

**J**ay Edwin Willfong, age 69, of Sioux Rapids, Iowa died December 13, 2022 at Happy Siesta Health Care Center in Remsen, Iowa.

Jay was born on May 27, 1953 to William and Nelda (Lauman) Willfong in Spencer, Iowa. He was baptized in the Congregational Church in Spencer on June 7, 1953. Jay attended Sioux Rapids Community School, graduating in 1972. During his senior year, he made First All Conference in football.

Jay was united in marriage to Risa Middendorff on April 7, 1979 in Sioux Rapids, Iowa. The couple was blessed with a daughter, Samantha.

During the first few years of Jay and Risa's marriage, he enjoyed scuba diving and was certified in search recovery for 6 years. In 1997, Jay got into gyrocopters and traveled to Georgia to learn how to fly. He then put in his own runway. Jay enjoyed the quiet of flying until he realized he was having trouble with his memory a few years before his passing. Jay was a member of the Popular Rodary Association. He loved to weld and repair anything, it didn't matter what! He designed and built many trailers for people. Jay also enjoyed cutting wood. Most recently, Jay loved helping Risa in the garden and looked forward to taking his grandchildren out every time they were over. He was always playing with his grandchildren and making them laugh. Jay will be deeply missed by those who knew and loved him.

Jay is survived by his wife: Risa Willfong of Sioux Rapids, Iowa; daughter: Samantha (Ryan) Roder of Marathon, Iowa; sisters: Pam (Damon) Mooney of Nemaha, Iowa; Ann McMaster of Sioux Rapids, Iowa; brother: Greg (Angie) Willfong of Scottsdale, Arizona; grandchildren: Tenley Rae Roder and Brantley Jay Roder of Marathon, Iowa; extended family and many friends.

He was preceded in death by his father: William Willfong; mother: Nelda Willfong; nephew: Ryan Willfong; parents-in-law: Arthur and Oma Middendorff; sister-in-law: Lyn Dee Middendorff; brother-in-law: Craig Middendorff; several aunts, uncles, and good friends.

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*We wish to express our gratitude for the kindness evidenced in thought and deed, and for your attendance at this service. You are invited for a time of fellowship at the Sioux Rapids Fire Department immediately following the service.*

*- The Willfong Family*



## *Celebration of Life*

**Jay E. Willfong**

**“Gyrojay”**

May 27, 1953 - December 13, 2022

# Welder

*noun (weld-er)*

A person who fixes stuff you can't.

## Enlightening Facts About Jay

- ◆ His nicknames were "Gyrojay" and "Fong"
- ◆ When Jay first got a gyro, he didn't know they had flying lessons for them. He crashed the first time and then went to Georgia with a friend to learn how to fly Gyros.
- ◆ He used to have a Plymouth Superbird.
- ◆ He was well know for being able to fix anything.
- ◆ When he would design and build trailers, he would do it without blue prints.
- ◆ Out of all the siblings, he was the only one not born in September, without brown eyes (he had baby blue), and left handed.
- ◆ Jay & Risa were high school sweethearts. They dated seven years before marriage.
- ◆ Many people know about the oxygen-acetylene bombs.
- ◆ He always made sure the grandkids had a popsicle every time they visited him.
- ◆ He never like country music, but went to a Garth Brooks concert a few years ago with a friend and said it was amazing.
- ◆ Jay enjoyed watching and learning about the military and history with it.
- ◆ He used to let Sammie paint his toenails, but would make Risa take it off before he left for work.
- ◆ Jay and Risa got into wine making about 13 years ago.
- ◆ His nieces and nephews know how he could balance a yard stick or broom on his nose.
- ◆ Jay always taught Risa and Sammie how to use tools and fix things without his help if he wasn't around.
- ◆ He once painted his car with house paint and painted a playboy bunny on the side doors.
- ◆ The last few years the gardening is what kept him busy. The grandkids always left dirty after being out there with him.
- ◆ He used to travel for work and get flown to different plants to do repairs and design machines.
- ◆ Jay once promised Sammie that he would wear a TuTu, he followed through with that promise one family Christmas when his mom made him and Sammie matching TuTu outfits.
- ◆ He has two people named after him, one was a best friend's son over a bet if the baby was a boy, and the other after dad taught a friend everything with welding and building things.
- ◆ His grandson has Jay for his middle name.
- ◆ He enjoyed cutting firewood to keep the house nice and toasty all winter long.

*He loved us with all his heart, we will forever love and miss him with ours. - Risa and Sammie*

# Jay E. Willfong



**CELEBRATION OF LIFE**  
*Saturday, May 6, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.*  
*First United Church - Sioux Rapids, Iowa*

**CLERGY**  
*Pastor Tonna Parsons*

**SPEAKER**  
*Lori Lamping*

**HONORARY PALLBEARERS**  
*Doug Kracht, Jeff Bromley, Ross Nielsen*  
*Charlie Fritz, Jay Nation (In memory of Jeff Nation)*

**INTERMENT**  
*Lone Tree Cemetery - Sioux Rapids, Iowa*



*Arrangements by*  
**SLIEFERT FUNERAL HOMES**  
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