

# Earl Hancock

March 23, 1937 ~ February 10, 2026

Earl's life philosophy was: "If you're not having fun today, it's your own d@mn fault!" He lived that motto every day of his nearly 89 years on earth. He was an adventurer to his core. He was an expert caver and was featured in a KETC-TV documentary about caves in St. Louis. He loved caving and was a devoted member of the Meramec Valley Grotto. He met his beloved wife Lannis on a caving trip; they were married on September 26, 1992, at Saranac Springs. Attended by hundreds of cavers and family, Rev. Devon Newman officiated. It was a celebration with family and friends lasting all weekend, lasting 35 years. He traveled across Europe for years on his Eurail Pass. He relished private outdoor showers during his winters in Yelapa, Mexico. He cajoled anyone to join him and Lannis on the donkey trails there or to hike to the waterfalls. Many friends and family did. He and Lannis enjoyed bluegrass music, attending concerts in and out of state. He was a skilled craftsman. He followed his father into the Sheet Metal Workers Union Local 36 in St. Louis, and Earl's sons Tim and Dan, and brother Rick also made their careers in the craft. The Hancock boys were known and respected in the trade. He could build or jury-rig anything, and was a welcome volunteer at DIY weekend projects, whether a treehouse, zipline, or a roof. Earl and his toolbox were always there. He was an eternal optimist who weathered life's toughest storms while keeping a positive outlook, whether he was recuperating from surgery or recovering from the loss of a loved one. He always focused on the bright side. Earl was married to the late Carol Ann Hancock, and they had four children: Jim (deceased), Dan, Tammy (deceased), and Tim. Earl dearly loved all of his grandchildren: Heather, Cori, Daniel, Matthew, Joshua, David, Michael, and seven great-grandchildren. He married Lannis 35 years ago. Her daughters Rachel and Amy also loved Earl, and so did their children Ben, Rosetta and Jack. Lannis' sons Bill (Bonnita) and Brian (Laura), and their children Kristel, Garrett, Caleb, Lillian, Joseph, Sam, and Eli, and Lannis' siblings Gail (Lynn) Cookson, Mark (Lani) Hopkins will also miss their friend and brother. Earl was especially a hero to his siblings: Ceil, Rose (Ed), John (Toni), Anne (Jack), Bill (Dottie), and Rick (Ann). He was the fun uncle to Maria, Stan, David, Isaac, Ant, Ben, Abby, Theresa, Angie, and Joe. He taught them to climb, rappel, cave, float Missouri rivers, ride motorcycles, and create noisy fun. He laughed loudest. Earl left the planet on February 10, just a few weeks shy of his 89th birthday (born March 23, 1937). He leaves behind a myriad of grieving friends and family whose lives were better because he was with them. The family is grateful to Earl's home nurse Vanessa, the staff at St. Clare Hospital in Fenton, and to the nurses at Arbor View Nursing and Rehabilitation in Cedar Hill. Their kind and expert care made Earl's final days better. A memorial service for Earl is planned at Chapel Hill Mortuary in the spring (about the time Earl would be taking his last boat ride from Yelapa to Vallarta).

