEIR TROUBLES.

PAT FREDERICK - August 01, 2013 at 10:06 AM



“ *Ralph Shortley*

August 01, 2013 at 07:54 AM

TS

“ *Ralph Shortley*

Troy Schomaker - August 01, 2013 at 03:58 AM



“ *Ralph Shortley*

August 01, 2013 at 03:57 AM



“ *Ralph Shortley*

August 01, 2013 at 03:56 AM

RN

“ *A true giant. The greatest of personalities and most memorable and admirable person one could have the pleasure of knowing. Everyone loved him and he will be missed by many. I hope he's watching over us all now with that all knowing smile of his. And an Rrrrr! to boot.*

Robby Noble - August 01, 2013 at 12:09 AM

RN

“ *Ralph Shortley*

Robby Noble - August 01, 2013 at 12:00 AM

ML

“ *Ralph Shortley*

Michele/Shelly Lundquist - July 31, 2013 at 11:37 PM

LL

“ *I will always remember how Ralph bore his illness with such grace and dignity. Never once did he complain or play the pity card, he showed up every day for one last go around on the lake, taking care of our customers as he did for all these many seasons.*

My condolences to his children and Michelle, his brother and sister.

Farewell Ralphie, til we meet again.

Lois Langfritz

Lois Langfritz - July 31, 2013 at 06:30 PM

CA

“ *There was only 1 Ralph, and he will be sorely missed and he was the truest of friends. So many memories of the point, Maxwells on the lake, football games, he was always the life of the party. He fought a hard battle, my condolences to Michelle, Hayden and Luther. We will always love you Ralph....Chris and Stevie Ashlock*

Chris Ashlock - July 31, 2013 at 05:49 PM

SD

“ *RIP Ralphy! The Danbom crew will surely miss you. My son Josh will treasure every minute you two shared. My grandkids will miss your smile. Your pain is gone but you will always be in our hearts!*

Sharon Daly - July 31, 2013 at 05:38 PM

SD

“ *Ralph Shortley*

Sharon Daly - July 31, 2013 at 05:29 PM

SH

“ *So sorry for you loss.*

Sally Haas - July 31, 2013 at 04:40 PM

DN

“ *My deepest sympathies to Ralph's family.*

David and Rhonda Nelson - July 31, 2013 at 03:10 PM

JW

“ *Deepest sympathy and condolences to Ralph's family, friends and the Danbom Crew. As my Father, being a dock builder, I don't believe any one knew the lake like Ralph did. He's humor, spirit and being will be missed. May you rest in peace and never be forgotten. Hope you and Dad have your drinks held high. RIP Ralphy!*

Jen Wemark - July 31, 2013 at 09:14 AM

JW

“ Deepest condolences to Michele and the boys for your loss. Also any of his extended family.
The last time I saw Ralph was in the parking lot at Buy Rite where we were comparing hair-dos. (what hair)
Ralph was always quick witted and was one of a kind. RIP buddy.

John Welle - July 31, 2013 at 12:26 AM

BS

“ I loved Ralph's personality, he was a good friend, helped me out many time. I will remember him rest of my days.Gods speed Ralph !

Bob Sullivan - July 30, 2013 at 09:33 PM

RS

“ i lived with Ralph for 6 months at lighthouse Point one winter. An experience i will never forget.Friends are hard to keep and even harder to loose .

Rod Sheldon - July 30, 2013 at 05:30 PM

GM

“ My sympathy to any family. I remember Ralph as a student in Milford Jr. High. Always enjoyed visiting with Ralph .

George Morris - July 30, 2013 at 12:41 PM

CS

“ Family, Friends, co-workers (Danbom): Our deepest sympathy. May God be with you during this time. It was always nice to visit with Ralph.

Chris & Chavon Struve - July 30, 2013 at 11:37 AM