

Remembering Ray.



Ray A. Cheely

Born
April 28, 1953
LaCrosse, Kansas

Died
July 24, 2009
Great Bend, Kansas

**Beloved husband, son and
son-in-law, brother and
brother-in-law, mentor,
advisor, and friend.**

Ray A. Cheely

Ray Remembered.....

Ray A. Cheely was born in LaCrosse, KS on April 28th, 1953 to James P. and Helen Ruth (Remling) Cheely. Jim was a depot agent for the Missouri Pacific Railroad and Ray and his family lived in many small towns along the MOPAC line west from Hoisington to Tribune, Kansas.

Ray moved to Great Bend just before his junior year in high school. In the spring of 1970, he dressed in a suit and tie and went down to the local Chrysler dealership, Marmie Motors, where he and his family had been dealing cars since it had opened. Here he applied for an office job, preferably in the accounting end. Eustace Marmie told him that he did not have anything available, but that his accountant, Virgil Belford, might. Ray figured that he would not get the job, so he took off his suit jacket and tie and went for an appointment. Virgil hired him on the spot, recognizing a young budding accountant, or maybe just the fact that he would only have to pay him \$1.25 per hour and he could bill him out at a much higher rate!

Ray met Sheryl Aumiller during Christmas break their senior year in high school. They dated during the rest of high school, college and were married June 26th, 1976, in Great Bend.

Ray and Sheryl both continued working full time while attending Barton County Community College, then later driving back and forth to Hays 2-3 times a week for the next 2 ½ years to attend classes. Ray received his degree in accounting. His accounting instructor, an academic with no practical experience, decided that Ray would never attain

his CPA certificate. Ray reveled in sending him a copy of the newsletter when he became a CPA. Many, in fact most, of Ray's clients did not realize that he was still a student while he was doing all of their accounting.

Ray loved his clients—from the little ol' ladies who he only saw once a year to the budding entrepreneurs that he loved helping grow their business. He had many long-term clients that he had worked with his whole career of 39 tax seasons—all at the same business—the name may have changed, but the business continued. Many of his clients knew Ray went into the office early morning and would call and run by a "what if" question or two or tell him a timely joke. Ray always had time for his clients—including holidays or returning vacation early to help with a business sale. Good, no, great, friends came from these relationships.

Ray worked hard, but he and Sheryl enjoyed life immensely. One of Ray's greatest loves was the Arkansas River. He and Sheryl owned acreage there, the River Ranch. Over the years the River was used for three-wheeling, four-wheeling—both big trucks and UTV's, partying and picnicking with huge bonfires.

He enjoyed it with friends or by himself, on quiet, early mornings, no one else except the turkeys and the deer.



Ray always enjoyed cars—fast ones. He had a bright lime green Dodge SuperBee that was a lot of fun during college. He and Warren Nuss have had a long term friendship and partnership in building and racing all kinds of vehicles—Dodge Hemi Challenger, other muscle cars, a couple of extremely large big trucks (used to rescue people from the Flood of '81, and many a late night rescue of someone stuck in the River), race cars and who knows what all. Their shop was a gathering place for friends. Ray and Sheryl were both on the Board of Directors at the drag strip when it reopened in the early '70's. This was much safer than racing at the five mile line or the Circle K.

Ray also enjoyed target shooting and believed very strongly in the Second Amendment. He was past-President and current Treasurer of the Smith & Wesson Collectors Association. The Association has an annual meeting, bringing together friends from all over the country for a "family reunion". Ray and Sheryl also established the Smith & Wesson Historical Foundation to help preserve the history of Smith & Wesson.



And don't forget the NBA, Noon Basketball League at the Rec. Ray loved it and enjoyed the guys so much. Chuck, you and Steve have to carry on to age 60!

Ray belonged to various civic clubs throughout his career. He was also on the Boards of Directors of several of his clients. Ray actively worked with Gene Stos, another very close friend, on the development of Rainbow Trucking.

Ray and Sheryl worked hard and both were goal-oriented—they worked as a team, always supporting each other, always being there for the other one. One of these goals had been building their dream house. Although they owned the lot for 19 years before they built on it, in 1996 they finally moved



into the house they designed. It, as well as their old house on McKinley, was often the meeting place for friends and acquaintances....Cheely's Bar and Grill was the sign on the back of the bar. Sheryl and Ray loved having friends over for food and drink.

Ray also enjoyed a special relationship with his parents. When Jim was still alive, Ray started a tradition of having coffee every Saturday morning with him. The tradition lived on with Mom unless he was out of town and then he normally made it up later.

Another hobby that Ray and Sheryl shared is antiquing. Ray loved discovering just the perfect piece of late 1800's art glass for Sheryl's collection. Epergnes were his favorite, but bride's baskets and other "perfect" pieces often caught his eye.

Ray had many other hobbies, but most of all he enjoyed his friendships.



Ray is survived by his wife of 33 years, Sheryl Aumiller Cheely; his mother, Ruth Cheely; brother, Ken (Virginia); mother-in-law and father-in-law Don and Dolly Aumiller Kingman, KS; sister-in-law, Linda (Steve) Sebastian; and brother-in-law, Mike (Evie) Aumiller. And brat cat, Gracie.

Memorials may be made to the Golden Belt Community Foundation or the Smith & Wesson Historical Foundation, both in care of the funeral home.

Funeral Services:

First Christian Church
Great Bend, Kansas
Monday, July 27, 2009 at 1:30 p.m.

Officiating Clergy:

The Reverend William F. Johnson

Pall Bearers:

Warren Nuss	Marlyn Poncin
Gene Stos	Steve Sell
David Carroll	Carmen Schmitt

My Love, My Rock, My Life—Sheryl