



Daryl Thorp

FEB 17, 1948 - JAN 28, 2024



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Remus, Michigan

Husband, father, machinist, and mule driver, Daryl Thorp passed away on January 28, 2024, in the log house north of Remus with his wife and children around him. Daryl lived on his own terms. He was born in the Thumb of Michigan in 1948, the youngest of the four living children of Duane and Mary (Hawley) Thorp. He lost his mom in 1953 and spent much of his formative years with his Little Grandma. Though he was never religious, he was a deeply moral man who, even late in life, said that in everything he did, he was trying not to let Little Grandma down. Life wasn't easy, and by the time he was a teenager, he was already making his own way as best he could. He was bright and mechanically gifted from an early age, but he had little love for school and would rather be working with his hands or hunting and fishing. He joined the Army after high school and was blessed to be stationed in Alaska. He said the biggest thing he learned from the Army was that he didn't want to stay in the Army, so he had better figure things out. He told a buddy he was going home to marry the neighbor girl, and he did—though at that point they had never even been on a date. Daryl and Sharon (Galubenski) Thorp grew up and played together as kids. They married June 6, 1970, and brought two children into the world: Jill Marie in 1971 and James Dwain in 1974. Daryl worked for many years for the state of Michigan, caring for residents with developmental disabilities at the state homes in Lapeer and Mt. Pleasant. He was known as “Daddy Fork” by those he cared for, who struggled to pronounce Thorp. He was also called “Lucky” by his machinist-mentor Chuck for his ability to complete difficult machining tasks with no advanced math or engineering training. For many years he worked full-time for the state, part-time as a machinist, hunted and fished, and still found time to be home for dinner. With full beard, broad-brimmed cowboy hat, and handmade leather vest, he made an impression on



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everyone he met. Once he walked into Helen's Restaurant in Remus, and someone whistled the theme from *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*. He had a knack for reading people, whether bumming a ride, a meal, or a bed on the way home from the Army; re-directing the residents at the state home; or selling a musty longhorn skull to a garage-saler for more than the original asking price. He loved wordplay with his family and was generous with his time and talents. His stoic exterior hid deep reservoirs of emotion, love, and forgiveness. In the early 1990s, Daryl and Sharon moved from Littlefield Lake to 10 acres of pasture north of Remus. They fenced it, parked a trailer house on it, and built their log home from scratch: cutting trees and peeling logs, and even driving their own well. Daryl opened his own machine shop, retired from the state, and dedicated himself to his passion full-time. He also raised longhorn cattle and horses and had a particular love for Airedale terriers and a big bay mule named Polly, which Sharon called "the other woman." He lived to see nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Parkinson's and dementia did their worst the past few years, and cancer did the rest. He bore it all well and told us not to worry about him; his life had been better than he deserved. As much as he could, he died as he lived—on his own terms, beneath the big log beams he set in place himself. He was preceded in death by his brother Ronnie, his mother Mary, his Little Grandma Laura Thorp, his father Duane, his stepmother Rowena, and his in-laws Frank and Stella Galubenski, who became like second parents to him. He is survived by the love of his life, Sharon; children, Jill (Rusty) Johnson and their children: Kayla, Kyle, Toby, and Stella; and Jim (Jodi) Thorp and their children and grandchildren: Brendan (Becky, plus Augie and Chuck), Gabe, Emma, Trevor, and Lily—and his siblings Joyce (Rob) Tank, Allen (Marilyn) Thorp, and Melvin (Sandy) Thorp, and Elaine (Mike) Darnell, Bea (Gary) Stimson, Rhonda Pederson, Sherri Thorp, and Raymond (Jessica) Thorp; his sisters-in-law, Cathie (Lyle) Curry, Jackie Galubenksi, Barb Walkiewicz, and Julie (Greg) Wenzlaff; and his best friend, Dwain Dennis—among so many others. A memorial celebration is being planned for this summer. If you would like to attend, email Jim at bottomlesspint@gmail.com. While you're at it, share a favorite memory of Daryl.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Daryl by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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