



## Lawrence "Larry" Edward Schafer

April 20, 2024

Lawrence "Larry" Edward Schafer "Poppy", 90, of Sarasota, Florida, passed away on Saturday, April 20, 2024, at 4:19am in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

Memorial Service with Military Honors will be held on May 17, 2024, - 11am at Toale Brothers Funeral Home, 40 N. Orange Avenue, Sarasota, Fla.

Placement will be - 2pm at Sarasota National Cemetery, 9810 SR72, Sarasota, Florida 34241. Gathering of family & friends will be at Geckos 5585 Palmer Crossing Cir. Sarasota FL 34233 @ 3pm

Larry was born October 3, 1933, to Paul and Nellie Mae Wright Schafer in Shattuck, Oklahoma. His parents moved to Ft. Myers, Florida, and he graduated from Ft. Myers Senior High on June 2, 1952. Then immediately moved from Ft. Myers to Sarasota, where he began working for Puckett's Harley Davidson, later known as Hap's Cycles. Shortly after moving to Sarasota he met his future wife Bonnie Jo Helmich at Smacks (a drive-in burger restaurant) near Bonnie's high school. In 1954 Larry was drafted into the US Army but, before deploying to Germany, married Bonnie on September 27, 1954. He left the Army in June 1956, returning to Sarasota, where the couple went on to have two wonderful daughters--Cindy and Brenda.

Larry's passion was motorcycles (both racing and building them). He enjoyed considerable success as a motorcycle racer. In 1958 he won the Daytona

100-mile Amateur Road Race, and in 1964, he won a National Expert Road Race at Nelson Ledges, in Ohio. Larry and his family moved north sometime in 1962--first to Virginia, then to Maryland, where he would be closer to the national motorcycle racing circuit. While there, for several years he worked as the Service Manager for the Washington, DC Harley-Davidson dealership, during which time he also raced Harleys on the National Road Racing circuit. Among other things, at one point in the early 1970's, he worked on and set up the Harley Sportster for Evel Knievel! Larry also loved flying airplanes, and in 1969, he obtained his pilot license from the Federal Aviation Administration.

In the early 1980's, Larry worked for the Harley-Davidson Motor Company helping in the development of Harley's new Evolution engines, and serving as a Regional Representative in the mid-Atlantic area. Because of Larry's reputation as a top race-engine builder, he was tasked with building the racing engine for legendary rider Scott Parker, who won his first two National races on Larry's engines.

Sometime in 1987, Larry and Bonnie moved back to Sarasota and bought a small farm off Fruitville Road, on which they raised cattle. Larry worked at Hap's Cycle (the Sarasota Honda dealer) for several years, as the store's only Harley-Davidson mechanic.

After retiring from Hap's in 2006, Larry filled his days by working on the farm raising cattle, riding the open roads on his Harley, playing cards, watching NASCAR races and NFL football games ("Go Skins!!"), and spending time with his family and friends.

Larry is survived by his brother Vernon "Bud" Schafer, daughter Brenda Gray, grandchildren Angela, Christina, Ashley, and Whitney, and 12 great grandchildren.

Larry is preceded in death by his wife of almost 68 years Bonnie Jo Helmich Schafer, parents Nellie Mae Wright Schafer Whidden and Paul Schafer, sister Betty Apperson, brother Clifford, daughter Cindy Asbury, and grandson Andrew Buchanan

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Tidewell Hospice.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service with Military Honors

MAY 17. 11:00 AM (ET)

Toale Brothers Funeral Home & Crematory - Colonial Chapel  
40 N. Orange Avenue  
Sarasota, FL 34236  
(941) 955-4171  
info@toalebrothers.com  
<https://www.toalebrothers.com/>

## Placement

MAY 17. 2:00 PM (ET)

Sarasota National Cemetery  
9810 State Rd 72  
Sarasota, FL 34241  
(941) 922-7200

## Gathering of friends and family

MAY 17. 3:00 PM (ET)

Gecko's  
5585 Palmer Crossing Cir.  
Sarasota, FL 34233

# Tribute Wall

LJ

“ *Leanne, Lisa, & John purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Lawrence "Larry" Edward Schafer.*



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**Leanne, Lisa, & John** - May 15, 2024 at 05:33 PM

ER

“ *The first time I remember hearing the name Larry Schafer, I had ridden my 1960 Harley-Davidson Super 10 to the AMA road races at the Charlotte County Airport. He rode a Harley XLCH in the open class. Emory Roan*

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**Emory Roan** - May 14, 2024 at 09:46 PM