



George Kilko

December 5, 1942 - March 30, 2021

George Kilko, 78, of Mentor, Ohio, died peacefully at Hillcrest Hospital on March 30th, 2021. He left this world having exhausted all opportunities with the same tenacity and audacity in which he inhabited it.

Born in East Claridon in 1942, George's lust for life began at an early age. He discovered the benefit of hard work to be the vehicle speeding him through life adventurously. Alongside his older sister and his younger brother, George began his career as a teenager working the meat counter at his parents' general store in Huntsburg. Wanting to carve out something for himself, his interest in cars ignited his entrepreneurial spirit, and inspired him to start his own auto parts business. He borrowed a small space in his parents' store and soon was expanding to take over Geauga Auto Parts in Middlefield. Around that same time, some in his hometown may remember, he owned and ran Middlefield's Golden Dawn grocery store as well. George was a self-made man who enjoyed finding solutions by digging in. On an occasion when he needed to move some land, he drew on his knack with machinery and his mind for math to start Kilko Excavating. Many ponds and basements throughout Geauga Co. have been dug by George and his crew.

Just as his excavating company was becoming well established, George was reacquainted with his '61 Cardinal High School classmate Sheri and they

quickly fell in love. Sheri and her two children joined George as a family. Everybody will agree, George liked to have fun. Whether by car, boat, plane, motorhome, snowmobile, motorcycle, on water skis, snow skis, or in a dune buggy, hot air-balloon, if an opportunity presented itself, he would be the first to say, "let's go". Often, he had a phone to his ear, multi-tasking, as he enjoyed time at the boat or by the water. He was a long-time member of Grand River Yacht Club and Mentor Harbor Yachting Club where he had many good times with good friends.

Always having a pet, George was every animal's friend. (He once had a monkey, though only for a few short days). Recalling when he was a child, he often talked about his mother playing her favorite record album of birdsongs. He adored his mother and most likely inherited his love of animals from her. His birdfeeder was always full. In fact, spilling over, so as not to forget the squirrels. Often a phone conversation would include an interruption of laughter describing in detail some humorous situation he was witnessing. He might be watching a chipmunk repeatedly running up and down a tree while saying "I can't believe it, here he goes again". There was a time when he lived in Middlefield that he was easily recognized seen towing his two St. Barnards behind his snowmobile in a sled. His thinking, they shouldn't be excluded from the fun. At the boat or by the beach, to him, a flock of birds surrounding his table or bench begging for his lunch was pure joy. George continued to expand and trade in businesses throughout his lifetime. He built out properties for commercial businesses between Geauga and Lake counties. His most recent, and favorite, endeavor was the jewelry business. Being part owner in Cameo Jewelers was a true passion for him. He would laugh as he said, "I went from moving big rocks, to moving little rocks," taking great pride in working with something he truly enjoyed. For those who loved George, the world is vastly better for having him in it. And far sadder for him having left. He was who he was, with complete indifference to what anyone thought. He could make a person feel like nothing

was more important than the moment being shared. He'd fight for the dinner check, ask you if you needed a refill on your drink, and part ways with the advice "don't take any wooden nickels". He was a smooth dancer who appreciated a true story and laughed at a good joke. He was generous with both his time and his attention. For his family who found him their rock, he will always remain a touchstone. For anyone questioning the role of stepfather, let George be the shining example of filling a child's life with unconditional love. He never held back. For his stepgrandchildren whom he relentlessly spoiled, he will forever be magical. He is preceded in death by his parents: George and Anne (Szabo) Kilko, and his brother James Kilko. He is survived by his sister: Betty Anne (Kilko) Adams. His stepchildren and their spouses: Ed and Kathie Kothera, Billi (Kothera) and Alan Rakov. His nephews: Jay Adams and Tom Adams. His stepgrandchildren: Luke Kothera, Faye Rakov, and Oliver Rakov.

"A boat at midnight sent alone to drift upon the moonless sea, a lute, whose leading chord is gone, a wounded bird, that hath but one imperfect wing to soar upon, are like what I am, without thee." -Thomas Moore

Tribute Wall

RF

“ *Gorge Kilko was a Man's Man, a gentleman that was a good friend and a mentor as well. A self-made entrepreneur with drive and moxie to boot!! Please have a cocktail with my Dad when you see him!* ”

Rick Fryan - April 07, 2021 at 10:42 AM

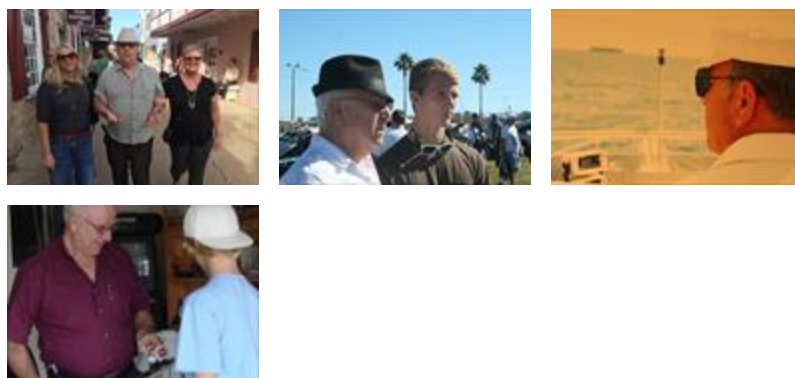
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“ *I will never forget how special George made me feel! I drove him around and to his doctor appointments. We would laugh and giggle like kids sharing our stories with one another, He always made time for me and loved Mentor Harbor! Tou have a part of my heart Mr George Kilko and until we meet again! Thank you for being my friend! Respectfully Aileen Osborne I will miss you!* ”

Aileen Osborne - April 06, 2021 at 11:33 PM



“ *4 files added to the album Memories Album* ”



Edward Kothera - April 05, 2021 at 06:44 PM