



# Andrew Vincent Hippler

September 1, 1966 - February 13, 2019

Andrew Vincent Hippler, 52, passed away on Feb. 13, 2019, in his home in Ridgefield, Washington.

Andy is survived by his sisters Vickie Lynn Kavanagh of Gresham and Dori Marie Miles of Sandy; brother Harold "Joe" Howard Hippler III of Oregon City; brother-in-law Tim Kavanagh of Gresham; sister-in-law Kelly McCabe Hippler of Oregon City; nephew Jack Hippler of West Linn; nephew Jared Hippler of Tigard; niece Sarah Hippler of Oregon City; aunt Terry Reinberg and cousin Gerri Reinberg Gonzales of Huntington Beach, California; and assorted aunts and cousins back east.

His other family -- and best friends for about 25 years -- includes Wade and Michelle Fish, Wade Fish Jr., Trevor Fish, Kayla Fish Shuman, Jimmy Fish, and Toni and Arlet Caldwell. Andy lived next door to the Fish clan in Ridgefield for the past three years and in a house he bought down the street from them in Vancouver before that.

Andy was born on Sept. 1, 1966 to Harold "Red" Howard Hipper Jr. (deceased 2010) and Nancy Lois (Reinberg) Hippler (deceased 1994) in Covina, California.

He was the baby of the family, so he was the kid we doted on, the one who was overly protected. We had a Norman Rockwell-style family upbringing and celebrated birthdays, holidays and numerous other events together. Our home was the hang out for friends, the party pad.

Andy graduated from Northview High School in Covina and lived in that area until the early 1990s when he followed his siblings and parents up to Oregon.

He took a welding course at the Wolf Creek Job Corps in Glide. Andy's goal was to work for Gunderson, Inc., a global manufacturer of rail cars and barges based in Portland. So he knocked on their door weekly until he landed a spot in the welding trainee program. That was a major turning point in Andy's life. Dyslexia and other learning disabilities had

chipped away at his self confidence, but the staff there recognized Andy's stellar work ethics, potential, dedication and loyalty. His supervisor helped him climb the ladder by administering verbal -- versus written -- tests and went the extra mile to help Andy master his skills and raise his self esteem.

Andy absolutely loved his job and colleagues. In fact, that's where he met his best buddy, Wade Fish. Andy boasted about how the Gunderson family personally served him Gatorade on hot days and he was so proud to show off HIS company to us at family picnics and new barge christenings. He looked forward to going to work and served as a model employee by arriving early and working overtime whenever they needed him.

That's why it was such a gyp that Andy suffered a heart attack about five years ago. He received a pacemaker -- a no no in the welding world -- but a lifesaver for at least a few more years.

Andy decided to make the best out of his situation and to maintain a positive attitude and a better lifestyle. He worked out in his home gym as much as his doc would allow, tackled overdue home projects, delved into hobbies that he didn't used to have time for, and reconnected with old friends.

Thankfully the Fish family took Andy under their wings. They invited him to live with them when he lost his house. They accepted and loved him unconditionally, as did Andy, them. They supported him emotionally and helped nurse him through the roughest of times, but they also used tough love to inspire him to continue to live his life to the fullest. Andy was always included in their family ventures -- from road trips to campouts to family milestones and annual themed parties.

Michelle hosts a daily family dinner, "A fun time," Andy said, when they crack jokes, share stories and discuss their plans and dreams. They also played silly pranks on one another. For example, Michelle said, she made fun of Andy's framed childhood photo and woke up to find it on her bed stand the next morning. That picture is still showing up in folks' beds, in cars and other random spots. Andy was a good sport. He even shed his macho behavior at least once a year and allowed Michelle to dress him up for a friend's themed party, including as a playboy bunny, a nerd, Peter Pan and Robin Hood.

Andy laughed about how Wade would show up on a daily basis and yell "Wakey, Wakey Andy!" -- a signal that it was time to work on a community project. He would wander outside to share his morning coffee with Trevor Fish, who lived just a few steps away.

Of course, Andy was still a regular at the Hippler family gatherings. And we talked weekly and hung out on my deck during the summer months. Andy, Tim and I used birthdays as an excuse to meet at the new casino down the street from his Ridgefield home.

Andy loved spaghetti, hamburgers and Red Bull. His freezer was always stocked with a gallon of neapolitan ice cream, a craving he inherited from his mom. He was a neat freak who rearranged his furniture just about every month. He was a 49ers fan, listened to Metallica and watched action movies. He had a passion for fancy trucks and motorcycles and was in the process of restoring a couple classic Chevys. He collected everything eagle, like sculptures, paintings and clothing. He was diligent about working out in his home gym, even though he had to scale it back after his health began declining.

Andy was a cowboy at heart and looked so handsome in his cowboy hat, belt and boots -- garb that he inherited from our dad. He changed his appearance on a regular basis -- from a Fu Manchu mustache, beard and long hair to a crew cut and clean-shaven look to his dad's signature pompadour hairstyle. That was my favorite. I always told him he looked like Patrick Dempsey, also known as Dr. McDreamy from the Grey's Anatomy show.

Andy was a sweet and sensitive guy and shy by nature. He was usually the quiet fella in the room, a pensive man who seemed to prefer hanging out in the outskirts. He was a good listener, kept secrets and I can't recall him ever gossiping. When Andy did speak up he was the jokester, a fun storyteller and he lit up when he talked about his hobbies and other good things happening in his life.

Andy has 172 Facebook friends and thanks to your heartfelt thoughts and memories we truly know how adored, loved and respected he was.

"He was a cool dude to laugh and joke around with," said his former workmate Truman Yazzie.

"Way to soon Andy," said Bruce Duffield. "You were a truly good-spirited character who could brighten any one's day. You'll truly be missed."

Lori Chambers summed up Andy the best: "We will miss your fun, silly, witty personality and the kind genuine soul that you are."

If you were fortunate enough to befriend Andy, he made you his friend for life.

A Celebration of Life for Andy will be held from noon to 3 p.m. Sunday, March 10, at the

Salmon Creek Grange, 1900 N.E. 154th St., Vancouver, WA 98686. For details, call Kayla Shuman at 360-931-9354; Michelle Fish at 360-448-1231; or email Vickie at [v.kavanagh@comcast.net](mailto:v.kavanagh@comcast.net). In lieu of flowers, please make donations in Andy's name to the American Heart Association.

# Events

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**MAR**   **Celebration of Life**   12:00PM - 03:00PM

**10**

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Salmon Creek Grange

1900 NE 154th Street, Vancouver, WA, US, 98686