



Railsplitter Obituary



John E. Harley, Jr.

3 Nov 1945 – 10 Feb 2022

John E. Harley, Jr., 76 of Two Rivers, WI passed away on February 10, 2022 at Holy Family Memorial Hospital in Manitowoc, WI. John was born November 3, 1945, in Milwaukee, the son of John and Kathryn (Womeldorf) Harley and grandson of William S. Harley, co-founder of the Harley -Davidson Motor Co. While John never became an official member of any church, he was baptized at St. Sebastian Catholic Church and was an active and generous supporter of his wife's Lutheran church and always urged his children to attend church and be active participants.

In 1972, John wed Modesta Ellena Rodriguez. That marriage was blessed with a son, John E. Harley, III. This marriage ended in 1977. In 1980 John married Kathleen Young and this marriage was also blessed with a son, William R. Harley.

John served his country in the army in Vietnam. His stint in combat was short lived as he was severely wounded in March of 1968. After three months in the hospital he was reassigned to Ft. Carson, Colorado. After his military service, John attended and graduated from Western State University in Gunnison, CO. In 1981 he re-enlisted in the Army Reserve and served with the 84th Division Training Division as an E7 Drill Sergeant and Training NCO until he retired in November of 2005.

John worked for a short time for the Harley-Davidson Motor Co. until he was laid off in May of 1982 due to a recession. He was later employed by the U S Postal Service where he worked for the next 37 years, retiring in March of 2017.

John loved duck hunting, a family tradition at Don Stiller's cabin in Little Suamico, WI. Deer hunting came in a close second in Wisconsin and South Dakota. In spite of being an avid hunter he had a real soft heart for God's creatures.



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In 2001 he and Kate bought a ranch house and a 7 acre parcel in the Town Concord in Jefferson County. This became a hobby farm with chickens, a pony and his donkeys. How he loved to talk and tell jokes about his donkeys! As nubies at farming, John was so proud of his self-taught haying abilities.

John's paternal great grandfather came from Littleport, England. Bruce Frost, who handles ancestry information in Littleport, along with others, held a magnificent 100th Harley-Davidson anniversary celebration which John and his Cousin Margo Manning were the honored guests. It went down as an experience of a lifetime.

John is survived by his wife, Kate of 42 years, and sons: John E. (Rhonda) Harley, III and grandchildren Sharon Nicole, Kathryn Elyse, Madison Kay and Johnathan Dalton of Knotts Island, N.C. and Pastor William R. (Jennifer) Harley and grandchildren Lliam Walter, Livia Caitlyn Grace and Leandra Pearl of Mishicot, WI. John was preceded in death by his parents, his brother, James Patrick and his sister, Sarah Ann O'Hearn.

In Lieu of flowers, memorials can be sent to Wildlife in Need, W349 S1480 S. Waterville Rd., Suite B, Oconomowoc, WI 53066.