

# *Eugene "Gene" Lehner*

**January 19, 1939 - March 17, 2015**

**Born in Emmetsburg, Iowa**

**Resided in Arvada, CO**



## Obituary

Eugene "Gene" Gary Lehner passed away peacefully in his home on March 17, 2015 at age 76 in Arvada, Colorado after a brave 5 year battle with cancer.

Gene was born to parents Florence and Dwight Lehner in Emmetsburg Iowa on January 19, 1939. Gene graduated from Emmetsburg High School in 1957, and went on to attend Morningside College on a football scholarship, where he lost a tooth playing tackle, and gained a degree in Business. In 1961, Gene served in the United States Navy for 2 years, where he created many fond memories and lifelong friendships. After leaving the Navy in 1963, Gene started work for Travelers Insurance Company in Des Moines, Iowa. Gene met and married Valois Ann Dodge, also of Morningside College, on June 13, 1964. They lived in Cedar Rapids, Iowa where they welcomed their first daughter, Laura Renee in 1965. Soon, The family was transferred to Ottomwa, then Fort Dodge, then Bettendorf, Iowa, where they adopted their second daughter Kirstin Michelle in 1971. Gene was transferred to the Travelers home office in Hartford, CT in 1971, and finally to their Denver office in 1974.

Gene was a man who loved spending time with his family and enjoyed the great outdoors. Often the family was seen hiking, bicycling, or playing ball. He taught his daughters how to change tires, kick a soccer ball, swing a baseball bat, and tell off-color jokes. Gene enjoyed woodworking, just like his father, and created many plant-stands, trivets, christmas tree ornaments, a doll house, and a puppet theater, among other things. Gene built and maintained an enormous garden in the backyard that included fruit trees, tomato plants, peas, cucumbers and many other vegetables that were pickled and canned in the kitchen. He loved entertaining friends, dancing, and cooking - always ready to try a new recipe.

As Gene's daughters married and left home, he began to enjoy more hobbies, including running in the Turkey Trot each year, participating in the Timberline Tall Group, and more hiking and bicycling. After more than 25 years with Travelers Insurance, Gene worked for King Soopers and later Pinnacle as a workman's comp insurance adjustor. Gene married Carol Schaefer on July 25, 2005, and the couple enjoyed discovering new restaurants and travelling near and far, including Iceland, South

America, and Africa. In his retirement, Gene enjoyed volunteering his time to various causes, including Habitat for Humanity, Food Bank of the Rockies, and the Nature and Science Museum. He donated his blood at Bonfils Blood Center as often as he could, until he surpassed the 15 gallon mark. Gene has been a member of several Catholic churches throughout the Denver area.

Gene is survived by his wife, Carol Schaefer; his daughter Laura Winkler and granddaughters Sarah and Emily; his daughter Kirstin Goth and son-in-law Ron, and granddaughters Annie, Erika and Nicole; and Carol's daughters Lisa and Kirstin Bebell.