



## David OBrien Potter

November 16, 1948 - March 17, 2016

David OBrien Potter, 67, passed away peacefully at home on March 17, 2016. He was born on November 16, 1948, in Banner Elk, North Carolina, son of Stover OBrien Potter and Betty Lou Jones Potter. He spent a number of sweet early years growing up with his maternal grandparents, David and Minnie Jones, on their mountaintop farm in Roan Mountain, Tennessee. There, Dave learned many of the values that guided the rest of his life: the benefit of work, the responsibility of honor, the importance of truth, trust in God, and love for the people around him. Those pastoral days also carved a deep poetic gentleness in him that helped him to see beauty in the created world—nature, wildlife, the rush of a waterfall, the song of a bird.

By high school, Dave returned to his nuclear family in Hammond, Indiana, and lived with his parents, and two sisters, and although he loved them, never felt like he quite fit. After high school, he attended both Purdue and Vincennes Universities, where he earned his amateur pilot's license, then worked a short time at J&L Steel, and eventually enlisted in the Army during the Vietnam war. The years he spent in military service changed his life forever. His intelligence and capability saw him recruited to elite units like Special Forces, Special Operations, and the Army Security Agency. The missions he undertook for them, many of them under the cover of anonymity, led him to dark and dangerous places—places from which he was sometimes the only one to return.

But he did return. And God had plans for him. When he came home, Dave

went to work as an electronics technician first for Powers Regulator, then as a design engineer for Motorola, where he spent more than twenty years, earning at least three patents and helping to design the first microwave oven and the first automotive electronic ignition and fuel injection systems. He met JoAnne in 1974, they married in 1978, moved into a house he built himself in Lake Villa, IL, and their son Bryan was born in 1979.

Those good years went by fast, marked by not only career successes, but the rush of starting his own design firm, building and running race cars, and the joy of bringing up a son. In 1991, Dave and JoAnne bought 40 acres in Richland Center, WI and the family moved there in 1998. Shortly afterward, Dave began to work for Nicolet Instruments in Madison, where he stayed until 2009.

Dave bore the last years of his life, marked by the progressive ravage of illnesses, with the same courage and humor that he'd lived by all his prior years. He did not always take himself seriously, but he always took the act of living seriously. He believed that what we do on this earth matters, that it is our obligation to the Creator who gave us life to live it with honor and courage according to His law. As son, soldier, husband, father, and man of God, he determined to do this and never faltered.

Dave is survived by his wife, JoAnne, his sisters Audrey Norris and Jean Potter, his son Bryan, his stepson, Richard Stoehr (Judi), three step-granddaughters, a plethora of Southern cousins, and more friends than any of us can count.

Funeral services will be held 11AM Saturday, March 26, 2016 at Grace Community Church, 23291 Co. Hwy AA, Richland Center, followed by a luncheon at Clary Funeral Home, 26777 Jelland Drive, Richland Center. Friends may call at the church beginning at 10AM. Those wanting to make financial memorials can do so either to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, <http://www.vfw.org/>, or Casa Hogar Juan Pablo II orphanage, Lima, Peru, [www.homeajpm.org/](http://www.homeajpm.org/) .



# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR **26**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Grace Community Church  
23291 County HWY AA  
Richland Center, WI 53581

## Funeral Service

MAR **26**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Grace Community Church  
23291 County HWY AA  
Richland Center, WI 53581

# Tribute Wall

BM

“ *Joanne - the years I spent working with Dave at Nicolet were ones that I enjoyed very much. The topics of discussion when not work related were very interesting and his love of Jesus was very evident. He often spoke of the plans for the orphanage that you supported. Dave will be missed. - Bart and Angie Morrnick*

**Bart Morrnick** - March 26, 2016 at 09:39 AM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of David OBrien Potter.*



March 21, 2016 at 04:47 PM

LM

“ *Dear Joanne, My sympathy in your loss. Loretta McCarthy*

**Loretta R McCarthy** - March 20, 2016 at 06:41 AM

WF

“ *With love....Maggie and your Reno Family..... purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of David OBrien Potter.*



**With love....Maggie and your Reno Family.....** - March 18, 2016 at 01:39 PM