

Clay Gyllenberg

May 18, 1959 - October 18, 2022

Clay Scot Gyllenberg, 63, a lifelong Baker City resident, passed away October 18, 2022, at his home. His memorial service will be at 1 p.m., Saturday, October 29th, at the Baker City Church of the Nazarene, 1250 Hughes Lane. Friends are invited to join the family for a dinner reception immediately following the service at the Family Life Center adjacent to the church.

Clay was born to Jack and Janice Gyllenberg on May 18, 1959, the third of four children. He was raised on the family ranch, where he developed his hard work ethic, love of motorcycle riding and passion for mechanical problem solving. He graduated from Baker High School in 1978. He worked for Mel's Discount Auto parts prior to attending and graduating from Boise State University's Vocational Technical School in 1980. Upon graduation he returned to Baker and pursued his dream of owning his own business. With a few hand tools, he started Gyllenberg Equipment in his granddad's machine shop on 9th Street.

Clay met the love of his life, Christine Ricco, in May 1984. It didn't take long for him to realize this was his lifelong mate and they were married in June 1985. They were blessed with two sons, Cody, born in 1996 and Dusty in 1997. Clay and Chris worked side-by-side running their business, ranch, raising their boys, and serving the community. They were an inseparable team.

Together, they expanded the business to include equipment sales, taking on the Zetor tractor line in 1989. Clay pursued his lifelong dream of having a shop on the freeway and in November 1994, built his shop on E. Campbell Street. He expanded the shop building in 2004, taking on additional lines of Kioti, McCormick, Krone, and Branson equipment.

Clay built his business on the premises of honesty, integrity, quality, and hard work. No job was too unique, and Clay would work on and repair anything from lawnmowers to bulldozers.

His drive for perfection led him to constantly improve and re-engineer most equipment he touched. His hobby was his work. He delighted in enhancing "old beaters," turning everything from a motorcycle, snowmobile, or tractor into a high performing piece, and seeing just how far he could push its performance limitations.

He was also an inventor, designing, fabricating and welding to create everything from new ag equipment to gifts and household decor. One project that rose to the top was his custom built show bike, "Rawhide." It was made out of scrap ag parts entirely, powered by a four-cylinder

Wisconsin industrial engine. The wheels are from an antique manure spreader. Its only chrome was a dented snowmobile gas tank. It took two to ride it to display at the

Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally, of which he won an award! "Rawhide's Her Name, Redneck's the Game" became its motto. It was part of his bucket list bringing him great pleasure in not only the design, but how it brought such joy to others (including local law enforcement!).

Clay also ran a ranching operation with his family to continue a passion from his youth while allowing his young sons the opportunity to learn how to run a ranch.

Clay passed on many ranching skills such as flood irrigation, equipment operation and techniques on how to put up hay. He received great satisfaction from improving the land and its production, all while working toward his goal of passing on a love for ranching to his sons.

He had a passion for helping others, whether sharing rides on snowmobiles or teaching skills he had learned. He helped teach the FFA Ag mechanics team. He spent his lifetime mentoring many individuals and employees in the field of mechanics.

Clay had a humble giving spirit. He never knew a stranger and his customers developed into his friends. He delighted in joking, teasing and putting a smile on people's faces with his witty humor. He was an encourager and wanted others to feel needed and included.

Clay had a love for music that started with playing the saxophone in high school. He was a member of his brother Brent's traveling gospel band, and was an active member of the Nazarene Church's worship team for over 10 years playing bass guitar. His greatest joy in music was teaching and playing with his sons.

Clay is survived by his wife, Chris of Baker City; sons and daughter-in-law, Cody and Elle Gyllenberg of Richland, Washington, and Dusty Gyllenberg of Boise, Idaho; granddaughters Ada and Josie Gyllenberg; brother Brent (Bitsy) Gyllenberg of Baker City; sisters Neva Parker of Powell Butte, Oregon, and Elissa (Clint) Morrison of Baker City. He was predeceased by his parents, Jack and Janice Gyllenberg. Memorial contributions may be made to the Northeast Oregon Compassion Center or the Baker County Livestock Producers Foundation either online or through Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home, P.O. Box 543, Halfway, Oregon 97834. Online condolences can be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

