

Obituary for Roger Dean Peterson



Roger Dean Peterson, 81, of Pecatonica, passed away Tuesday, May 2, 2023, at home. He was born on May 26, 1941, in Thief River Falls, Minnesota, the eldest son of Joseph and Darlene Peterson. He served in the United States Navy. He married Sandee Lee Peterson on June 5, 1965. He worked for Galgar Engineering, Janar Machine Tool, Sundstrand, and Crown Machine. He was an active member in the Italian clubs of Rockford, including the Verdi, Venetian, and Lombardi.

Survivors include his wife of 58 years, Sandra Lee Peterson, his son Bradley Dean Peterson and daughter Michelle Lee (Joseph) Magdziarz, siblings Bryce (Sharon) Peterson, Diane Gerholdt, and Sidney Peterson, grandchildren, Mikayla Magdziarz, Joey Magdziarz, Jake Peterson, and Seth Peterson.

Roger grew up in Cedar Falls, Iowa, and graduated from Cedar Falls High School in 1960. The day after graduation, he hitchhiked, solo, to Redondo Beach, California. After returning to Iowa at the end of the summer, Roger enlisted in the Navy Seals and attended UDT School. He spent two years in the service and traveled across southeast Asia. In Japan, he climbed to the top of Mount Fuji. He was honorably discharged on July 17, 1962. In 1964, mutual friends arranged a blind date for Roger at Maria's Italian Café, where he met the love of his life, Sandee. They united in marriage at Saint Anthony Church in Rockford on June 5th, 1965.

Roger was always working with his hands; you name it, he fixed it. In 1976, he purchased a plot of land in Pecatonica, and over the course of eight years, built a home for himself and Sandee. Roger was a happy man; he was so proud of his roots, his children, and his grandchildren; he was always there when they needed him. Roger believed that anything was possible. He was a free spirit with a compassionate heart. He loved the outdoors, drinking cold beer, and spending time with family and his many beloved friends.