



Aaron Gay Swift

November 9, 1953 - May 2, 2019

Aaron "Gay" Swift, 65, passed away Thursday, May 2nd at home under the care of Hospice of South Georgia while surrounded by loved ones. Gay is survived by his mother, Delores Swift, his children, Jessica Swift, Jared Swift, Shannon Baughman, Joshua Agner; his grandchildren, Zack Baughman, Zane Baughman, Caleb Baughman, Jace Agner, his brother, Bruce Swift, his sisters, Karen Wieland, and Leah Davis. He is predeceased by his father, Leon "Red" Swift.

Gay was born in Madison, FL on November 9, 1953 to Red and Delores Swift. Gay was named after an Air Force buddy of his dad's, named Gaylord "" long before the term "'gay' had its current day meaning. As a young man being introduced to a girlfriend's father, the man heard the name "'Gay' and asked "Well, are you?" . Gay answered, "Kiss me and you'll find out" .

Gay served in the U.S. Coast Guard during the Vietnam conflict where he lost an eye. He was known for making light of his disability; when he became a CB operator, he took on the CB handle, "Deadeye." As a Madison County Sheriff's Deputy working at the jail, he popped out his glass eye and told a prisoner "I'm going to keep an eye on you while I'm gone" .

His personality amplified the joy he got from taking his prosthetic eye out during get-togethers and jokingly telling the attending children, "Here's looking at you!"

In 1978, Gay joined the Madison County Sheriff's Department after being dual certified as both a correctional officer and law officer. Gay was a part of the

Valverde drug bust in 1985, helping secure funds that would acquire Madison County's first k-9 drug dog. He was the first drug dog handler for the Sheriff's Department and had to learn German commands in order to train and control his K-9 partner, Lord Van Lingerhand.

In addition to his other accomplishments and contributions, Gay became scuba certified and assisted the Sheriff's Department with underwater rescues. After serving 25 years as Captain and Chief Jailer, he retired in 2003.

Upon retirement from the Sheriff's Department, Gay worked for the City of Lee as well as Madison Blue Springs State Park while spending time creating his beautiful wood work. Other hobbies included cross-stitching, billiards, model-airplane building, and hunting.

Gay was a devoted son, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, and friend. Even though he was robbed by Alzheimer's, his affectionate personality shined through, making those around him belly laugh with his stories.

A Graveside service will be held Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at Macedonia Baptist Church Cemetery at 10:00 AM.

Visitation will be Monday from 5:00-8:00 pm at Beggs Madison Chapel.