



Howard Ogaard

May 17, 2014

Howard Lawrence Ogaard was born on October 5, 1954 in Romulus, NY to Raymond and Shirley (St Michel) Ogaard. The family settled in Minot, ND where Howard graduated in 1973. Howard enlisted in the U.S. Navy and was stationed in Oakland, CA, where he was an oral surgeon technician for four years. After being honorably discharged, Howard returned to Minot and started working at Keebler Company as a salesman. In an earlier marriage, Howard was blessed with three children, Ryan, Jason and Leslie. In 1988, Howard was transferred by Keebler Company to Alexandria, MN working as a salesman and district manager. He worked for the Keebler Company for 13 years. On May 23, 1992, Howard was united in marriage to Donna Haman at the Little Flower Catholic Church in Rugby, ND. To this marriage the couple was blessed with a son, Daniel. Howard then worked at 3M for 10 years. In 2003, Howard started working at Prairie Community Services as the program coordinator, where he became in contact with clients who enriched his life. Howard also started growing his beard and became known to many as ?Santa?. Not only was he Santa in the suit, he lived out being a true ?Santa? talking and listening to children and adults alike, providing hope and encouragement and helping anyone in need. Howard enjoyed fishing, photography, writing poetry, sharing many laughs and stories, and bragging up his children who brought much joy to his life. Howard?s other truest passion was dedicated to his love for motorcycling. Howard was one of the founding fathers of the Freedom First Riders and a member of the Patriot Guard.

Howard was affectionately known as "Howie" and "Santa". Howard embodied the spirit of Santa year round and gave every child (and occasional adult) that reached out to him a gentle handshake or hug and reminder to "Be Good, Be Kind, Be Happy, Be Respectful." To Howard's brothers and sisters of Freedom First Riders and at home, he had a saying: "Remember, everyone dies but not everyone lives. Make some memories and share some memories. Expect the Unexpected." Most of all, Howard loved his family and grandchildren and was loved by all who knew him. Howard died on Saturday, May 17, 2014 in a tragic motorcycle accident at the age of 59. He is survived by his loving wife, Donna of Alexandria, children, Ryan (Amber) Ogaard of Williston, ND, Jason (Katie) Ogaard of Minot; Leslie (Garik) Leraas of Alexandria, and Daniel Ogaard of Alexandria; grandchildren, Alysse and Ellie Ogaard, Olivia and Carson Ogaard; and Landan, Khalan, Kherington Leraas; brothers, Kevin (Jennifer) Ogaard of Elgin, IL and Jeff Ogaard of Port Orchard, WA; sisters, Lynn (Lynn A) Bertsch of Minot, Kim Bolin Ogaard of West Fargo, Alison (Bryan) Schmidt of Horace, ND; and many nieces and nephews. Howard is preceded in death by his parents, Raymond and Shirley; and granddaughter, Leslie Beth Ogaard. A funeral service will be held on Friday, May 23, 2014, 3pm at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Alexandria. Visitation will be held from 4-8 PM on Thursday, May 22, 2014 at St. Mary's Catholic Church and for one hour prior to the service at the church on Friday. Interment will be at St. Mary's Catholic Church Cemetery in Alexandria. Arrangements are with the Anderson Funeral Home in Alexandria.