



Dennis J. McDonough

July 28, 1949 - June 19, 2009

Dennis John McDonough, age 59, a 34-year East Wenatchee resident, passed away peacefully at Central Washington Hospital, after a long struggle with Multiple Sclerosis and a brief battle with Leukemia. He was born on July 28, 1949, in Superior, WI. His parents, John and Alvina McDonough, raised him along with six other brothers and sisters. He spent his childhood in Superior, attending parochial schools. In 1969, he moved to the Seattle area and settled in Kirkland. He met Cheryll Heldenbrand in 1973, and they were married on August 24, 1974. Denny began his electrical apprenticeship with IBEW local 497 and in June of 1975, they moved to East Wenatchee to make their home. Dennis and Cheryll settled into life as a young married couple. They had two children, Ryan and Shannon. Denny was continually involved in activities in the community around him. He served as President for IBEW local 497 for several terms, worked on contract negotiations and organized union picnics. Denny was very active with his son in Boy Scouts, participating in winter camps, 50 mile hikes and much more. He also took his daughter on many hiking and camping trips and taught her much about the outdoors. For many years, he participated in the Ridge to River Relay, until his MS prevented him from continuing. He was an engaged and involved father and an avid outdoorsman. Every spring since being diagnosed with MS, Denny has participated in the Wenatchee MS Walk, bringing in thousands of dollars for MS research. Denny was a great person; ready to lend a hand, to lend a tool, to give advice, without concern whether that kindness would be repaid.

For his son, Ryan, Denny was and is his hero, a loving and involved father, teacher and role model. His physical strength of years past, gave way to inner strength, grace and intestinal fortitude as his MS progressed. For his daughter, Shannon, as a child, she was his sugar bear, he was papa bear, always there to scoop her up when danger approached, as well as to cuddle her when she needed comfort. As an adult, even though his physical capacity diminished, he was still papa bear, the person she could go to for comfort, advice and help, no matter what the circumstance. She enjoyed lavishing care on him as his disease progressed, the way that he had cared for her as a little girl. Throughout their lives, Denny always had time and energy for his children, teaching them the meaning of unconditional love and respect. As the MS progressed, Denny's positive attitude, grace and dignity, were inspirational to his family, friends, medical personnel and really, anyone who knew him. He was never heard to complain or bemoan his condition; he knew it was important to be positive. He always had a joke or a story, maybe an old one, to share.

Denny is survived by his wife, Cheryll; his son, Ryan; grandchildren, Sophie and Fiona; daughter, Shannon; and son-in-law, Chae. He is also survived by his mother, Alvina; brothers and sisters, Sharon, Patrick, Maureen, Brian and Colleen; and his mother-in-law, Martha.

His family would like to thank family and friends who have supported Denny and Cheryll, as well as the nurses at Central Washington Hospital Oncology, ICU and Home Health Departments. Very special thanks to Drs. Peter Rutherford, Mitch Garrison and their office staff. The last four years could not have gone so well without caregivers, Art Johnson and Carol Zufuto.

Donations may be made to Central Washington Hospital in his name.

At his request, No Funeral Services will be held. The family will hold a party to Celebrate his Life at the family home, 2615 N. Baker Avenue, East Wenatchee, at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 27, 2009. Come share food and drink, celebrate his life, and share a story or two about a caring, decent and giving man.