



Gary Louis Brender

February 20, 1952 - March 30, 2020

Gary Louis Brender passed away peacefully in his sleep (after battling a longtime series of illnesses), at age 68, on Monday March 30th, 2020 at Hospice of the Comforter in Altamonte Springs, Florida. Gary was born in Corpus Christi, Texas on February 20, 1952 to Bernard William Brender and Ruth (Cooper) Brender. One of three siblings, he was part of a Navy family and lived in many states before graduating in 1970 from Colonial High School in Orlando, Florida. He graduated with a degree in Political Science from Miami University (Ohio) in 1974.

While at Miami University, Gary earned a Navy ROTC scholarship. Upon graduation, he was commissioned as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy. He moved to Pensacola for flight training and earned his aviator wings. Gary commanded anti-submarine warfare aircraft for ten years during the peak of the Cold War, before leaving the Navy and returning to Central Florida to raise a family while working as a sales executive for Lion Ribbon Company. He remained in the US Naval Reserves and continued to serve his country and then retired as a Commander after more than twenty years of service.

The Brender family has deep roots in the Central Florida area. Gary's father, Captain Bernard William Brender, who was a Pearl Harbor survivor and died in 1988, was the first Commanding Officer of the Orlando Naval Recruit Training Center. Captain Brender was also the first president of the Maitland

Arts Center. Gary followed in his father's footsteps as a public servant.

Gary was a long time civic leader and devoted to serving his community. He spent 31 years in public service as a City Commissioner in the City of Lake Mary, including a stint as Deputy Mayor. He loved a good ribbon cutting ceremony, speaking to local high school classes about civic engagement, and was a member of multiple community boards over the years. In addition to his three children, he told friends and family that his service to his country and community were some of the highlights of his life.

Gary loved the ocean, sailing and traveling. With his life-long friends, Frank and Marsha Kraft and Dave and Diana Grunderman, he shared a sailboat docked in New Smyrna Beach, called Mutual Fun. He also loved the Colorado Rocky Mountains, where he would go skiing and hiking when he was able. Gary and his older brother, Mark Brender, had a particular affinity for spending time in Telluride, Colorado, ever since their first land purchase together there in 1977, which was followed by purchasing several properties together over the years.

Gary is survived by his three children; Sharon Procopio and grandson Remy of Boulder, Erin Brender of Montana and Evan Brender (wife Juliet and granddog Sadie) of Boston. His older brother Mark (wife Sharon) lives in the Washington DC area and his younger brother, Keith Brender (wife Jeanette), lives in Deerfield Beach, Florida.

His favorite condiment was ketchup (which he put on almost everything - including eggs), so when you find yourself squeezing a bottle of Heinz, you can think of him fondly, as we will.

Gary's wishes were for his ashes to be equally spread between the calm waters near his sailboat in New Smyrna Beach and the See Forever ski run in

Telluride. A memorial service will be planned for a later time when we are all able to gather. To honor Gary's memory, please share your memories of him on the Tribute Wall and consider donating to the Myotonic Dystrophy or Myleofibrosis foundations to support their research at the links below:

<https://www.myotonic.org/donate-towards-myotonic-dystrophy-care-and-cure>

<https://www.mpnresearchfoundation.org/Donate-to-MPN-Research>

Tribute Wall

LD

“ Gary and your grandmother, Ruth, were long time members and supporters of Florida House on Capitol Hill. We loved seeing them at events and appreciated all they did on behalf of Florida's embassy. They will be truly missed. Our deepest sympathy to your family.

Liz Doyle - April 19, 2020 at 08:10 PM

SH

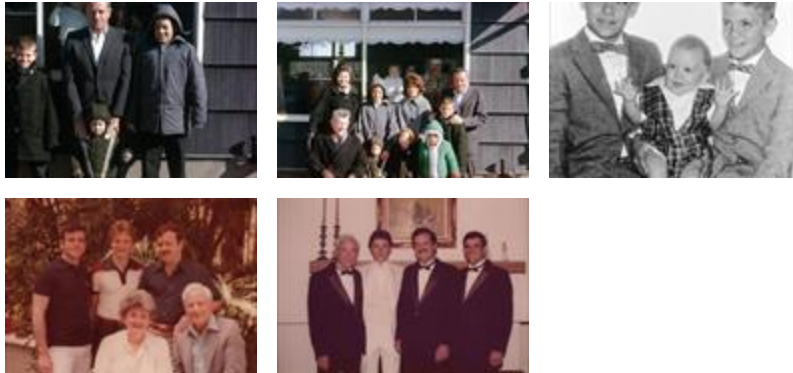
“ 2 files added to the album City of Lake Mary



sharonprocopio - April 06, 2020 at 08:41 PM

SH

“ 5 files added to the album Young Gary



sharonprocopio - April 06, 2020 at 08:40 PM

PP

“ Gary was a great guy and a wonderful elected official. He always had a smile on his face and represented Lake Mary with class. I am sure he will be helping Jesus in Heaven!

My condolences to his family. He will be missed.

Paul P Partyka

Paul P Partyka - April 05, 2020 at 05:13 PM

KW

“ Dear Brender Family: I had the pleasure to call Gary my neighbor and my friend for many years. We worked together on projects at my condo development when he was a City Commissioner. Gary always listened to what was said to him, always had a kind word to share and an infectious smile. His commitment to the City of Lake Mary and to his family and friends is certainly noteworthy. Although he will be greatly missed by all who knew him, I am glad that he is no longer in pain and that he can finally rest in peace. All the best, Kitra Weaver



Kitra Weaver - April 05, 2020 at 04:11 PM

MT

“ I just loved Gary and his awesome ability to light up a room and spread cheer to others. He was so smart when it came to politics and was always willing to let me pick his brain on “best picks” for our community and country.
*My prayers are with all of Gary’s family who are mourning his loss.
God bless and love,
Mary Burke Timmes*

Mary Timmes - April 04, 2020 at 04:17 PM

KR

“ Dear Brender Family: I worked with Gary at Lake Mary, and he was the most welcoming and kind person. He was an inspiration by being so humble and relatable despite his very impressive career. He was always so easy to talk to. He cared so much about Lake Mary, and worked so hard as a commissioner. He also spoke so often of his wonderful family, and was so proud of his children. We will miss him so very much. All the best, Katie Reischmann (City attorney)

katie reischmann - April 04, 2020 at 11:47 AM

JB

“ 4 files added to the album Gary Brender



Juliet Brender - April 03, 2020 at 08:50 PM

RR

“ I had the pleasure and the privilege of being a FIJI fraternity brother of Gary's at Miami, of OH. I remember Gary, always with a smile, as a kind and good person, always within a good day, with great enthusiasm. That is, much like the boat wheel "helm" photo shown with this portal. Gary, may you rest in peace, and Perge!, wherever you may be.

Robert Runyan - April 03, 2020 at 05:11 PM



“ *Fairest of All* was purchased for the family of Gary Louis Brender.



April 03, 2020 at 09:22 AM



“ 8 files added to the album Gary Brender



Charlie Castelli - April 02, 2020 at 07:03 PM

SH

“ I don't really know how to express how much my dad meant to me, he was my cheerleader, my champion, my voice of reason, he was one of few people I spoke to everyday when I first found myself going through a divorce (while he was recovering from a stroke), and who I still talked to weekly or more until he was just too weak to speak another word. We found a way to be respectful and warm hearted in our many heated talks on the topics of the day, he was as rock solid as a lighthouse in a storm, he taught me how to balance grit with grace, he embraced all of me and my choices, and he was the best pop-pop I could have wanted for R. I will miss our time together, but I am also relieved he can rest after a long and weary few years battling a host of health issues.



sharonprocopio - April 02, 2020 at 01:07 PM

BR

“ 27 files added to the album Gary Brender



brendere - March 31, 2020 at 05:50 PM

JM

My condolences to Gary's family. Gary and I were pledge brothers in a fraternity at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. I haven't seen Gary since those days. But I remember him as a sweet guy who seemed to always be happy and kind. I was struck by that since I wasn't. In those years I was insecure and anxious about most things. May you all find comfort and solace in his being free of any more suffering.

John McHugh

John M McHugh - April 01, 2020 at 11:36 AM

RS

Gary was a great guy, with a big heart, and kind soul. I started my tenure with Lion Ribbon a few years before Gary. We experienced many Sales Conferences, Trade Shows, as well as late evening meals. Gary was well liked and well respected by his Lion Ribbon Colleagues and Executives. He also was a great family man. I know Gary is resting comfortably now. He is missed!

Richard Stern - April 02, 2020 at 05:51 PM

CC

To the Brender Family:

Gary was my FIJI brother and roommate during our Junior Year at Miami University. He was a great fraternity brother and we enjoyed each other's company. We also were in Naval ROTC together and after our college graduation, we went down to Pensacola for Naval flight training along with Brother George Soles.

After moving back to Florida (St. Petersburg area) in 1989, I had was able to reconnect ties with Gary but my flying job kept me on the road quite a lot. We never were able to get our schedules to match but vowed to try to have that face-to-face reunion. Gary was always very personable and jovial during our many phone conversations. I will miss our friendship.

*Charlie Castelli
Miami FIJI 1974*

Charlie Castelli - April 02, 2020 at 06:53 PM

SH

Thank you all for the kinds words!

sharonprocopio - April 06, 2020 at 11:44 AM

SS

I, too, was a FIJI brother of Gary's at Miami University. Our pledge class went through tumultuous times together and made us close. What really stands out for me about Gary was his willingness to step up, to help, to volunteer, or even be drafted with a smile, for anyone, any time. Gary was so good natured about this that I think we took advantage of him and aksed more often than was reasonable. Yet, I never once recall him complaining or getting out of sorts in any way. That was just his nature, and I enjoyed reading how he continued that with his civic duties. Godspeed Ensign Brender. You made your mark on the world.

Scott Sedam - April 07, 2020 at 11:53 AM

HH

I knew Gary as a neighbor and fellow board member at Feather Edge in Lake Mary and over the years we spent working together on the various community projects, found he was very thoughtful, engaging, serious and lighthearted while always concerned about the current and future planning of the community. I know he was both a leader for Lake Mary and our community and will be missed tremendously for his counsel and guidance - but know he's in a better place today. May God rest his soul....Harry

Harry Hilton - April 11, 2020 at 07:37 AM

AG

*Our condolences to Gary's family.
We knew Gary for over 32 years as we managed retail sales with the Lion Ribbon Company in the Florida territory. Not only was Gary a considerate company associates, to us he was a friend. Gary will always be with us!
Our prayers and thoughts are with the family,
Andy & Belinda Garcia*

Andres Garcia - April 11, 2020 at 10:50 AM

TF

We just learned of Gary' passing and want to share what a joy and privilege it was to know him and work with him. He was our Offray/Lion Ribbon rep for many years and we enjoyed his visits and hearing about his family, latest cruise, his work as a community leader, etc. So sorry for your loss.

The Liu Family - April 27, 2020 at 02:57 PM