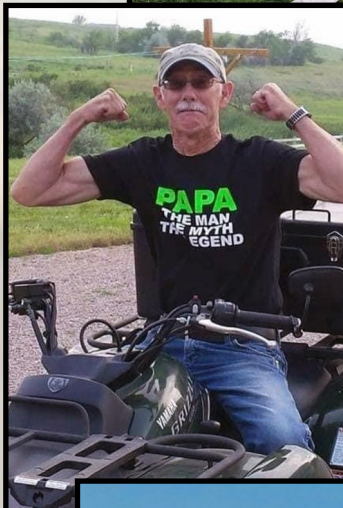
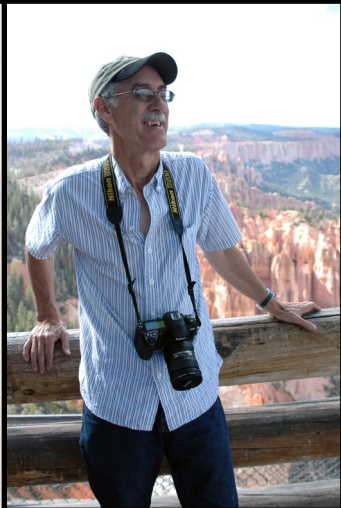




*In Loving
Memory
Of*



*William
“Bill”
Lyons*



June 28, 1945 ~ November 11, 2020

Fly with the Angels Papa



William 'Bill' Lyons, 75, of Sturgis, SD, got his permanent wings on November 11, 2020.

Bill was born June 28, 1945, to Marjorie and Ervin Lyons at Belle Fourche, SD. He spent his childhood having fun with lots of siblings and friends around the Belle Fourche, Fruitdale, and Sturgis area. When he was 4, he faintly remembers riding in the snowplow through a blizzard to get to the Deadwood hospital to treat an acute appendicitis. Many of his most cherished childhood memories were spending summers at his grandparent's ranch, which they had homesteaded near Redig, SD. Here he learned about work, hunting, and getting along with his sister! He attended school in Belle Fourche, Fruitdale, and later at Sturgis.

At age 6, Bill was fascinated with flying and built his first balsa wood glider. If anything had wings, he would fly it! Bill was always scrawny, but he worked hard in wrestling, which came in handy when he had to come to that same sister's defense. Those bullies found out he was strong, mean, and lean, and they never messed with either of them again. During his high school years, Bill did the normal stuff, like syphoning gas from cars so he and his friends could drive around, "borrowed" carburetors and other car parts to make another one run, and try to meet girls at the dances at Whitewood.

Bill met and fell in love with a special young woman, Karen Borup. But the Vietnam War was brewing, so he elected to join the Navy in 1965. Even though Bill was never on a ship, he worked as an Aviation Electronics Technician fixing electronics for communication on Whidbey Island, WA. He was also stationed in Saigon, where he was a replacement guard at the officer's hotel. He never thought he was in harm's way; but he could see where the previous soldier had been killed, so he stacked the sandbags a little higher. On the weekends, he would go to the beach, and in true Lyons' style, hung out with the girls! During his stint in the Navy, the love letters continued between Karen and Bill, and in 1969 he was honorably discharged. They married on January 30, 1971, and were blessed with two great kids, Dennis and Laura. The couple raised their family in Sturgis and then moved east of Bear Butte, where they lived for several years.

Bill had endless hobbies. He was an avid CB radio operator, hunter, loved 4-wheeling in his '75 yellow Jeep and '65 "Ol' Black" Ford. He belonged to the Black Hills 4-Wheelers, and especially enjoyed Christmas tree hunting in the hills. He reloaded ammo, loved hunting at the ranch, woodworking, and being with family. As an electrician, he had some odd quirks...like zapping his fingers with the "starter" for a grill, just because it "felt cool." He could make anything run, whether it was electrical or mechanical. If it were just plain old, he would design and make a new part.

In 1983, with Kip Matkin's training, Bill fulfilled his lifelong dream to become a pilot. He belonged to the Bear Butte Flying Club for many years and served as their secretary. He introduced kids to flying and took many on their first airplane ride, where they got their "Young Eagle" certificate. He bought his rainbow-colored Sunburst ultralight in 1984 (Karen called it his flying death trap), rebuilt it, and flew it well over 1000 hours. He said it made him feel "free" and loved the sound of the engine... He was especially excited when he got to land on the parade field at Fort Meade. Many people of Sturgis remember him flying the ultralight. He had a camera mounted to its wing, and every time he wanted to take another picture, he would have to land, advance the film, and then take off again. There were no digital retakes in those days. His aerial photos are on display at the National Cemetery at Sturgis, as well as at the front entrance to VA at Fort Meade and Rapid City. His "Balloon" picture is one of the employees' favorite *Dakota Magazine* did a special

edition on aviation, including an interview with Bill and his ultralight. He was so proud. He loved flying people, and his Cessna log books show over 1000 hrs. They loved seeing their property from the air, flying over the hills, or just flying to Wall, SD, for breakfast.

For 36 years, he was employed by the VAHCS at Fort Meade, starting in the kitchen and working his way up quickly to being an electrician. He loved working at Fort Meade. For several years he designed and built blanket/toy chests to be raffled off for the employee association. He was a self-taught woodworker, machinist, mechanic (with lessons from high school years, no doubt!), photographer, and enjoyed playing ping pong. He loved to work on computers, overhaul engines, fly airplanes, gliders, remote control airplanes, and helicopters...the list is endless.

Tragically in May of 1999, Karen passed away in a car accident, which devastated him, their family, and the entire community. His friends helped him through that awful time, and he was always grateful to them for the strength and love to help him and his family to press on and heal.

He met one more love, Pierrette Nissen, (me) at the end of June 2001. It was a blind date... He was blind, and I was his date! Honestly, I could hardly see through his super thick yellow aviator glasses to see them. He was so patient and so wonderful to everyone he met. We decided to take it slow, but then he got new glasses, the bird of paradise landed, and we got married in July 2002. On that day, he gained two more daughters who loved him like no other. We enjoyed doing everything together, from shooting prairie dogs to camping in the Big Horns. After Bill retired, we drove to Alaska with the highlight of flying and landing on Ruth Glacier on Denali.

He was the best person in the world. I am honored to be just one of his "loves." Bill was diagnosed with Parkinson's, Parkinson's Dementia, Lewy Body, and a myriad of other dis-eases. He peacefully passed to his next adventure on November 11, 2020 - Veterans Day.

He was always a true gentle-man and lived and loved life to the fullest. He showed that the heart is able to love **many** people equally. Hopefully, all of us can learn that as well.

Bill Lyons is survived by his mother, Marjorie of Rapid City; his wife, Pierrette, of Sturgis; his son, Dennis (partner Carol) of Rapid City; his daughter, Laura (Ramsey) Adham of Brentwood, CA; his daughter, Lisa Nissen of Waynesboro, VA; grandchildren, Lexi (Garrett) Fedora of Hill City, Hayden Eakins, Hatya and Ethan Lucas all of Brentwood, CA; 1 great-grandson, William Fedora; siblings, Jan (Michael) Meyer of Black Hawk; James (Glennette) Lyons of Faith; Kenny (Rebecca) Lyons of Onida; John, David, Robert Lyons all of Sturgis, Tammy (Gary) Karli of Sahuarita AZ, many nieces and nephews, cousins and of course the ultralight!

Bill was preceded in death by his father, Ervin, his first wife Karen, and daughter Stephanie Nissen.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.kinkadefunerals.com.

