



David "Dave" Robert Chamberlain

October 7, 1943 - March 10, 2026

David "Dave" Robert Chamberlain, 82, passed away peacefully at home on March 10, 2026, leaving behind a legacy of love, joy and kindness. Dave is preceded in death by his loving parents, Walter and Esta Chamberlain.

Dave is survived by the love of his life, his wife, Mary (Russell James), and by his four beloved children: Raylene (Tommy) McLeod, David Jr., Holly, and Dayton; his two devoted stepdaughters; Christy (Doug) Wilkins and Lori (Craig) Grinnell. He is also survived by his siblings Walter "Dick" (Sharon), Rebecca Graham, Douglas (Marty), and Leslie (Bob) Miller-Elbon along with his cherished ten grandchildren, eight step-grandchildren, and twelve great-grandchildren.

Born on October 7, 1943, Dave was raised in the nurturing community of Peoria, Illinois and attended Central High School, class of 1961. His early years were filled with the warmth of a close-knit family. At an early age, Dave developed a deep appreciation of nature and caring for animals. He spent countless hours outdoors at local lakes with a fishing line in the water, patiently waiting and wondering what he might catch. Dave also had a strong creative side. At a young age, he discovered an aptitude for music, sketching and painting. Whether playing the bongos or trombone, or listening to soulful gospel, country classics, or the rock anthems of Fleetwood Mac, Foreigner, and The Eagles, music seemed to feed Dave's soul.

After high school, Dave enlisted in the Army and proudly served his country while stationed in Germany. Following his military service, Dave began a successful career as a skilled tool and die machinist, working at Chip's Tool and Machine Works. Along the way, Dave acquired many other skills, such as drywalling, tiling, carpet installation, and woodworking. One of the most memorable gifts he gave his mother was a beautiful iron candelabra he crafted, which she proudly displayed in her home.

Fatherhood was a role Dave played with dedication. He coached little league, created Christmas magic, and regularly took his four children on camping adventures, making lifetime memories. As Grandpa Dave, he beamed with pride, always available and ready to show up and cheer on his grands and great-grands however he could.

When Dave wasn't working, he spent many years playing in bowling leagues, fishing local waters, while becoming a darn good golfer, enjoying his time with friends in many golf leagues. Not one for sitting idle in retirement, Dave found joy and fulfillment working for the Peoria Park District at Kellogg Golf Course up until June of 2025. Somehow Dave always managed to carve out time to help others, sharing his skills with anyone who needed help with repairs or remodeling. He was quick to jump in and too generous to accept payment. He loved sharing his time and talent.

He thoroughly enjoyed building wooden boats for fishing and remodeling golf carts with his long-time friend Jim. It was this very friend, who invited Dave to join him for a weekend at their lake rental to do some fishing. There he met Jim's sister, Mary, the love of his life. Five months later Dave and Mary were married on December 29, 1994. They built a beautiful life together and enjoyed many seasons in their RV and fishing on the lake. Dave was an adoring and devoted husband for more than 31 years of marriage.

We affectionately remember Dave as the embodiment of friendliness as he never met a stranger. He greeted everyone with a welcoming smile and a happy “how we doing today”. Dave was loving, kind, and humble. He leaves behind shoes too big to be filled. He is so loved and so missed.

Schmidt-Haller Funeral Home is overseeing cremation rites.

There will be no service, as per Dave’s wishes. The family encourages friends and family to post condolences, photos and memories on Dave’s page.

The family would like to thank Dave’s care team from OSF Home Hospice and his caregivers from Stay at Home With Care for the loving and compassionate care they provided to him.

Condolences and memories may be shared through SchmidtHaller.com.

Tribute Wall

CC

“ *Sending deepest condolences to Dave's wife Mary & entire family! One of his caregivers from Stay at Home inc.. 🙏❤️🙏🌹*



CATHY WATSON (CAREGIVER) - March 19 at 02:44 PM

LM

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Leslie Miller - March 15 at 05:56 PM

BK

“ *Mary and Family, May your many fond memories help console you in this sorrowful time.*

Bob Knott - March 15 at 03:56 PM