REMEMBERING

Andrew Allan Balcom

February 28, 1944 - December 17, 2020

Andy was a faithful and true Kimberley lad, making his first historical mark on February 28th, 1944 arriving as a wee preemie, 18 minutes shy of being crowned a leap year baby.

An elaborate story that Andy never wavered on when recounting his early school days, was he never missed a recess. Living on Mill Road offered distractions abound, nothing could deter the search for pond creatures, the beckoning call of the trains, the shrill of saws from the mill, and the route to school was never trudged the same as the day prior. Andy boasted about an old vehicle (I think it was an old willys jeep) on the Mill's property, he put more miles on it than it actually had when running. Quite often Mr. Fabro would pause and chat with the boys, reminding them of off limits and safety, and of course they respected that rule.

Andy packed up some basics, not long after graduation and ventured to the coast. He started apprenticing in plumbing, pipefitting, and steam fitting, he accomplished a Red Seal in all 3.

6 years ago, Andy boarded a Vancouver bound flight, all gussied up, sporting a fresh haircut, finely trimmed beard and mustache, and shaped brows. As an attendee at the UA 170 (United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters) banquet/recognition awards night, he appeared to be 6 feet tall while accepting a Caravelle Bulova watch for being a 50-year member, and last year received a 55-year gold ring. Real gold!! Not pounded down, misshapen chunk of brass, that often found its way into an unsuspecting visitor's gold pan.

Andy had a mechanical aorta heart valve for 17 years, it was a noisy thing, clicking and ticking to no particular beat, he claimed that it was many times successful in keeping venison out of the freezer. It had the capability of soothing babies and youngsters, (must add kittens, too). The second replacement was bovine (sounds better than cow) tissue, with the same surgeon that conduct the first performance. Andy was a hockey fan, (never swaying his dedication for the biggest losers), do I need to say the team name? Then there was the Kimberley Dynamiters, we were driving through Meadowbrook, heading home 10 days after open heart surgery, he piped up that the Anthem would be on the speakers in the Civic Center, only a devoted fan would express his desire to attend the game. Friends rallied to get him

comfortable when they spied his entrance, he lasted a whole period with little razzing aimed at the referee.

He swore that he hated cats, family knew better, as he also was blessed with 9 lives. 1 of those lives was erased when his hang glider kite failed to swoosh off the mountain. 1 more vaporized, when a Mack truck confrontation challenged his youth agility. Then another was gone, instead of acquiring a tattoo, a steering wheel imprint materialized on his chest. Ice fishing on Saint Mary Lake, found Andy stretched out on a bed of broken ice, refusing to release the vise grip on his father-in-law's wrists, until they could retreat together. 1 more was obliviated when the pulp mill chemical of sodium chlorate ignited, searing the front of both legs.

Andy's fondness of the outdoors exposed him as a confident and dedicated outdoors man. There was a need for CORE (Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Education) instructor/examiners. Andy secured those certificates and elected to take a course on the federal non-restricted PAL, (Possession and Acquisition License) he in turn did add PAL instructor/examiner to his repertoire.

Andy squirreled away some of the funds he earned instructing the 2 courses, they were used to support the Kimberley Wildlife and Wilderness Club's endeavors of having a registered Firearms range in the immediate area, this was a priority of his. With his dedication, members helped the vision to become reality.

Andrew was predeceased by his parents Alvin (Alvie) and Emilia Balcom, and his sister, Cherie Smale in March of 2016.

Left to mourn is his Wife of 30 years, Abbie (nee Pearson),

Daughter- Tamis Balcom of Kamloops. Grandchildren- Joshua, Mikayla, and Maryssa, from Kamloops. Son- Tom Balcom. Wards- Kabuki and Dylan, from Calgary.

Daughter-. Em Balcom Grandchildren- Olivier, Liam, and Logan from Kamloops. Son- Erik Balcom (Tina)- Grandsons- Nate (mom-Tammy), Jax (mom- Amy) from Kamloops. Daughter- Amanda Arrowsmith (Jeff), Grandsons- Austin, Alex, and Alvie from Kimberley. Niece- Carrie Smale – Andres (Martin) of Quesnel and children, Cindy, Robert, Alvin, and Shawn.

Andy had 2 very special people in his life, Susan Pearson (s-i-l) and Ron Henderson (great friend), they offered more than a friendship, they were Family.