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Randy S. Kingsbury

Dec 18, 2012



Randy S. Kingsbury died peacefully at his home on Friday, Dec. 14, 2012.

Randy was born Aug. 15, 1946, in Shelton, Wash., the third of six children to Llewelyn and Delores Kingsbury. He grew up in Shelton and lived there until he joined the U.S. Army in 1964. Randy served his country proudly and earned the Vietnam Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Vietnam Campaign Medal. He was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army in December 1966 as a specialist four.

While serving in Vietnam, he started writing letters to the daughter of a friend of his mother. What started as pen pals turned to true love for Randy and Gretchen. Upon his discharge from the Army, Randy rode his motorcycle in a driving rain storm from Clallam Bay to Tacoma to meet Gretchen, who was a student at Washington State University who was home for Christmas break. They dated for a short time before realizing that they were meant to be. Randy and Gretchen were married on June 19, 1967.

Randy continued his life of service as a Bellevue, Wash., police officer. He started as a cadet with BPD on April 1, 1967. He was only 20 years old and as thus could not be a commissioned officer. On his 21st birthday, Aug. 15, 1967, Randy was promoted to the position of a patrol officer. He served with the Bellevue Police Department until 1976, when at the rank of lieutenant, he decided that he had had enough of police work.

Randy took a three-year hiatus from law enforcement and opened a grocery store in the small town of Salkum, Wash. However, he felt the call of law enforcement once again and migrated to the City of Lewiston, where he started as an undercover narcotics officer in 1978. His assignment was so secret that only three police officers even knew who he was. His family joined him in June of 1978. Randy had a great career with the Lewiston Police Department. He was named the American Legion Idaho State Police Officer of the year in 1981 for his involvement in the rescue of three people at a boat crash on the Clearwater River in December 1980.

Randy felt a continued call for service and decided to run for the position of sheriff of Nez Perce County in 1996. He was elected to this position and served two terms as sheriff. He was very proud to serve the citizens of Nez Perce County for eight years.

Randy retired in 2004, but the call for service again was heard. He worked as a temporary deputy sheriff for the Asotin County Sheriff's Office in 2005 and 2006.

He finally retired for good in 2006 after serving 36 years as a law enforcement officer.

Randy and Gretchen were blessed with three sons, Craig (Loretta) of Nampa, Cory (Rebecca) of Lewiston and Colby (Erin) of Rathdrum. They also served as foster parents for many children. Their first foster daughter, Jan, became the daughter that they always wanted.

These children blessed Randy with several grandchildren: Joseph, Brianna, Chad, Ryan, Jerica, Matt, Courtney, Cheyenne and Colt.

Randy spent several years coaching youth sports. He coached baseball, football, wrestling and basketball. He was named the Lewis Clark Valley Boys Club volunteer coach of the year in 1981 and the USA Baseball Coach of the Year for the state of Idaho in 1993.

Randy's hobbies included hunting, fishing and bowling. He was an avid fisherman, even winning some money in last month's Snake/Clearwater River Steelhead Derby. He had been involved in bowling in the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley for many years. He served in many positions on the bowling board. Randy could always be found at Orchards Lanes on Thursday and Friday evenings. In fact he once bowled a 299 game, leaving the final 10 pin standing.

In his last several years, Randy was able to fulfill his dream of traveling. He and Gretchen made trips with the family a priority. Not only did they take annual family camping trips, but he was able to travel the country. He went to Hawaii, Alaska on a cruise, New York and several states. He also enjoyed a six-week road trip with his two eldest granddaughters. He was fortunate enough to see the Grand Canyon, Mount Rushmore, the Alamo and everything in between.

Randy was preceded in death by his father and mother.

Aside from his wife, children and grandchildren, Randy is survived by his sister, Jan Owens (Willie); and brothers, Dennis Kingsbury, Walt Kingsbury, Kenneth Simmons and Martin Simmons. He is also survived by his brother-in-law, Stan Gehrke, and sister-in-law Sally Fitzwilliam.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday at Trinity Lutheran Church, with a luncheon to follow.