



Kurt Gustafson

August 1, 1951 - February 20, 2009

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Kurt Gustafson, 57, died in his home Friday, Feb. 20, after a long battle with a rare form of adult onset muscular dystrophy.

He was born Aug. 1, 1951, in Eureka, Calif., to Tom and Alice Gustafson. He moved a lot during his early childhood as his father was in the military. His elementary school years were spent in the Roseburg area, but he graduated from high school in Missoula, Mont., in 1969. He joined the Coast Guard upon graduating and served on Light Ships and Buoy Tenders off the Oregon and Washington coast. He also spent some time at Base Kodiak in Alaska.

After the Coast Guard, Kurt spent some time enjoying the '60s and everything that went with them. He moved back to Corvallis in 1975 and worked for Greyhound in both Corvallis and Salem.

He met his wife, Cheri, in 1976, and it was love at first sight. They were married in June 1977; Kurt then began attending college and Cheri worked as a registered nurse.

Kurt graduated from Western Oregon University in 1980 with a Bachelor of Science in education and graduated from Oregon State University in 1984 with a master's degree in computer science education. He taught for the Greater Albany Public School District from 1980 to 2006, when his illness forced him to retire. He taught at Grand Prairie Elementary, Memorial Middle School, South Shore Elementary and North Albany Middle School. He loved

teaching and learning. He was best known as “Mr. G,” who always wore tie-dye T-shirts, a long beard, shaved head and Birkenstocks.

He was also very involved in his children’s lives as well as their friends’. The Gustafson house was where everyone liked to “hang out.” Kurt would often entertain them with stories of the ’60s or perhaps having a “hot sauce” competition. He was very proud of both of his children, his daughter’s love of organic living and his son’s love of music. His greatest regret was that he would not be here to watch them fulfill their life’s purpose.

He was a free thinker, lover of nature and most of all passionate in his love for Jesus, his Lord and Savior. He began a worship group in his home church and thoroughly enjoyed singing and praising God.

He is survived by his wife, Cheri; daughter Jenn Verdries and her husband, Bill; his son Joel; and his brother Leo and sister-in-law, Kimiko, who all live in Corvallis.

Per his words, he wants everyone to know he has gone on vacation from this life and is sleeping safely in Jesus.

A celebration of his life will be at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 28, at the Seventh-day Adventist Church, 3160 S.W. Western Blvd., Corvallis. Per his request, please dress in casual clothing and tie-dye if you have it.

Memorials can be made to the Kurt A. Gustafson Memorial Fund in care of the McHenry Funeral Home, 206 N.W. Fifth St., Corvallis, OR 97330.

Tribute Wall

RW

“ Kurt was "Mr. Calm and Cool" for the seven years I remember him. On numerous occasions he provided that kind of demeanor that I needed to be more balanced. He was such a genuine disciple of Jesus Christ. His memory will live on in both the lives of Darla and myself.

Ross Winkle - February 26, 2009 at 06:58 PM

NF

“ To the Gustafson family: My children had Mr. G when they were at Memorial and then later I was honored to work with him there. He was always smiling and made all, from students to staff, feel validated and special. He was a WONDERFUL man and will be missed by all who knew him. Looking forward to seeing him again when we are reunited in heaven with Jesus. Nikki Fox

Nikki Fox - February 26, 2009 at 05:22 PM

TS

“ My son Aaron was a student of "Mr. G". He didn't usually talk about teachers from middle school, but he did talk fondly of Mr. G. Thanks Mr. G for being you and inspiring others to do the same.

The Stricklands - February 26, 2009 at 12:17 AM

TB

“ Mr. G touched my life a great deal. He made science engaging and entertaining. I always look back at him with a fondness and a smile. Rest in peace you will always be an inspiration for me. Travis Bakke memorial middle school. 1981-1984

travis bakke - February 25, 2009 at 08:53 PM

CM

“ *Jenny, I have so many wonderful high school memories with your family, and your father always stood out to me as being an exceptionally happy man who knew he was blessed. I offer my most sincere condolences to you, Joel and your mom.*

Clare Magee - February 25, 2009 at 07:44 PM

PW

“ *So sorry to read about Kurt's death. Our thoughts and prayers are with your family. God Bless you during the time that we all wait for the return of Jesus to take us home to be reunited with those we have lost!*

Pam and Geoff Woitt - February 25, 2009 at 06:58 PM

TT

“ *Mr. Gus - You were a wonderful, energetic, inspirational and dedicated teacher. You will be missed by so many. Gustafson family - My thoughts and prayers are with you in this most difficult time. God be with you.*

Teri (Fox) Thomas - February 25, 2009 at 12:33 PM