



## LeRoy Carpenter

July 1, 1946 - January 24, 2007

LeRoy Duane Carpenter, 60, of Glendive, Montana died January 19, 2007 at the Glendive Medical Center. A Life Tribute Service will be held at 2:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 24, 2007, in the Chapel of the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home with Celebrant Sandy Silha officiating. Interment will be in the Dawson Memorial Cemetery in Glendive with the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive entrusted with the arrangements. Leroy was born on July 1, 1946 in Glendive, Montana the son of Edward and Mary Lou (Albright) Carpenter. He was raised and educated in Glendive. After high school, LeRoy served in the United States Army in Germany. Following his discharge from the military, LeRoy traveled extensively while working construction and as a "roughneck" in the oilfield. LeRoy returned to Glendive in 1976 where he resided until the time of his death. He loved the sport of boxing, enjoyed horses and panning for gold in the mountains. Survivors include a son, Fred Carpenter and his wife April of Glendive; four daughters, Lynn Anne Bain and her husband Travis of Richey, Montana, Gina Conner of Virginia, Christy Conner of Casper, Wyoming, and Roxie Conner of Thermopolis, Wyoming; two step-sons, Terry Bunch of Billings, Montana and Eric Schuler of Miles City, Montana; a sister, Connie Schaaf and her husband Loren of Glendive; a brother, Charley Carpenter and his wife Judy of Lander, Wyoming; an aunt and uncle, Fred and Adeline Carpenter of Glendive; two grandchildren, Trace William Bain and Casey Stephen Carpenter; and a special buddy "Dayton" and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. LeRoy was preceded in death by his parents

and one son, Clay Carpenter. Celebrant Service: A wise man wrote these next words: "The value of a life cannot be judged by the words that pass our lips. It isn't what we say. Nor can the value be based on belief systems, accepted or rejected. It isn't what we believe. The value cannot be determined by the work we do, no matter how successful. It isn't what we do. Our value is found in the person we become. It is the "who we are" that matters. The kindness that does not need to be turned on, And just seems to be there. The honesty that happens without thought, And is the expected response. The acceptance of others without conditions, And no one is surprised. The love that loves in spite of and through it all, And is as natural as breath. These are the values of life." (The Value of Life by Doug Manning) LeRoy Duane Carpenter's life had value to his family and to his friends, to those of you here today. Many of you have stories about LeRoy and your experiences with him. The stories and memories we will share during our time together today, have come from LeRoy's family. Although you won't hear some of the "wilder" stories, suffice it is to say, as LeRoy's sister Connie commented, "LeRoy liked to have fun". If you would like to spend more time viewing the memory board that is filled with pictures from throughout LeRoy's life, it will be set up at the tribute center during the reception. The hat LeRoy is holding is one that was special to him. The music chosen for LeRoy's life tribute service has a country flavor to it, because that's what LeRoy liked. LeRoy's brother, Charley Carpenter, suggested the first song you will hear today. This song was first written and sung by Vince Gill for his step-brother's funeral, but seems to have meaning for many who have suffered the loss of a loved one. Let us listen to Vince Gill's "Go Rest High On That Mountain." Song: "Go Rest High On That Mountain" by Vince Gill Celebrant: Eulogy LeRoy had a couple things that were constants in his life. One constant being his uncle, Fred Carpenter and his aunt, Adeline Carpenter, and the family farm south of Bloomfield, Montana. LeRoy grew up in a family that moved around frequently. Uncle Fred and Auntie Adeline provided a secure place, the farm, for LeRoy and his sister, Connie, and brother, Charley, to spend summers and extended periods of

time. Uncle Fred's and Auntie Adeline's farming and ranching operation provided many opportunities for work, play, and adventures. As a young boy, LeRoy would ride on the tractor all day with his uncle on a seat Uncle Fred had put on the side of the tractor. When LeRoy would nod off to a nap, Uncle Fred would cover him with a blanket and continue on around the fields. As LeRoy grew older, he learned to drive the tractor and work those same fields for his uncle. Uncle Fred always had cows, horses, goats, and chickens, so there were always chores for LeRoy, Connie and Charley to do. They even raised an orphaned antelope during one of their stays. And the children rode every animal there was, horses, cattle, goats. Many memories were made with Uncle Fred and Auntie Adeline out on the farm. They and the farm was where LeRoy's heart was. As a young adult, LeRoy went out and about in the world trying different things, but at about age 30, LeRoy returned to Glendive, where he stayed, close to family and the farm he loved and enjoyed. Uncle Fred was so highly regarded by LeRoy, that Leroy named one of his sons after his uncle. If you viewed the memory board, many of the pictures, of young LeRoy, also have a horse in the picture. Horses were another constant throughout LeRoy's life. Out on the farm, young LeRoy had a horse named Penny, and Charley rode a Shetland pony, named Happy. Charley recalls Uncle Fred taking he and LeRoy up and down the steepest hills they could find, making sure the boys could stay with their horses. LeRoy liked to run his horse and was always able to stay in control of a horse. One distinct memory Charley has of riding was of heading across a pasture and having to cross some water. Charley recalls getting into the middle of the water and it was then Happy decided to lie down. As Happy went down, Charley stepped off, filling his new boots with water as he walked to the edge. LeRoy went into the water, got Happy up, and rode Happy out of the water, kicking the horse as they went until they were on dry land. So Charley tried, once more, going through the water, and again, Happy decided to lie down in the water and no amount of kicking by Charley could dissuade Happy from lying down and

making Charley dismount. Charley's kicks just didn't have the same message in them as LeRoy's. As an adult, LeRoy spent much of his spare time on horseback out on the farm. He also had a horse he kept in town during his later years. Many of us can still picture LeRoy and his horse making their way around the streets of Glendive. If you lived here in the early 80's, you may recall LeRoy riding his horse downtown to the Lulhaven and tying the horse up outside. That picture made the local newspaper. Once, after having too much fun with his friends downtown, LeRoy got a citation from local police while riding home one evening. But when he got to court and the judge read the ordinance LeRoy was charged with breaking, it was determined the horse had a mind of its own and would not endanger itself. LeRoy was just an innocent rider. During their growing up years, LeRoy was a true older brother. Connie remembers him teasing and picking on her and Charley. LeRoy called the shots. One such time was in their teen years. LeRoy had gotten a Harley Davidson Motorcycle. He took it apart, cleaned it up, painted it shamrock green and put it all back together. But LeRoy couldn't get the motorcycle to start. He decided to get it rolling down a hill and pop the clutch to get it running. But this was not successful, so he had Charley and another boy push it up the hill to try it again. And down LeRoy went again. And up went Charlie pushing. Several tries later it still would not start. Charley wonders to this day how LeRoy got him to do these types of things. It was that big brother persona that LeRoy had. Part of it might have been, though, that LeRoy was, as his sister Connie states, just tough. LeRoy started boxing at the Glendive Elks Club and became part of their team. He competed in Golden Gloves matches in one of the lightweight divisions and was so quick and good, he became one of Montana's top boxers, going on to win second at the nationals. This competition occurred when LeRoy was officially too young to be competing. His mother and coach unofficially made him older so he could compete. LeRoy's second place at nationals came at the hands of a boxer who broke LeRoy's nose early in the match and then, kept hitting LeRoy's broken nose, getting the win. LeRoy also boxed in the Army. During the Viet Nam era,

LeRoy was stationed in Germany in an artillery unit as a mechanic. Much of his Army time was spent representing the Army, boxing in matches against the other armed forces boxing teams. LeRoy had his nose broken so many times while boxing that there was a certain spot on his nose that if you hit it even slightly, his nose would bleed. LeRoy's son, Fred, remembers his dad letting him hit his dad's nose making it bleed and then telling Fred how tough a kid he was. That always made young Fred feel good. LeRoy taught his son, Fred, to box. Fred recalls being one of the younger kids and getting beat by the bigger, older kids on a regular basis. As Fred got older, he began sparring with LeRoy, and thinking he was pretty good. One day, thinking his dad was going all out against him, Fred challenged how hard LeRoy was hitting him. LeRoy told Fred to put his hands up in front of his face and he, LeRoy, would hit show him a hard hit. After picking himself up out of the ropes, Fred realized he was highly outmatched. Another thing LeRoy loved was practical jokes. LeRoy's daughter, Lynn, and son, Fred, both recall many instances LeRoy pulled a good joke on them. One morning, LeRoy was cooking breakfast, and tried to convince them that they were eating sausage, when in fact they were eating cow brains he had fried up. One taste of that was enough for both Fred and Lynn to be skeptics. Another joke was convincing Fred that the NASA astronaut of the day, Scott Carpenter, was a relative. Fred went to school bragging and telling everyone that story. But Lynn and Fred do have a little of LeRoy in them, as payback was planned and executed. They baked up some exlax brownies for their dad, with Lynn telling LeRoy that the chunks of exlax were pieces of chocolate that didn't melt. They got LeRoy good! Other memories of times shared with their father was of going camping. LeRoy would take Fred, Lynn and other family members out to the farm by Bloomfield and they would ride horse to one of the pastures that had corrals, and set up camp. There was a tent to sleep in but LeRoy always slept by the fire, under the stars. Camping was also involved in LeRoy's favorite pastime of panning for gold. LeRoy had staked a claim on government land in the mountains near Big Timber, Montana. LeRoy, young Fred, and other family members, would

pack up the horses and walk over twenty miles into the mountains where the claim was located. Camp would be set up and days were spent panning the creek for gold. LeRoy generally would come out with several medicines bottles filled with gold dust. Their gold panning trips were in August, and one year was quite miserable as they got caught in an early snow storm. Another memory of these trips was an old abandoned gold mine on the way to the claim. Fool's gold was piled by the entrance to the mine. LeRoy convinced Fred the fool's gold was real. Fred excitedly loaded up with the fool's gold and took it home and to school, only to be disappointed when his teacher explained what it really was. Young Fred recalls the times when LeRoy worked and lived out in the oil patch. When Fred wasn't in school, he too lived in the oil patch with his family. A break from work in the patch meant a camping trip for LeRoy and his family. He borrowed a friend's boat and the family went camping at Lake Sakajawea in North Dakota. They were several miles out on the water, with LeRoy driving the boat, when the engine quit. Fred clearly remembers his dad, throwing the mooring rope over his shoulder and swimming into shore, towing the boat, with his family in it. Fred was always impressed with how tough his Dad was. But for all his toughness, LeRoy, like all of us, had his weaknesses too. Part of love is acceptance and an ability to love in spite of and through all things. LeRoy's family has done that. They found value in LeRoy and experienced the significance he brought to their lives. They accepted who he was and they honor and pay tribute to LeRoy today. Let us now listen to a song by George Jones entitled "Walk Through This World With Me." Song: "Walk Through This World With Me" by George Jones. Celebrant: Closing About eight months ago, doctors diagnosed LeRoy as having two to six months to live. When LeRoy was home and sick, auntie Adeline, Connie, and daughter-in-law, April, took turns looking after LeRoy and taking food over for him. Connie tells that LeRoy was a very good cook and when she would take over a food he especially liked, such as a corn salad, LeRoy would want all the details of the recipe. And when he was

feeling better, LeRoy would cook dishes such as borscht soup or a new casserole share it with her. For his family and for LeRoy this was a special time. Relationships were re-established, conversations shared and time was spent together. LeRoy became phone buddies with April, and she found him to be a good listener. LeRoy was able to spend some quality time with his grandson, Fred and April's boy, Casey. April tells that LeRoy and Casey had their own special game they would play, that only they understood. Casey is not a child that enjoys being touched, but the last time he was with LeRoy, Casey put his nose up to LeRoy's and kissed his grandfather several times. Casey had never done that and LeRoy was quite excited about the show of affection. But LeRoy always enjoyed children. When Connie's daughter, Donna Emmett was small, she was having trouble learning to tie her shoes. Uncle LeRoy showed her how. And LeRoy found a special buddy in Donna's son, Dayton. Whenever Dayton would come to visit LeRoy with Connie or Donna, LeRoy would give Dayton a rock to take home. Soon Dayton had a big pile of rocks outside his home from LeRoy and, soon, LeRoy had no more rocks to give Dayton, so one day, he sent home a cake mix with Dayton. That was a hard one to figure out. When LeRoy went into the hospital, Dayton would visit LeRoy, bringing a rock to LeRoy. What this all meant is something that was understood between Dayton and LeRoy. But a giving and sharing was happening between the two buddies. And their giving and sharing had importance and value to both LeRoy and Dayton. A couple days before he died, LeRoy's daughter, Lynn and her husband Travis, had their first child, a boy named Trace. Trace did not get to meet his grandfather. Trace will have to get to know LeRoy from the stories and memories of family members. That is how we keep someone alive, by sharing memories and stories about them. And it is in the sharing that we can gain a new appreciation for the value of their life and its significance to our own. There are many stories to be told and retold, shared and discussed about LeRoy Carpenter. It is in the stories of LeRoy's life and in the sharing of tears and laughter that comfort will be found. Every life has value. Every life touches other lives. During his life, LeRoy

Carpenter, touched your life just as you touched his. The family invites everyone to leave their handprint on LeRoy's casket, to mingle with the touch of family and friends as a final good-bye and tribute to LeRoy Carpenter. After our final song "Amazing Grace" you will be ushered from your seat and are welcome to come forward to place your touch with LeRoy. Thank you for your presence here today. Song: "Amazing Grace" by Willie Nelson

# Tribute Wall



“ *LeRoy Carpenter*

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