



Dr. Gary Timbers

None - Nov. 16, 2024

Dr. Gary Timbers ,77, of Hampstead, NC, passed away on Saturday Nov.16, 2024 after a successful Kayak fishing trip. Born in King Co., Washington, he was the son of the late John and Edythe Timbers.

Gary is survived by his wife Barbara, children Josh Timbers and Christy Rife, sister Dianne Timbers, niece Kirsten Timbers, grandchildren Emerson Timbers and Maddison and Kilee Rife, and his two brothers preceding him in death, Brian and John Timbers.

Gary met his wife of 57 years while attending the University of Arizona. In graduate school at the University of Kansas, Gary and later Barbara worked with Dr. Montrose Wolfe and fellow researchers in the development of the Teaching Family Model. In 1973 he brought this Model to Morganton, NC via a grant through Western Carolina Center to develop community-based group homes for troubled youth. There, he was director and founder of Appalachian Family Innovations originally called "Bringing It All Back Home Study Center." In 1980 the Study Center became a part of Appalachian State University. AFI's programming impacted families, schools and organizations

State University. Arts programming impacted families, schools and organizations throughout western NC, the State and the nation.

Gary enjoyed fishing, reading, cards, traveling the world, feeding the hungry, ACC basketball, and staying active. He passed on his love of soccer and competitive spirit to his children and always stood by his core belief of “do the right thing”. Gary’s

intense competitive spirit is best exemplified by the Duke-Carolina basketball rivalry.

Dempsey, his schnauzer, was his beloved companion and the two were not often apart. Gary Timbers’ purpose in life was his family, supporting families and children, and feeding the hungry.

Tribute Wall

My sincere condolences to the family. I know how hard it is to lose another Timbers. I'm thankful that Gary came to John's remembrance and I got to see him. I found out about his death when I read the Uof A alum mag. and saw his name on the those lost page. The Timbers men were all exceptional. I'm sure that his brothers were there to welcome him. They are all missed very much.

—Joy Timbers

I am sorry to hear about of the loss of Gary. I just found out yesterday. I refereed High School soccer with Gary in Western North Carolina. Gary was always a joy to be around. He smiles made it a joy to be in his presence. He shared a lot about Josh and Christy and their soccer accomplishments. He was proud of both of you. He told me about buying Barbara a truck. We laughed a lot. I learned from watching Gary on the soccer field. His love for the game was immense. I am Thankful for having had the privilege of knowing Gary Timbers. I always looked forward to being on the soccer field with him. May God's love and grace continue to give you great memories. Glenn, Chris and Scott Davenport Shelby, NC

—Glenn Davenport

I met Gary on the soccer pitch as a new referee. He was always so wonderful to be with and made every game we officiated a pleasure. He always had the best attitude and just helped me grow to love officiating soccer. He was such a wonderful person and he will be missed.

—Matt Brinton



—Anonymous

Dear Barb and Family, My deepest condolences, thoughts, and prayers are with you in this season. I'm thankful for the many years of excellent training and enjoyable years working with Gary. Marcus and I were better people because of his influence. Love to you and your family. Mary Humphrey

—Mary Humphrey

My sincere condolences to Barb and the children. Gary was a visionary and innovator whom I was honored to have work for a with through the study center. I remember fishing for big blues in October and other fishing trips to the outer banks. He lived life to the fullest and will long be remembered. I am saddened to hear of his passing but his life brings a smile to my face. His leadership led to many helping troubled teens live a more purposeful life. Well done my friend and know you will be greatly missed.

—Chuck Ballsnce

So sorry for your loss. Gary led an excellent life. He certainly left a legacy of helping the downtrodden. We have only fond memories of Gary. Love, Kathy and John

—Kathy and John Sebbby

Timbers family and friends, Dr. Timbers was such an inspiration to so many of us in the Morganton and Burke County area. He had a profound effect on so many worthy programs through the years. My heart goes out to you as you navigate the

grieving process. Live on the good memories.

—Wayne Giese

Dear Barbara Our condolences to you and your entire family for the loss of Gary – a jewel of a man with the integrity and heart to assist others – and the professionalism to bring programs to life that improved the lives of thousands of youth and their families and communities. I remember so well those early lessons that you and Gary taught us at the University of Kansas about the differences in the application of the Teaching Family Group Home program with girls verses boys. I was so thrilled when Gary signed on to the national grant that we at Western Carolina Center had been awarded to establish the “Bringing It All Back Home” project. I believe that Gary and his team (including Karen Blase) are the only one’s who could have navigated the implementation of this program that they established throughout rural western NC. Becky and I had been trying to figure out how to reach you and Gary over these past 3 years. I’m disappointed that my connection comes under such saddening circumstances. We were pleased to hear that Gary had a successful kayaking fishing trip shortly before his death. We too enjoy kayaking, pontooning, and sailing on the Gulf of Mexico. Barbara, if your game, we would appreciate your reaching out to us sometime. Our peaceful wishes to you and your family, Rusty and Becky St Petersburg Florida rclarktip@gmail.com 813-494-8233

—Rusty and Becky Clark