

## **Former Waterford resident and Vietnam veteran, 64, faced adversity with a smile**

Armed with a mix of dry wit and sarcasm, former Oakland County resident Lawrence “Larry” W. Klein, 64, fought a hard but short fight against cancer to the very end, a true testament to his strong yet humble character, his daughter said.

Klein had a simple, unwavering philosophy in life, family members say - such as that beer should always be cold, that BBQ should be tastefully burnt, and if all else fails, order a pizza. In his younger days, the man with a penchant for Hawaiian shirts and Sam’s Club cargo shorts played football for Pontiac Catholic High School, for which he received an All-State award from University of Michigan’s late, great Bo Schembechler. He never asked for any special recognition of his U.S. Army service during the Vietnam War, and he then gave his sweat to General Motors for 34 years before retiring to the sunny climes of Lakeland, Fla., home of the Detroit Tigers’ spring training complex.

But Klein was a husband and father first and foremost, raising his family of two girls, Kari and Katie, with Angela, his wife of 41 years, in Waterford. He is also survived by sister Patricia, grandchildren Mae, Halle and Harrison - as well as his cherished silver 2004 Z06 Corvette.

Klein was the epitome of suburban fatherhood; drinking beer (cold beer, remember), watching NASCAR, scratching his head over crossword puzzles and shuttling his family through motor-home vacations and epic camping adventures.

Though Klein would often express that his cancer “really sucks,” nothing prevented his gratitude from shining forth. He thanked every doctor, nurse and caregiver that tended to his illness, finding humor during the darkest times since grieving simply was not the Klein Way. One Lakeland doctor who cared for Klein was so touched by the dying soldier’s bravery that he personally reached out to the family to express his awe at how his patient was “facing death with a smile and above all a great sense of humor.”

Klein will be laid to rest at Holly’s Great Lakes National Cemetery, 4200 Belford Road, on Nov. 17 during a 1 p.m. service. A “Toast to Larry” event will follow at 2:30 p.m. in Waterford with more details forthcoming.