

# Buddy Ray Mennen

OCTOBER 8, 1951 - NOVEMBER 18, 2016



**Buddy Ray Mennen**, 65, of West Burlington, died at 2:00 PM Friday, November 18, 2016, at his home in West Burlington surrounded by his loving family.

Born October 8, 1951, in Burlington, he was the son of Mark A. and Rita P. Gulick Mennen.

On December 23, 1982, he married Kathryn Lynne Marmion in Burlington. To his wife he was everything; a loving and faithful husband, a rock of stability and a once-in-a-lifetime friend. Never were two people more perfect for each other. There was never a

question of his feelings for her. She was his number one and he spent every day of his life reminding her of that. They strolled through life together hand-in-hand, side-by-side, both falling more in love every day.

Together, Buddy and Kathy raised four children. To his son Bill, he gave his belief that nothing was beyond repair and anything can be fixed. To his daughter Mindy, he gave his conviction that it is never too late to right your course and be the best version of yourself. To his son Aaron, he gave the belief that no situation is too big and anything is achievable through hard work and dedication. To his daughter Amy, he gave his tender heart and his gift of patience and understanding. In fact, he gave all of his children all of these gifts.

Buddy loved motorcycles. As a young man, Buddy was a talented rider, competing in motocross races and occasionally showing his skills in the neighborhoods of Burlington. It was not uncommon to find him riding a wheelie down Osborn Street or up South 5th Street hill. In more recent years, Buddy spent his time restoring old Triumph motorcycles. When he

did ride, it was usually slowly through the rolling timber of his land with his grandchildren on the back. These were perhaps his favorite times on a bike.

He was a gifted, self-taught banjo picker. Buddy's earliest audience was his two little girls who loved to dance to the music he made. As his family grew, so did his audience, and in his final years, it was his two little great-granddaughters who danced to his picking. Buddy rarely played for anyone outside his family; he never knew how good he was. To his family, the music he made was more beautiful than anything they'll ever hear again.

Although Buddy spent his entire career at General Electric in Burlington, IA, loyalty to his friends and coworkers always superseded loyalty to his company. He would do anything for anyone, and always had their back. His impact was felt beyond the walls of GE as he inspired young friends through the way he raised his kids and loved his wife. To those who knew him and loved him at work and in life, he will never be forgotten for the impact he made on their lives. Buddy retired from GE in 2006.

Buddy was a member of SS. John and Paul Catholic Church. He came back to his Catholic faith in 2009. As he and Kathy went through the RCIA process, their love for the Lord grew and their faith family expanded. Buddy's final days were spent wrapped in the warmth of Christ's love and the love of those with Christ in their hearts. It was Buddy's strong faith that allowed him to face the end of his life without fear.

Survivors include his wife, Kathy of West Burlington; two sons, Bill (Beth) Mennen of West Burlington and Aaron (Judy) Mennen of Burlington; two daughters, Mindy (John) Mahon of Davenport and Amy (Alfredo) Tovar of Kansas City, MO; 17 grandchildren, Emily, Nick, Maddie, Carly, Brice, Lilian, Caleb, Sam, Morgan, Jonah, Luke, Carter, Jake, Brent, Abe, Gretchen and Hattie, and two great-grandchildren, Ruby and Wren; one sister, Vicki (Buz) Dreckmeier of Burlington; one brother, Tony Mennen of West Burlington, numerous nieces and nephews and one aunt, Joann Pugh of Texas.

He is preceded in death by his parents.

Visitation will be from 12:00 PM until 7:00 PM with the family to receive friends from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM Friday, November 25, 2016, at Prugh~Thielen Funeral Home.

The Funeral Mass of the Resurrection for Mr. Mennen will be 10:00 AM Saturday, November 26, 2016, at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church with Very Rev. Father Marty Goetz as the Celebrant and Rev. Father Bill Roush as Concelebrant. Music will be provided by the Des Moines County Resurrection Choir. Burial will be in Green Glade Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please direct memorial contributions to the American Cancer Society and the Iowa Donor Network.