

Seneca, KS



Richard Alan Gress, 61, of Seneca died on Monday, July 6, 2020 at his home in Seneca.

Richard was born on March 20, 1959 to Charles and Ann Heideman Gress. Attended grade school at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic School and graduated from Nemaha Valley High School in 1976. Richard was one of the top dairymen in Nemaha County for the last 40 years. He was a leader in adopting new technologies that are now widely used in local dairy farms including artificial insemination, total mixed rations, use of byproduct feeds and no-till farming practices. In 1994, he was the first farmer in Nemaha County to buy and use a large square hay baler. This led to a very successful custom baling side business. Over the years, Richard received many dairy awards including the Mid America Dairymen Young Cooperator Contest in the mid-1990s.

Richard was a single man and did not have children. Over the last 30 years, he employed and mentored dozens of young people to help with his dairy operation and custom baling business. Many of these have themselves become successful farmers.

Richard has been an active and loyal member of Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church and the Knights of Columbus Council 1769 throughout his life.

Richard served as a Gilman Township treasurer from 2008 to 2020. His main responsibility in this position was making sure that Township funds were well managed.

Richard was a hard worker but also lived a calm and joyful life. He appreciated visits to his farm from siblings and cousins but especially from his nieces and nephews. Richard was a great friend to many in the Seneca community.

Richard was born near Mercier, Kansas. When he was 1 year old, he and his family moved to the farm 4 miles northeast of Seneca where he lived the rest of his life. Before Richard took over the farm in 1990, it was owned and operated by his great uncle, Fred Heideman and then by his parents. The farm has been in the Heideman-Gress family for over 100 years.

Richard was diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumor, Stage IV Glioblastoma, in March 2017. While he knew from when he got the diagnosis that his days were numbered, he found a way to continue to live each day with joy and to generously give to the community he loved until the very end.

Richard was born on March 20, 1959 to Charles and Ann Heideman Gress. He is survived by his mother and his siblings Kathleen (Wes) Elkins of Lenexa, Joseph (Ron Robinson) Gress of Niles, MI, Jean (Rich) Wassenberg of Seneca, Mary (Patrick) Shields of Fort Smith, AR, Doris Palmer of Lafayette, CO, John (Gwendolyn Farnsworth) Gress of Boulder, CO, Larry (Michele) Gress of Overland Park, Randy (Nancy) Gress of Merriam, Brian (Ann) Gress of Omaha, NE and 18 nieces and nephews.

A rosary will be prayed on Wednesday Evening July 8, 2020, at 7 P.M. at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Seneca. The Mass of Christian Burial will be offered on Thursday, July 9, 2020 at 10:30 A.M. at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Seneca. Burial will be in the Saints Peter and Paul Church Cemetery in Seneca.

Those wishing to express their condolences can choose a charity of your choice and make a donation in Richard's name. To express your sympathy and for more information visit www.lauerfuneralhome.com .