



Gary Steven Opoka

August 30, 1952 - January 26, 2021

Opoka, Gary Steven, January 26, 2021 age 68 of Westland. Beloved husband of Janet Opoka. Loving father of Jamie (Jeremy) Salo and Jeffry Opoka. Proud grandfather of Trent and Lilah Jones. Dear brother of Ken (Marilee) Opoka and Carol Creighton (Carl). Also leaves many aunts, uncle, nieces and nephews. Memorial Service held at a later date. Arrangements entrusted with Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home, Westland. To share a memory, please use the Share a Memory tab on this web page.

Comments



“ My heart was hit with sadness today and at the same time filled with memories of happiness. I learned today that my best friend from the past has left this earth for a happier time with his creator. Gary & I shared the craziness of the 60's, 70's and into the 80's. Paula and I send out our condolences to Jan and family. It was nice seeing the photo of Gary with guitar. We shared a love of music, roommates and friendship. He was part of my family. Time waits for no one and the time we spent together lent itself to our growth and development as individuals. One can regret that we lost touch over time, but one will never regret the time together. As I often travel to Ann Arbor i always see a memory of a place we shared. Jan I'm so happy to know you were part of his life for years to come. To his children and grandchildren you don't need me to tell you he was someone special.

Gary Mikola

Gary M Mikola - February 24 at 11:25 AM



“ My heart goes out to the family of Gary and everyone who was touched by him. I only knew Gary through messages and phone conversations, but I've lost a great friend. Gary and his wife Jannie were a big part of our online community from the very beginning. When Gary first joined, it became immediately apparent that he was someone who had a wonderful sense of humor. I often felt that Gary and I were doing an online "routine." I played the straight man and he could always come up with great lines. You could basically throw him anything and he could make something funny out of it. He was so much fun to parry with online. But he also was very diligent and helpful. He helped us in so many ways and always with a wonderful attitude. Our little online community has been in grief since we heard the news and in fact I first learned of Gary's passing by a phone call from one of our British members who called me in tears because of the news. Gary will be missed by many and our little online community will never be quite the same. God Bless you Gary. We all miss you.

-William Hammer

William Hammer - February 05 at 09:54 AM



“ Gary will be missed. Had the pleasure of working with him and will always cherish the memories made celebrating him and his retirement at our house. Rest In Peace Gary. sending prayers for you and your family .

Renee DeVos - February 04 at 07:49 AM



“ Gary was a great guy and always stopped by my desk to shoot the breeze. He will be missed.



Connie wade - February 03 at 05:17 PM



“ I'm so sad to hear this. I worked with Gary for many years at Canton, he was on of my favorites. Such a nice guy and so funny! My thoughts and prays go out to his family who he talked about often and loved very much. Gone way too soon. Rest in Peace Gary, you will be missed by all who knew you.

Amy Hamilton - February 03 at 10:42 AM



“ Dianne Bell lit a candle in memory of Gary Steven Opoka



Dianne Bell - February 02 at 02:44 PM



“ George Smith lit a candle in memory of Gary Steven Opoka



George Smith - February 02 at 04:43 AM



“ Stuart Wherry lit a candle in memory of Gary Steven Opoka



Stuart Wherry - February 01 at 12:43 AM



“ Mary Francais Cook lit a candle in memory of Gary Steven Opoka



Mary Francais Cook - January 30 at 07:29 PM



“ 18 files added to the tribute wall



Jamie Salo - January 30 at 09:00 AM



“ Gary we love you and miss you

USA - January 29 at 08:15 PM



“ Not everyone got to grow up sitting at their dad's knee as he strummed his guitar. I did. My childhood was music. James Taylor, Pink Floyd, even The Big Chill Soundtrack. He was a constant presence throughout my high school marching band competitions and a second dad and mentor to all of my friends. He taught me how to drive (around the same time his gray hair started to show, but coincidence I'm sure). He came to get me a week after I got my license when I blew a tire by hitting a curb when I was trying to impress my friends. That may have been when what my mom, brother and I lovingly refer to as the "Stevie Wonder Head Roll" was born. (His first reaction to annoyance/irritation was always a side to side move that if you slapped a pair of sunglasses on him would have resembled the great Stevie when he performs). Or, now that I'm thinking about it... The head roll may have been born the time I called him frantically that my 1987 Acura Integra wouldn't start. He drove the 15 minutes to my friend's house, got in my car, threw it in park, and would you believe it started right up. (My bad, dad). Another time he dropped everything and drove 20 minutes to my first place when my vacuum cleaner wasn't a worthy enough opponent to a scary looking bug. From about 2006-2009 we were so lucky to be able to make music together regularly at Westwood Community Church. He played guitar/harmonica in the praise band and I sang. Looking back I'm not sure I realized how precious those times were. I'd give anything to make music with him again. He always wanted me to sing with him at every campfire. Thankfully I did indulge him quite a bit, but I am kicking myself over all the missed opportunities. Many times when he asked I'd be feeling to self-conscious to sing with him so I would politely or not so politely decline. Hindsight.

Watching him become a grandfather to my children was, looking back, one of the biggest blessings of my life. Boy did he love those kids. Once they existed, his universe shifted. They were so, so lucky to have him as their Poppa. They went to mom and dad's house three days a week for several years when they were little. That time was priceless. Trent and Lilah are both better people because of my dad. The music, the laughter... It does a soul good. Gary was good for the soul. I have so many memories. I'm a lucky girl.

I wasn't ready, daddy. There was still so much to do and see and talk about, but God wanted you home. I am the luckiest girl in the world that you were my dad. My soul aches to reconnect with yours someday. I love you so much, dad. I know you're whole again and making beautiful music with the greats.

Jamie Salo - January 29 at 07:43 PM



“ Gary was a wonderful man and a great Christian. He influenced me in so many ways from his love of Christ to music and guitar. You'll be missed greatly my friend.

John Barnes - January 29 at 02:19 PM



“ I went to Gabriel Richard with Gary and played basketball with him(good player, sweet shot) and after school played a year of volleyball. Gary was a quick witted, personable and friendly good guy I enjoyed being around him and he always seemed happy. He will be missed by many but leaves great memories. Peace to you, my friend and condolences to all who loved you.

Dennis Karp - January 29 at 10:13 AM



“ They called him GaryOAnon, and he was the greatest moderator in the west (he really was, the set by positive example mentor type) and a real good laugh with the best jokes too, we'll all miss Gary at Trump Chat, he loved the Benny Hill songs i put up so this one's for him and condolences to his family.
"Benny Hill - Ernie (The Fastest Milkman In The West)"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ef6edDwphhk>

Stuart Wherry - January 29 at 10:00 AM



“ My brother Gary was the kindest, funniest and most loving person I have ever known. Even during the challenging time he was going through, he remained positive and never failed to make me smile. The joy of his life was spending time with his children, grandchildren, and his music. I love you Gary and I know you are at peace now with Mom and Dad. The world will never be the same and you will forever be missed.

Carol Creighton - January 28 at 10:39 PM



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Jamie Salo - January 29 at 09:09 AM



“ Gary was an important calming influence on Trump Chat. He is greatly missed!
Doreen Bumpus - January 29 at 09:17 AM



“ GaryO was much loved on TrumpChat and will be greatly missed. God showed His love to us all through GaryO's words.
Barb PA Deplorable - January 31 at 09:02 AM



“ Gary loved to make others laugh and entertained so many of us with his wit, his music and his mischievousness. I'm going to miss my brother. Rest in peace Sweet Music Man.

Carolyn Earl - January 28 at 08:26 PM



“ You were one of his best friends. I'm so thankful for you.

Jamie Salo - January 29 at 08:27 PM



“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



Jamie Salo - January 28 at 06:00 PM