

Jerry Passer

February 17, 1943 – February 11, 2022

Jerry Wayne Passer was born on February 17, 1943, in Wells, Minnesota. Jerry was a veteran of the U.S. Navy. He served as a corpsman for 4.5 years at Bethesda Naval Hospital in Washington D.C. It was in Washington that he met his wife (Susan Burton), and his son Jon was born in 1966. In 1971, his daughter Kim was born.

In 1973, he took a job in Cedar Rapids at WMT TV/Radio, where he worked for 18 years as the farm director. Shortly after their daughter was born, his wife was diagnosed with Muscular Dystrophy. Every year, WMT participated in the Jerry Lewis Telethon to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). Jerry took an active roll assisting with the fundraiser. At Christmas time, the MDA held a party for the children, and Jerry was their Santa Claus; he loved kids, so this was a real treat for him. He also played Santa in the mall for several Christmas seasons.

In 1986, tragedy struck when his son fell off the running board of a truck while serving in the Army in Germany. After leaving WMT in 1991, Jerry spent a couple years doing various jobs such as security guard at the Collins Plaza, limousine driver, and furniture salesman. In 1993, his only daughter got married and then blessed Jerry with his first grandchild, Triston, in 1997. That baby was his pride and joy. In 2000 and 2001, he enjoyed the arrivals of two more grandsons (Gavin and Kalen).

Jerry eventually made it back to radio with KOEL and Brownfield, where he worked from home for another 13 years. This was a perfect fit as he was caring for his son and wife. He began his Brownfield career in 2005, which was a year of joy and sorrow for Jerry as he welcomed his granddaughter Aleah to the world and said goodbye to his wife of 40 years.

He retired from Brownfield at the age 74. He is one of few that can truly say they loved the job he did. During his retirement years, Jerry spent time gardening, playing with his dogs, riding his 3-wheel bike, traveling to see his daughter in Texas, eating out, and meeting friends down at the Red Lion for social time. He also attended his friend's hockey games and ran errands for his friends. He had his routine of eating at his favorite diner, Oscar's, for breakfast, and enjoying dinners out on Fridays with a close friend. He was a personable guy who never knew a stranger. He was kind and giving and did his best to help when he could. Over the years, he was always there for his neighbors.

Jerry was preceded in death by his wife, Susan Burton Passer (July 2005) and his son, Jon Passer (November 2016). He is survived by his two 2 sisters: Marge Lorenzen, and Carol Quackenbush and her husband, Jim; daughter, Kim Park and her husband, Troy; grandchildren Triston, Gavin, Kalen, and Aleah; and many close friends.

Jerry chose to be cremated. Visitation is scheduled for Noon, Saturday February 19, 2022, at Salem United Methodist Church, 3715 33rd Avenue SW Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402. A celebration of life, officiated by Pastor Matt German, will follow at 1 p.m.