

formerly of Seneca, KS

Larry J. Schmits, 71, of Shawnee, Kansas died on September 21, 2019 at Advent Health Shawnee Mission Hospital in Shawnee, Kansas.

Larry was born in Seneca, Kansas on February 18, 1948, the oldest child of Alvin (Butch) and Armella Haug Schmits.

Larry attended Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic School and graduated in 1966. He attended Washburn University in Topeka for 2 years and then transferred to the University of Kansas in Lawrence. He graduated with a bachelor of Arts in Anthropology in 1971 and received his master's degree in Anthropology in 1976 both from the University of Kansas.

Larry, by nature, was always very interested in finding out how people used to live with digging for Indian artifacts on his parent's farm as he was growing up. This led him to the study of anthropology and archeology at the university of Kansas. This passion for uncovering evidence of historical times evolved into a participating in many archeological digs including one in France as a graduate student to eventually owning his own archeology company, Environmental Systems Analysis. He ran archeological surveys primarily in Kansas and Missouri. His belief in the importance of preserving historical sites in the Midwest lead him to the Quindaro Site in Kansas City, Kansas. His work to preserve the significance of this location culminated a nation Commemorative in the site eventually being labeled a National Commemorative site. It is considered a great importance to the Quindaro community in recognizing this location as a station on the underground railroad. Because of Larry's enduring interest and extensive research and reading, he became what to many considered a natural Kansas historian.

Larry enjoyed a variety of hobbies throughout his life, including hunting, coin collecting, refinishing antique furniture, rebuilding antique cameras, and reading especially about all aspects of Kansas History. He will be missed by his family, friends and his colleagues.

He was preceded in death by his father Alvin on July 9, 2010.

Larry is survived by his three children, Sarah Schmits of Portland, Oregon, Laura Schmits of Brooklyn, New York and Joseph Schmits of Lenexa. His mother Armella of Seneca, his brother Gene (Candy) Schmits of Seneca, his sisters, Jane (Doug) Smith of Lenexa, Carol Baker of Topeka, Linda (David) Stewart of Lenexa and Donna (Mike) Bacon of Lenexa. He is also survived by 10 nieces and nephews.

A rosary will be prayed at 7 P.M. Thursday, September 26, 2019 at the Lauer Funeral Home in Seneca.

Mass of Christian Burial is on Friday, September 27, 2019 at 11 A.M. at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Seneca.

Memorials can be given in Larry's name to the Kansas State Historical Society and sent in care of his family. To express your sympathy and for more information visit www.lauerfuneralhome.com.