



Eldon Cameron Marple

MAR 9, 1940 - APR 8, 2022



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Eldon Cameron Marple, known to most by his nickname “Woody,” left this world on April 8, 2022. He was 82. Woody’s namesake and grandson was born on the same date in 2002. Woody was always happy to be the center of attention and maybe this was his way of ensuring he wouldn’t be forgotten at the celebrations! He was unforgettable.

Woody’s last home was at the Keystone Pointe nursing facility in LaGrange, Ohio. Prior to Keystone, Woody spent many years living in both Medina and Strongsville, Ohio. He also lived in Boca Raton, Florida; Huntsville, Alabama; Maryland and Washington, D.C.

Woody was born on March 9, 1940 to Delphia Lewis and Edwin Ross Marple, Sr. on a farm of green pastures, rolling hills and a meandering creek in Wolf Summit, West Virginia. He was the youngest of four boys and, by all accounts, a bit mischievous; quick to play a prank or get into a fight. His wry smile and pretty blue eyes helped him work his way out of whatever trouble he was in, most of the time!

Woody graduated from Bristol High School in 1958. Bravely, and with only \$20 in his pocket, he left West Virginia for the Washington D.C. area, where his favorite Aunt Rena lived and was able to help him get on his feet. Woody’s first job was selling fine china sets to brides-to-be for their weddings. While in D.C., Woody married and had four children: Laurelle, Georgia and the twins Janan and Cam. During this time, he became a company man at IBM, where he worked for several years, in Maryland, D.C. and in Huntsville, Alabama.

Corporate life was not Woody’s calling and he made his way into the car business where he could be independent and work for himself as both a dealer and a wholesaler, eventually settling in Cleveland, Ohio, where two of his brothers were living and working for Ford. It was there, on a rainy day outside of a gas station in Strongsville, he met Christine, who would become his wife of 53 years. They had two children, Michele and Brian, and lived for many years in Strongsville before departing the snow and clouds for sun and surf in Boca Raton, Florida.



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After several years in Florida, Woody returned to Strongsville, where he had many friends and his work-life was easier. After re-establishing himself in the Cleveland area and with the help of his family, Woody opened his own car dealership in Brunswick at the corner of 303 and 130th. "Woody's Auto Sales" provided the opportunity for Woody to spend several years working with his son and wife. Eventually, the family closed the business and Woody went back to working as a car wholesaler.

It turned out that the car business would be Woody's lifelong passion. It was a career that suited him perfectly: he always had a lot of energy and thrived on being out and about. Woody was a talker and a storyteller and that made him a natural at working with people, making friends and acquaintances and setting up deals. And while you'd always find him with his "Black Book" for car valuation, over the years, he developed an encyclopedic knowledge of the value of hundreds of makes and models of cars. It was this expertise that car dealers from across northern Ohio relied on when they were moving vehicles in and out of their dealerships. "Call Woody and see what he thinks," they'd say when determining what price to put on their assets. And his phone was always ringing or his pager was always beeping! In fact, he had one of the very first cell phones in his car in the late 70's and he had his house wired for a phone in the garage, so wherever he was, people could reach him! He travelled all over the country to car auctions and dealerships and he had friends from Detroit to Darlington to Daytona. Woody's tenacity and constant drive provided much financial success over the years, in addition to the satisfaction of doing work that he truly loved. He was lucky in that way, or you could say, he made his own luck!

Over the years, Woody owned hundreds of cars, and he especially liked those that were unique, including luxury and sports cars. He had a DeLorean and scores of Corvettes, Mercedes', Cadillacs, Monte Carlo Super Sports and Buick Grand Nationals. He also owned classic cars like a metallic turquoise blue hot rod, and a 1940's Packard. He even owned a speed boat for a little while, never mind he didn't know how to drive it. He still tore up and down Lake Erie's shores, having the time of his life (while the rest of us held on for our lives!). Up until his death, he could still identify and tell stories about the many cars he'd owned through the years. In the end, his favorite car was the practical and unassuming Toyota Prius. He drove hundreds of miles for his work and in his later years it gave him much satisfaction to save money on gas!

Working was always the cornerstone of Woody's life. He was always moving, always doing something. He rarely rested or took time off. If he wasn't out looking at or buying cars, you would find him working at home: detailing a car, cleaning up his garage, taking care of his dog, or



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feeding wild animals. Woody loved animals and made pets of squirrels, deer and birds (as well as the occasional skunk!). It was his love of animals that made him refuse to eat pork (as a young man, Woody made a pet of a pig that would become the family's Christmas ham!).

In the rare moments when he wasn't working, Woody liked to read a good book. He enjoyed thrillers the most. In his lifetime, he must have read thousands of volumes. And you could always find him with something sweet nearby: cakes, cookies, candy, it didn't matter. One of his favorite meals when visiting "down home" was peaches his Mom had "put up" in the summer, drowned in cream and topped with handfuls of sugar! If it was sweet, Woody would eat it! He would have survived on doughnuts and iced caramel coffees if given the opportunity.

Family was important to Woody and he made a point of visiting and keeping in touch with his many relatives. He made regular trips home to Wolf Summit to visit his parents and see his brothers, cousins, nieces and nephews. He visited his Aunt Rena in Alabama when he could and talked to her on most Saturdays. He visited his Aunt Arlie, who had been in a nursing home for years, right up until she passed at the age of 101.

Woody was deeply proud of his children and if you knew him, you'd heard him brag about them at some point. And no one was too important to be bragged to: he once stopped the Senator and former Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole, who happened to be walking by, and brought her into his daughter's graduation ceremony and said, "This is my daughter and she's graduating today!" And to her credit, Senator Dole was gracious and offered her congratulations!

Woody spoiled both his children and his grandchildren, never missing an opportunity to take one of them shopping and buy them whatever they wanted. He loved to see the joy on a child's face and it was his pleasure to do whatever he could to make them happy.

Woody was a small man, standing barely 5 feet 8 inches, but what he lacked in stature, he made up for in personality. He was a snappy dresser, known for his baseball caps when he was younger (he had hundreds at one point) and as he aged, he transitioned to fedoras, felt for the winter, straw in the summer. He always wore pressed pants (thanks to his wife!) and colorful polos and oxfords color-coordinated to his hats!

What Woody lacked in formal education or fancy upbringing, he made up for with wits, drive, determination and an imperviously positive attitude. He did not quit, nor did he back down from



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a fight, not even at the end of his life. He left us all with the memory of a man who provided the best life he could for his family with strength, determination and a dash of mischief. He liked to say: "You can do anything you set your mind to," and that he did. He succeeded beyond what might have been expected of a young boy from Wolf Summit. And no, we will never forget him.

Woody is survived by: his wife of 53 years, Christine; his Aunt Rena, brothers Edwin, Lane and sister-in-law Sharon; his children Laurelle, Janan, Michele (son-in-law Curt) and Brian (daughter-in-law Rebecca); and grandchildren Jason, Victoria, James, Jessica, Madison, Cameron, Kendall and Braden. Woody was preceded in death by his parents, his brother Dale, and his children Georgia and Cam.

The family wishes to thank: Jimmy, who kindly looked out for Woody and acted as his chauffeur so he could still work after his stroke in 2017. Melanie, his favorite nurse at Keystone Pointe, as well as the rest of the staff who took care of Woody while he lived there. He was not the easiest patient to care for, having been an extremely independent man, but to the women who persevered and understood, we owe our deepest gratitude.

The family is not planning a service and in lieu of flowers, would suggest a donation to the American Stroke Association <https://www.stroke.org/?form=FUNCNKRYYTR>.



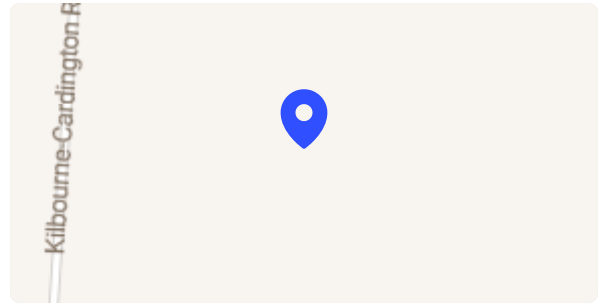
Events

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Cemetery Details

 PRIVATE
OH





Tribute Wall

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Bob Bates lit a candle in honor of Eldon.



May 7 at 2:42 PM



Bob Bates posted:

So very sad to learn of Woody's passing this week. Condolences to Chris, Michele, Brian and family. I have known Woody since October 1972. He was always hard-working, kind man with a big heart, and one of the best in the car business for 50+ years. I have been praying for Woody's good health since he had the stroke in 2015 and will continue to do so. Godspeed Woody, you were one of the best!! Hope to see you again. RIP

May 7 at 2:42 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Eldon by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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