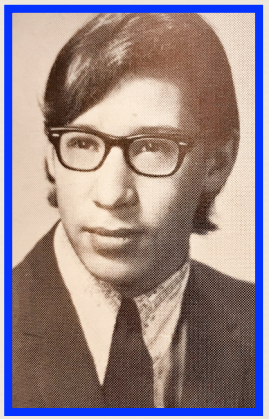


Shakopee's yearbook, *Waniyetu,* included pictures of George Meredith Crooks, who graduated in 1972.







On August 22, 1954, in Yellow Medicine, Minnesota, George Meredith Crooks was born to Norman Melvin Crooks and Edith Eleanor Ross Crooks. He was the second youngest of their seven sons. During his childhood, George's family lived in Granite Falls and Mendota before moving to the Twin Cities.

George attended Shakopee Senior High, where he graduated in 1972.

He continued his education at Dakota County Technical College. George worked many jobs over the years. He worked for Cargill before becoming a surveyor and in casino management as part of Little Six, Inc. in Prior Lake. Little Six Casino is owned and operated by the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) in Prior Lake, southwest of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. The casino features slots and live dealer blackjack tables. With 4,100 employees, the SMSC, Mystic Lake Casino Hotel, and Little Six Casino combined are the largest employer in Scott County.

In 1979, George married Kim Cerise. George and Kim had two daughters, Rebecca and Tyanna. Although George and Kim parted ways, he remained a loving and dedicated father.

George later married Kathleen McElligott and was blessed with Samantha. While George and Katie ended their marriage, they remained close friends.

A charismatic man, George lived his life surrounded by those he loved — his family, friends, and pets. He laughed easily, loved deeply, and always treated others with kindness. No matter the situation, George was ready with a joke or a one-liner. His dry sense of humor even influenced the names of his pets… his golden retriever John "after the son he never had," as well as Rat and Ricky, his beloved cats.

In his free time, George enjoyed golfing, visiting the casino, and boating along the Minnesota River. He especially enjoyed time with his grandchildren.

Maureen McElligott noted, "George was an easy to love kind of guy, sense of humor and his jokes is something I will always remember about him."

"I have been living with him for the last four years. And during those four years we grew to become very close friends. The pain I feel inside is deep. I learned a lot about who your father really was as a human being. And he was and always will be the most kind-hearted and non-judgmental person I've ever had the pleasure of knowing. I am truly blessed for having had the great honor and pleasure of being able to share that little part of his life with me," Michael Emerson noted.

At age 67, George Meredith Crooks journeyed to the Spirit World on Monday, January 10, 2022. George was laid to rest at the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Cemetery. Pallbearers were Mike Crooks, Skipper Crooks, Randy Crooks, Jacob Crooks, Damian Redlegs, Timmy McElligott, Eric Svane, and Larry "Stu" Housley.

After struggling with complications of COVID-19, George left his family's side too soon. Yet he leaves an enduring legacy with his daughters, Rebecca (Dan) Crooks-Stratton, Tyanna (Damian) Crooks, Samantha (Dever) Crooks; grandchildren, Gabby, Lauren, Thomas, and Dire; brothers, Danny "Skipper" Crooks and Mike Crooks; many other loving relatives and friends.

George is preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Norman "Woody" Crooks, Stanley "Jim" Crooks, Alfred Crooks, and infant brother, Alec Crooks.

Classmate Tom Rust recalled, "I am sorry that he had COVID and was unable to continue creating memories with his friends and family. However, he will not be forgotten

since he has family and friends to remember him."

Mario Hudson said that George "didn't know how to say no to anyone. He would let anyone lay their head at his home and didn't want anything in return. George and I had a REAL friendship that I'll never be able to experience or duplicate again in my lifetime."

Gary Spohn said George was a kind, true friend, mentor, and so much more. "You touched so many of our lives in such a positive way. I've never met a more kind and generous person than you. I will never forget about all the conversations we had sitting in your office passing on your wisdom to me."







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George Meredith Crooks

1954-2022

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