



Louis Warren Feak Jr.

January 12, 1956 - February 7, 2024

Louis Warren Feak, Jr., 68, passed away at home in Bates Township after a ten-year fight with liver cancer on Wednesday, February 7th, 2024. Lou, also known as "Butch," "The Candyman," and "Poppa Doc," spent his final days at the farm with his family and friends always close by.

Louis (Butch) was born at Belmont Community Hospital in Chicago, Illinois, on January 12th, 1956, to Elizabeth Ann (Betty Bain) and Louis Warren Feak (Lorny Feak SR). In 1966, his parents relocated Lou and his three sisters, Connie, Teri, and Donna, from Chicago to Channing and finally Sagola. Lou loved growing up in the Upper Peninsula and had a veritable cornucopia of interests. He was a top-notch student who excelled at sports, Babe Ruth Division One Champion, All-State Track, Football, and Basketball. Lou was kind, helpful, social, highly motivated, and participated often in school, church, and community activities. He loved the outdoors, exploring, and hunting, but his favorite was fishing at his secret spots along the Ford River.

After graduating in 1973 from North Dickinson High School, Lou enlisted in the Air Force. With his plans to become a doctor, He had requested training as an X-ray technician, dreaming of seeing other parts of America while serving his country. In January 1974, he headed to Texas for basic training at Lackland AFB. Anyone who has ever served in the armed forces will happily explain in great detail how "The military has its own plans for you." Ironically, the Air

Force already had enough X-ray techs, but there was a staff shortage in obstetrics at KI Sawyer AFB, less than an hour from home. Lou gained experience as he worked in OB and the ER and became an EMT. After reassignment in 1980 to Davis-Monthan AFB in Tucson, Arizona, as an ER Shift Leader and NCOIC of Nursing Education, Lou finished his Independent Duty Medical Technician Training (IDMT) and went to Saudi Arabia to support AWACS operations. Afterward, he was stationed at Murted Air Base near Ankara, Turkey, where he picked up the nickname "Poppa Doc" while providing medical care to children at a nearby orphanage.

In 1985 Lou was assigned to Vandenberg AFB in Santa Barbra County, California. His many positions included NCOIC of Emergency Services and Superintendent of Nursing Services, and he enjoyed temporary classified assignments as Senior IDMT in Egypt. At Vandenberg, Lou had a habit of getting involved in anything exciting or unusual. His calendar was full, working on Air, Space, and Missile shows, training ROTC, serving as an Exercise Evaluation coordinator, and as a Rep for the START Program. He provided Olympic arena support and was the Special Olympics Coordinator. Lou spent his off-duty time building haunted houses and planning squadron activities such as BBQs and fundraisers. Lou loved Vandenberg AFB, and Vandenberg AFB was good to Lou. Lou enjoyed working as Chief of the Presidential Medical Support Team to the Western White House for President Ronald Reagan at Rancho del Cielo, participating in the Space Launch Complex activities in partnership with NASA for Space Shuttle Enterprise on Slick 6, and with the Peacekeeper Rail Garrison prototype.

Master Sergeant Louis W Feak JR received many decorations and ribbons. His awards included the Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Force Commendation Medal with Two Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Achievement Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, and He served in support of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. In 1994, after serving 20 years, he

passed over a rank promotion opportunity and retired home to Sagola to provide care for his parents.

Adapting to life outside the service was bumpy at first. It took a while for Lou to migrate his military training and experiences to a Michigan RN License; it took even longer for him to find a new workplace that felt right. Lou found his true home at Iron County Community Hospital and stayed on as the name changed to Northstar and then to Aspirus. Over the years that the "Candyman" worked in the hospital or clinics, he was always ready to sweeten someone's day with a bag of candy. Lou's work family was just as crucial to Lou, as he was essential to them. They supported him throughout life's ups and downs; they helped him navigate his journey in Serenity Prayer, helping him through all the 12 Steps until Lou could help others climb, too. Starting in the summer of 2014, coworkers donated many weeks of banked sick time to carry Lou through his multiple surgeries and cancer treatments; they were always there for him, and Lou was always there with a bag of candy. Even after he retired from the hospital, Lou would often pop in for a visit, always with candy as an excuse because he missed them. Lou was a social butterfly and often enjoyed a good vent session over life's trials and tribulations, but one thing he wasn't always good at was saying how he really felt or how deeply he cared. Lou loved people, and he loved them with all their imperfections and blemishes. The candy was his way of saying, "I love you, and I am so happy you are in my life."

Lou was not just the Candyman of the Hospital; he was the Iron County Candyman. He also had a habit of helping others with his medical skills and advice even when not officially working. In 2011, while he was grabbing snacks at the local gas station, the clerk, a worried mom of two daughters, sought advice on temporarily fixing her youngest daughter's cracked cast. His off-duty "volunteer" efforts led to a thank-you dinner invite, which became a

close friendship, turned into love, and a partnership that only strengthened as Lou began his fight against cancer in 2014. They might have taken a slow boat to marriage, but it seemed like it traveled a lifetime in thirteen years. Life seemed to happen at a breakneck pace; they were polar opposites but equally matched. Their individual strengths and weaknesses mostly balanced the scales, but when they shared the same traits, like being hard-headed and stubborn, how the thunder rolled. The paperwork to formally adopt Lou was filed years later, but Lou was actually adopted by the Ricker-Baros-Hunter-Rose-Tusa family around 2012. "Can I keep you?" Jen asked, and Lou stayed. Lou stayed for all of it; he was in front of them, behind them, alongside them, and always there. When Lou's cancer returned a second time, they married on May 18th, 2019, with Rainy and Savanna giving the bride away and grandson Hayden as the candy boy. On April 1st, 2021, he was legally adopted by Savanna Rose Hunter-Feak, and pictures of her in her cast were printed on the announcements.

This past year was more challenging than most and took a toll as everything went wrong, and there were no more solutions or cures to try. They tried hard to focus on four things: Life is rarely perfect; Fortitude is a virtue; Staying is a choice, and being there for each other during the hard stuff is priceless.

Lou is survived by his wife, Jennifer Ricker-Feak; daughter, Savanna Hunter-Feak; a special grandson, Hayden Rose; extra daughter, Rayanon Williams (Jason); sisters, Teresa (Bob) Berg, Donna (Mike) Cline, and Constance (Mike) Kuzak; grandchildren, Micah, Miles, Riley, Noah and Flynn; a sister-in-law, Cynthia (Josh) Brown; in-laws, Ruth Ricker-Tusa and Miles Tusa; nieces and nephews, Richard (Juliet) Kuzak, Lynnea (Sean) Hosey, Cheryl Kuzak, Stephen (Chastity) Alexa, Angie (John) Mattson, Matthew Cline, and Violet Brown; Kim and Andrew Spigarelli; extended family; and friends from Aspirus Hospital, Iron Mountain VA Medical Center and the Iron Baraga Conservation District.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Elizabeth Ann Feak; his father, Louis Warren Feak Sr.; father-in-law, Alan Ricker; extra son, Jacob Rose; and many other family members and friends.

Visitation will be held on Saturday, March 2nd, 2024, at the United Lutheran Church of Crystal Falls, Michigan, starting at 10 am, with Reverend D.J. Rasner officiating memorial services at 11 am, with a luncheon to follow.

The family has trusted Nash Funeral Home and Cremation Services of Crystal Falls with his final wishes.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 2. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

United Lutheran Church Of Crystal Falls
506 Superior Ave
Crystal Falls, MI 49920

Funeral Service

MAR 2. 11:00 AM (CT)

United Lutheran Church
506 Superior Ave
Crystal Falls, MI 49920

Tribute Wall

D(

“ Deborah Rutland Sperandio (cousin) purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Louis Warren Feak Jr..



Deborah Rutland Sperandio (cousin) - March 12, 2024 at 02:08 PM

D(

“ Deborah Rutland Sperandio (cousin) planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Louis Warren Feak Jr..

Deborah Rutland Sperandio (cousin) - March 12, 2024 at 02:08 PM

GN

“ I am so sorry to learn of the passing of “Butch”. I met him at K.I. Sawyer. AFB Hospital in 1974. He was such a kind, gentle man full of life and humor. A very special friend. May he rest peacefully in God’s arms and May God give the family comfort in their memories.

Geni (Flaisman) Nieto - March 01, 2024 at 05:40 PM

GM

I met Butch at KI Sawyer AFB Hospital. He was a teammate on the squadron softball team for the years i was there. Was always amazed at his speed to run down a fly ball in the outfield. He could've played 2 positions! We were base champs for at least 2 years, and always had a winning record, which he contributed greatly. Was always a friend on and off the field to me and other teammates. Lost track after leaving KI, but what a life of service he had. He definitely made a big difference in many people's lives. Will always remember. Glenn McLeroy 2nd base.

Glenn McLeroy - March 02 at 09:55 AM

LH

“ Linda I Hammerberg lit a candle in memory of Louis Warren Feak Jr.



Linda I Hammerberg - March 01, 2024 at 02:45 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Louis Warren Feak Jr..



March 01, 2024 at 01:26 PM

MF

“ Matt and Stephanie Welch and family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Louis Warren Feak Jr..

Matt and Stephanie Welch and family - March 01, 2024 at 01:26 PM

ED

“ Elise D. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Louis Warren Feak Jr..

Elise D. - March 01, 2024 at 12:28 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Louis Warren Feak Jr..*



February 22, 2024 at 02:43 PM



“ *Louis was my teammate on the 1971 state championship baseball team. We never re-connected until our 50 year reunion a few summers ago. It was an absolute delight to spend time talking to him again after all those years. What an incredible life he had. May God bless his family and friends in a very special way. Rest in peace my friend .*
David Bray

David Bray - February 21, 2024 at 11:04 AM



“ *So sorry that you must suffer another significant loss, Jenny and family. This lovely obituary brought tears. I'm glad that you all had some happy years together. He seemed so nice and right for your family.*

Valerie Novak - February 13, 2024 at 03:03 PM