Ernest Walter Shumsky

June 6, 1955 – January 7, 2013

With profound sadness we announce the sudden death of Ernie Shumsky, of Calgary, Alberta, formerly of Fort McMurray, Alberta.

Ernie was born and raised in Grimsby, Ontario and graduated from the University of Waterloo in 1979 as a chemical engineer. With his loving wife, Barbara, he came west to Alberta to join Suncor Energy that same year.

Ernie was a bear of a man with tons of energy, enthusiasm and a quirky sense of humour. He loved people and they loved him back. A man of many passions, he was adventurous with a rare and boundless zest for life.

Ernie played football and lacrosse at Grimsby High and his commitment to the teams ruled his young life. Ernie remained an avid sportsman, pursuing such passions as skiing in the mountains he loved. At the age of 56, at Banff's Sunshine Village, he persuaded the Ski Patrol to jump with him at Delirium Dive! He was very proud that an old guy like him still had it! Golfing gave him time to share with friends and to decompress from the many stresses of life. He played 18 holes on the day of his untimely passing. He also loved to dive and hoped in retirement to get back to the bubbles.

At Suncor, Ernie was highly regarded over his 33-year career as a chemical engineer, an operations supervisor, and his progression through many levels of seniority. He was intuitive, diligent and detail-oriented; a principled and an ethical colleague; a mentor to many; and a consummate perfectionist committed to the pursuit of his craft. Operability, safety and maintenance were key in carrying out his work and the many projects he oversaw.

While some may look to the physical assets that resulted from Ernie's work, those fortunate to know and work with Ernie remember him for his ability to forge and work with teams of people able to achieve the impossible. He was drawn to the many challenges presented and surpassed them at every turn. Ernie contributed in a significant way to the growth and success of the oil sands industry.

Raised in the Orthodox Catholic faith, Ernie followed the path of a truly Christian man.

Ernie is lovingly remembered by Barbara, his cherished wife of 40 years; Max, his shih zhu; siblings Paul (Susan) and Christine; father-in-law Kevin J. Manning; brother-in-law Daniel P. Manning (Sharon Parsons), niece Colleen (Andy Pequegnat) and great nephew Riley Ernest; by Joan Manning and Herk and Rose Phillips; and by the Gayowski, Manasterski and Connor families.

Barbara expresses her sincerest love and thanks to Mike Hutchen and Lori Friesen of Sidney, BC, who worked so valiantly to save Ernie; to the Saanich EMT team; to McCall's Funeral Services for their speedy and respectful support and service; and to Fr. Luyen Dau, CSSR of St. Andrew's Cathedral who brought the spirit of the Lord and Mother Mary to her in her grief. Special thanks to the amazing "Wings Gang" social group and Suncor Energy for their support and kindness.

Ernie was cremated and a Celebration of Life was held. Tributes in Ernie's memory may be made to the Heart and Stoke Foundation (heartandstroke.ca) or The Alberta Cancer Foundation (www. albertacancer.ca). Condolences may offered to the family below.

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