



Gary R. Wright

April 9, 2025

Gary Rodger Wright, 80, of Fort Collins, Colorado, passed away peacefully on April 9, 2025 from a long battle with bladder cancer due to surgical complications. Born on February 14, 1945, in Indianola, Iowa, to Max and Georgine Wright, Gary lived a life marked by faith, family, and service. His life and home have been rooted in Colorado but his heart still belonged to the small-town times in Iowa.

In his early years, Gary cherished time spent with his grandparents, who provided love and structure that shaped his kind heart. He loved puzzles, playing board and card games. he was a formidable MahJohngg player, delighting in friendly competitions. Gary proudly served in the United States Air Force from 1963 to 1971, embodying dedication and patriotism leaving the service as a sergeant.

Gary is survived by his beloved wife, Patricia Ehrlich, with whom he shared 55 years of devoted marriage. He also leaves behind his children, Christa (Dean) and Aaron (Kendall), along with his grandchildren, Ryan, Eliza, Shane, and Henry, who brought him immense joy. Gary is also survived by his brother, Terry Wright of Loveland, Colorado, sister, Kayla Ballard of Waverly, Colorado, Aunt Priscilla of Colorado Springs, Colorado and multiple cousins, nieces and nephews.

Professionally, Gary excelled as an automotive technician for over 50 years, retired from the same company and later as a builder for Habitat for Humanity, where his skilled hands helped create homes for those in need. He was recognized for the countless hours he dedicated to Habitat, leaving a lasting impact on families and communities. He had a love for baseball (only the Rockies). His passions for model railroading and classic cars shone through, as a dedicated member of a local "N" gauge train club, crafting intricate layouts and as a founding member of the Northern Colorado Mopar Club, where he bonded with friends over polished chrome. He was a familiar face at car and train shows across Colorado and Wyoming

In his 30s, he played drums in a country western band, bringing rhythm to local stages. He loved music and you would see him continuously tapping his fingers and toes to the beat of early rock , especially his favorite band- ABBA. Later in life, he played drums at Peak Community Church, retreats and Christ Fellowship Church in Fort Collins, enriching Sunday services almost every week. A man of deep faith, Gary's love for his Savior, Jesus Christ, guided his life. He studied scripture daily, finding strength and wisdom in his spiritual practice.

Gary's kindness, wit, and unwavering faith will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

A celebration of his life will be held at Christ Fellowship Church, 3850 Ziegler Rd., Fort Collins, CO 80525, on May 10, 2025, at 10 a.m.

Internment at Belmont Cemetery, Milo, Iowa

Tribute Wall

JS

“ Gary has been my best friend for over 50 years. We met through a hobby shop owner in Fort Collins who noticed we were buying model railroad equipment in the same scale. It turned out that we had more than just trains in common as we both grew up in Iowa and graduated from high school the same year. Oh how we both wished that the Iowa delicacies of Maid-Rite and pork tenderloin sandwiches were available in Colorado! We both belonged to a couple of model railroad clubs, and our many trips to watch trains were legendary. When my wife, Dianne, went through cancer treatment and after her death, Gary’s friendship and support was so very helpful, encouraging, and healing. Gary was a true blessing and a gift, and I shall treasure always the many many fond memories. He touched many lives in a special way. Gary will be greatly missed. Attached is a photo of Gary at the birthday celebration of one of our Big T club members. Jon Schiltz



Jon Schiltz - May 05, 2025 at 04:11 PM

LL

“ Gary and Tricia had been our neighbors for 24 years. When our son, Dominic was small, he'd run over to watch Gary work on his car, crawling underneath so he could be part of the work. I loved seeing the two of them. Now, they're both gone, two days apart. Love to Tricia and the family.

Laurie Linam - April 24, 2025 at 07:09 PM

DS

“ Gary was a great friend and we will miss him dearly! We live just a few houses from Gary & Tricia. We met when I had my Roadrunner out for a wash and Gary drove by in his Sport Fury. We really became close friends when Gary & I helped a vendor set up for a train show in Denver. It was kind of funny because we went down separately and as we started working we realized we lived around the corner from each other. Gary got me into the Big T & Northern train club and running trains together. After that day, we rode to meetings & train shows together all the time. His favorite time was when we took my Dodge Viper to a club meeting in Longmont. When we were leaving he said “can this burn rubber?” I did a 100 ft burnout smoking up the neighborhood with Gary laughing hysterically the whole time!!

When I started taking my Grandson, Benny, to run trains with us, Gary just fell in love with him. He enjoyed helping Benny run the trains, following him around the layout. Gary surprised Benny with a small modular layout that Gary had built years ago along with a loco & cars to get him started. When Gary got sick and went into the hospital, Benny made him a get well card , which Gary loved.

Rest in Peace Gary, your pain is gone. We will miss you at the club meetings.

Dan St John



Dan StJohn - April 23, 2025 at 12:15 PM