



Robert Lee Ward III

November 20, 1957 - March 5, 2022

Robert (Bobby) Lee Ward III, 64, of Ocala, Florida, passed away on Saturday, March 5th, 2022 at E.W. and Lucille Cates Hospice House after a 19- month battle with cancer. Robert was born in Ocala, Florida, to Robert L. and Marion (Betty) Sheen Ward on November 20, 1957. He graduated from Vanguard High School in 1975, where he played drums in the marching band, received his AA degree from CFCC in 1977, and his BA in Business Administration from UF in 1979. He worked at Publix in Gainesville during college. After graduating from UF, Bobby started Ward Construction and Roofing with his brother and maintained the company for forty plus years. As an adolescent, he had a speaking and singing role in CFCC's production of The King and I, playing the king's eldest son. He was skilled in multiple sports such as running, scuba diving, taekwondo, and racquetball. He ran nine marathons and won the men's 25-29 division of Gainesville's Florida Relays Marathon in 2:47:37. He and his family would scuba dive in the Keys during lobster season and enjoyed many open ocean dives. He earned a 3rd degree black belt in Taekwondo and taught for H. Y. Kim in Inverness for several years. His most recent love was playing racquetball at the YMCA where he made many friends. He participated in numerous tournaments and leagues. In addition to his sports, he was a devoted member of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church for 52 years. He played in the bell choir, sang in the choir, played guitar, participated in youth leadership and conferences, sang solos and duets for special music, served on council, and participated each Christmas in the

Live Nativity as the Roman soldier/ tax collector. He organized or participated in numerous church functions doing whatever needed to be done. He was often the first person at church on Sunday and the last to leave in the afternoon.

Bobby is survived by his wife, Gwenda Ward of Ocala; Clarke Tanner (Tara) of Virginia, and Cindy Tanner of Florida; grandson Clarke Jackson Tanner; father, Robert L. Ward, Jr; sisters Shelley Ward Jackson and Trina Leary (Howard); brother William Ward (Laurie); in-laws Penny Van Buren, Jacquie Alberti, Tish Rowe, and Teresa Harrison, of South Carolina; nieces Tiffany McCarthy, Heather Hazen, nephews Michael Ward and Tyler Ward, Howie Leary, Cindy Leary, Sarah Church, Nicki Alberti, Kristina Alberti, Allie Rhodes, John Alberti, Annie Harris, Jenny Wright, Sean Adams and 16 great nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his mother, Betty Ward; uncle, William Sheen; in-laws Jack Adams and Patricia Adams, and nephews Jeromy Leary and Mark Van Buren.

A Celebration of Life service will be held at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church 3453 E Silver Springs Blvd, Ocala, on Saturday, March 19, at 5:00 p.m. with Pastor Gayle Nelson of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church officiating. A reception will follow immediately after the service at Benson Hall adjacent to the sanctuary. Roberts of Ocala Funerals and Cremations will be handling the funeral arrangements.

Memorial donations may be made to St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 3445 NE 10th St, Ocala, Florida 34470, or a favorite charity. The family would like to thank the doctors, nurses, and technicians at Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida, and the E.W. and Lucille Cates Hospice House in Ocala. The family would also like to thank all the friends who encouraged Bobby with cards, food and prayers.

Bobby loved the Lord. He lived the Word by being a good and faithful servant, humble to a fault and was happiest helping others.

Tribute Wall

Lois
Leighton

“ *Lois Leighton lit a candle in memory of Robert Lee Ward III*



Lois Leighton - March 17, 2022 at 03:33 PM

Lois
Leighton

Gwenda: So sorry for your loss. My prayers are with you and family.

Lois Leighton - March 17, 2022 at 03:38 PM

PF

I have known the Ward family for ^0+ years. Bobby was special. He put a roof on my barn-workshop that was beautiful and lasting., I can not imagine losing my son but Bobby no longer suffers from his cancer and he and his wonderful Mom are together again. To his wife, kids, to his father and to my Saturday breakfast pal ... my prayers and love!

Paul Ferguson - March 18, 2022 at 07:54 PM

JS

“ *All my love and prayers to the entire Ward family. WE are to be out of town in North Carolina for a wedding and not able to attend the service. Hugs to Mr. Ward. Judy Long Starnes*

Judy Starnes - March 14, 2022 at 12:40 PM

GW

“ *Gwenda Ward lit a candle in memory of Robert Lee Ward III*



Gwenda Ward - March 13, 2022 at 08:58 PM

GW

“ Bobby was truly a unique person. One Christmas, his gift to me was to install window locks on all the windows in my historic home on 4th St. It was an odd gift, but full of protective care. I grew to love those gestures on his part.

Gwenda Ward - March 10, 2022 at 06:36 PM