



## Gary Norman Montgomery

August 4, 1942 - March 5, 2016

Gary Norman Montgomery, a resident of Benicia, California, born August 4, 1942, died peacefully at his home on March 5, 2016, after living as fully as he could with the challenges and trials of pancreatic cancer for two and a half years. A life-long bicyclist, he kept turning the pedals until he couldn't and called himself lucky to have lived as long and full a life as he did.

He recently said, "there are no miracles, except that we exist."

Born in Nashville, Tennessee, Gary was the eldest of five children who became a loving and devoted father, grandfather, and husband. A lifelong learner, he read voraciously across a wide range of ever-evolving interests. He received his bachelors degree in computer science from California State Polytechnic College in 1968, and masters degree in vocational rehabilitation at age 70 (about which he felt particular pride) from California State University San Diego. People knew Gary for his kind and patient nature, sharp and discerning mind, quit wit and will of iron on the bicycling path. He brought the gift of humor to most encounters.

He believed strongly in the importance of education and meaningful work, taking great pleasure in helping others to develop skills and attitudes that would enable and empower them. His first job was delivering newspapers, at age eight and he carried the discipline and work ethic he learned then throughout his long and varied work life. At 17 he joined the United States Air Force, leaving Florida, where the family had resettled, and moving to California where he served in the fire department at March Air Force base from 1960 to 1964. He retired from the State of California in 2012 having worked as a State Hospital and Department of Corrections administrator, peace officer, labor relations representative (on both sides of the table at various times), and correctional counselor. His post-

retirement work was as a social worker in programs serving both homeless and incarcerated populations for the University of California San Diego.

He is survived and remembered by: his wife, of fifteen years, Jady Dederich Montgomery; his son, John Russell Montgomery and daughter, Julie Elizabeth Montgomery, from his first marriage to Sally Tavaglione Wieringa; daughter-in law, Aimee Montgomery; son-in-law, Matt Morbello; grandchildren and step-grandchildren: Perri Montgomery, Jason Diederich, Clio and Dario Morbello; Jaren and Raina Gaines; step-daughter Leda Dederich and partner Andrew Gaines; and by his sisters, Judy Joiner, Beverly Benedix and Vickey Bidwell of Florida. He is preceded in death by his parents, Russell and Evelyn Montgomery and his brother, Tony.

A private Celebration of Life will be held at the family home in Benicia, California. In lieu of flowers, and with profound gratitude, the family asks that donations may be made in Gary's name to Hospice of the East Bay which made Gary's final time the best it could possibly be.