



Ernest "Ernie" Irwin Shelton

March 3, 1945 - January 24, 2025

Ernest Irwin Shelton, age 79, of Des Moines, Iowa passed away peacefully from Alzheimer's with family by his side, January 17, 2025.

Ernie was born March 3, 1945, in North Kansas City, Missouri to Malcolm and Dorothy Shelton. He was the third son of 4 brothers: Gary, Jim, Ernie and Joe. He grew up in an inventive family building forts, climbing trees, and riding bikes in an attempt to stay out of trouble with whatever big ideas were dreamt up. Ernie knew he was artistic at a young age.

Ernie married Deloris Jean High in 1966 and graduated from the Kansas City Art Institute in the spring of 1969. He soon began his career at Meredith Corporation in Des Moines where he and Deloris welcomed their daughter, Alicia Anne, in October 1969.

Ernie worked for Meredith Corporation for 26 years, starting his career with Better Homes & Gardens Magazine and climbed to Art Director for the BH&G book department for the last 18 years. Upon leaving Meredith in 1995, he opened Shelton Design Studios and did a variety of freelance graphic work, illustration and book design until retiring.

A devastating turn of health events lead to Deloris' early passing. Ernie was fortunate and blessed to find love again in 1985 and married Peg Van Gorp in

1990, becoming a caring step-dad to Peg's two daughters, Kari and Amy. There were many fun adventures over the years raising three teenage girls.

Ernie was a true creative and good at nearly everything he tried. Whether it was sports or the arts he would work to master every new challenge. He was an artist at heart and loved taking classes at the DSM Art Center, painting and drawing in his home studio, and building in the garage.

All his life Ernie was a natural athlete. He was a runner participating in fun runs, triathlons and marathons, including the Boston Marathon. He ran Dam to Dam for years and designed the original logo in 1980. Ernie played racquetball and handball in his younger years and was fantastic at tennis until he retired his tennis racquet in 2021. He and Peg even tried their hand at rowing with the Des Moines Rowing Club. Ernie took up golf in the 90s and loved that too. He and Peg loved cycling together and spent countless hours riding their bikes and in spinning classes. They enjoyed many biking trips over the years with friends and family, including Ragbrai. Ernie also enjoyed yoga, photography, movies, theatrical arts, reading, music, playing the piano, dancing and being with family. He truly embraced life and all the fun activities that came with it.

Ernie is survived by his wife, Peg; daughters, Alicia (Jason) VanAusdall, Kari (Ron) Dorrian, and Amy (Chad) Larson; grandchildren, Bryan (Hannah) Dorrian, Dallas (Jessica) Dorrian, Harry (Sara) VanAusdall, Max (Erick) VanAusdall, Allison Dorrian, Grace and Anna Larson; great-grandchildren, Jaxson, Hayven & Graham VanAusdall and Wesley Dorrian; brothers, Joe (Cindy) Shelton, Jim Shelton, and sister-in-law Linda Shelton (Gary's wife); brother-in-law Bill (Judy) Reiff and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents Malcolm and Dorothy, his first wife Deloris, his eldest brother Gary Shelton, sister-in-law Mary Alys (Jim, deceased) Cornils; brothers-in-law James Reiff and Robert (Pat, surviving) Reiff.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Alzheimer's Association Des Moines Area Chapter (alz.org/iowa), Count the Kicks (countthekicks.org) or a charity of your choice.

Family and friends are invited to a Celebration of Life on Saturday, February 1, from 3 pm - 5 pm at the Hyperion Field Club, 7390 NW Beaver Drive in Johnston. Social time will begin at 3pm and end with a short program. Anyone that would like to share a memory or story from Ernie's beautiful life is invited to do so.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Gathering

FEB 1. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

Hyperion Field Club
7390 NW Beaver Drive
Johnston, IA 50131

Celebration of Life Service

FEB 1. 5:00 PM - 5:30 PM (CT)

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7390 NW Beaver Drive
Johnston, IA 50131