

## Robert Harold Farmer Obituary

Robert Harold Farmer, of Waterford, Vt., passed away at his home Saturday, Jan. 31, 2015. He was born on the family farm in East Burke on May 25, 1937, to Harold and Stella (Nutting) Farmer where he joined his older sister Marilyn. He attended a one-room school in East Burke through eighth grade and graduated from St. Johnsbury Trade School in 1955.

His work life began as an equipment operator for Olsen Construction in 1955. He then served the country in the United States Army from 1961 to 1963. Soon after this he found work in a logging camp in Averill for two winters. His second winter in the camps he found himself living with an entire crew of only French speaking loggers. He was the dozer operator and after struggling in 6 feet of snow the second winter with no one else who spoke English he decided this was not his chosen profession.

He purchased his first snowmobile on Dec. 19, 1964 -- an event that defined his life for the next 50 years. On Dec. 31, 1964, he met Jeannette Paquette while on a break from logging. They married on April 30, 1966. Two sons Michael and Alan soon followed and they moved to Waterford in 1969 where Bob and Jeannette resided for 45 years. His career in the construction industry spanned 50+ years working for many highway and bridge contractors including Caledonia Sand & Gravel, Pizzagalli, Winterset, Earth Construction Inc. He was part of a shrinking but hardy group of men who helped build the interstate highway system in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. In 1988 he started his own company Bob Farmer Bulldozing. Self-employed for 18 years he retired in 2006.

Snowmobiling to Bob was a way of life and he help found the Waterford Ridge Runners snowmobile club in 1971 and the Moose River Rock Dodgers from Concord soon after. He was instrumental in building the Waterford club house by moving a building from the East Haven radar base in 1974. He repeated this act in 2005 but this time the building was moved to become the groomer garage for the Caledonia County Trail Club in St Johnsbury. Snowmobiling in the '70s meant limited signing and un-groomed trails so Bob began developing small trail groomers to improve riding conditions. In 1988 he began operating the Caledonia County Trail club groomer covering 78 miles several times per



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**Robert Harold Farmer**

week in St. Johnsbury, Kirby, Waterford and Burke. In 2004 he was the Vermont State Snowmobiler of Year, nominated by many friends and snowmobilers for his lifelong contributions. He retired from grooming in 2012 as his illness prevented him from working.

After he left Averill in 1966 he thought it would be never to return. But 9 years later he and Jeannette built a camp on St. Regis Paper Company land. The family camp served as our vacation spot for many years and from it allowed Bob and family to snowmobile in the winter, hunt and fish during the rest of the year. Bob and Jeannette have entertained many friends and family at the Hangover Inn.

In 1989 Bob's first daughter-in-law Pam joined the family and in 1996 the second Michelle. Grandsons Ethan and Kevin and granddaughter Taylor have all joined the family since.

He enjoyed his pontoon boat, fishing and 4-wheeling last summer with all his retired friends

He is survived by his wife Jeannette (Paquette), two sons and their wives, Michael and his wife Pamela, and Alan and his wife Michelle, and three grandchildren, Ethan, Kevin and Taylor Farmer.

He was predeceased by his parents, his sister Marilyn and her husband Bob Norcross.

The family would like to thank Caledonia County Home Health for their support and care during his time of illness.

Friends and family are invited to attend visiting hours on Friday, Feb. 6, 2015, at Pearson's Funeral Home from 2-4 p.m.

A memorial service will take place following the visiting hours at 4 p.m. at the funeral home.

The Reverend Barbara Dwyer will be officiating. Burial will take place at the Riverside Cemetery in Waterford with full military honors in the spring.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be marked in Bob's memory to: The Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation, 230 East Ohio Street, Suite 304, Chicago, Illinois 60611-3201 or Caledonia Home Health Care, 161 Sherman Drive, Saint Johnsbury, VT 05819.