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Kai Arnold Bodtker

February 9, 1964 - February 26, 2009



PORTLAND - Kai died in an auto accident Thursday night, February 26, 2009 in Portland, Oregon.

Kai graduated from Sprague High School in Salem in 1982. He attended Evergreen College in Olympia, Washington for a couple of years. While there, he was the driver of a rebuilt school bus which he and 20 other students used as home during a cross-country tour following the Grateful Dead for six weeks, though he insisted he was never a Deadhead.

In 1970 - 71, Kai spent eight months going to school in Denmark and four months camping through several countries in Western Europe with his parents and sister. This experience contributed to his appreciation of other cultures and love of travel. He had made several trips to Mexico, and visited the Galapagos Islands, Machu Picchu, and most recently, New Zealand.

For several years, he participated in the Country Fair in Veneta, Ore. However, in the last five years Kai has made annual pilgrimages to the Burning Man Festival in the desert of northern Nevada, where he could enjoy the wild creativity of his friends.

Early in life Kai started collecting comic books. He became a knowledgeable resource about all aspects of comics - the artists, the production, and the history of comics. He maintained an extensive collection.

Kai spent much of his adult life in Portland where he was an independent contractor, maintenance man, painter, and all-around handyman. He also spent several years as a cook in Salem, Crater Lake National Park, and at Government Camp.

He married Sally White in 1996 and she preceded him in death.

While he took care of the houses of his family and friends, he also took care of their lives, always coming to the aid of one or the other who needed encouragement, or a hot meal, or a drink with a friend and a long talk. He had such good stories that our problems seemed far away. Where will we be without our family storyteller?

He is survived by his parents, Egon and Diana Bodtker; his sister, Ingrid Bodtker; her partner, Walker T. Ryan; his two nephews, Ian Baber and Emmett Baber; his niece, Katherine Ryan; his uncle and aunt, Harry (John) and Beth Wright; and cousins, Derek and Kristen.

There will be a memorial service for Kai at 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 7 in the Eliot Chapel at the First Unitarian Church of Portland, 1011 SW 12th St. Contributions can be made to your local humane society.