



## Joseph "Lew" Melanson

October 17, 1934 - March 7, 2015

COLUMBIA – Joseph Lewis “Lew” Melanson, 80, of Columbia, passed away at the Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital in Colebrook on Saturday evening, March 7, 2015, the 21st wedding anniversary with his beloved wife, Gerda, who was at his side.

He was born on Oct. 17, 1934, in New Bedford, Mass., one of 13 children to the late Peter and Emiline (Marcotte) Melanson. He attended schools in Massachusetts and later served with honor in the U.S. Navy.

Following his military service, Lew worked for the State of Massachusetts highway department for 25 years as a bridge carpenter. Not one to ever sit still, he had most recently worked at the rest area in Colebrook as a greeter.

On March 7, 1994, Lew married the love of his life, Gerda, whom he lovingly referred to as his “German bride,” at the top of the Balsams/Wilderness ski slopes where they had met and fallen in love. They moved to NH permanently in 1997 and made their home in Bungy.

Lew enjoyed being outside, working in his woods and was always up for any project that involved hammers, power tools, or a chainsaw. He loved to mow his lawn which he made sure looked like a carpet of green. Always wanting to be busy, he volunteered for many organizations, including Kiwanis and the Colebrook Ski-Bees. He loved meeting new people and learning new things. Lew loved reading history books, surfing the web on his computer, and telling and hearing stories. He was quick to laugh and was always ready to share his wisdom with anyone who was looking for it. He was usually right, much to the consternation of some. He would often say, “You do what you want, but....” And you were usually sorry if you didn’t listen to that “but...”

He was tenacious, hard-working, and although he battled illness the last few years of his life, he never once complained. He died as he lived, setting an example that love, strong character, and an even stronger faith can see you through anything. Lew always said, “Love is the most important thing.” He was a communicant of St. Brendan’s Church and a

faithful, loyal servant of the Lord. He made sure to say grace each and every night before dinner and taught his friends to do the same.

Lew is survived by his loving wife of 21 years, Gerda (Möest) Melanson of Columbia; a son, Scott Melanson and wife Mary of Wareham, Mass.; two step-sons, Siggi Ahrens and wife Karen of Florida, and Ingo Ahrens and wife Karen of Colebrook; four brothers; six sisters; three grandchildren; his next door neighbors and dear friends who he considered family, Scott and Coralie Stepanian; as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

He is predeceased by two daughters, Kelly, as a teenager, and Nicole; and two brothers.

At Lew's specific request, there are no public services. A celebration of his life will take place at a later date.

Expressions of sympathy in memory of Lew may be made to the North Country Community Recreation Center, 33 Rec Center Rd., Colebrook, NH 03576

Condolences may be offered to the family on-line by going to <http://www.jenkinsnewman.com>.

Funeral arrangements in NH are under the direction of Jenkins & Newman Funeral Home in Colebrook.

# Comments

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“ Tear of Love Pendant was purchased for the family of Joseph "Lew" Melanson.



April 07, 2015 at 02:47 PM

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“ Gerda,  
Susan Preston told Billy and I you had lost your husband.  
Don't know if you remmeber Billy and I with the whole crew every year for over 20 years at the Balsams, with Dean and Lorraine Ellis, Larry and Eujanie Wheeler and of course Roger and Susan Preston and others different years.  
Billy and I wanted to send our condolences, I'm sure Lew was a Wonderful man.  
We always looked forward to seeing you every year and hope to see the Balsams again if it reopens.  
Beverly and Bill Watson  
Cape Coral, FL

**William A Watson** - March 28, 2015 at 01:44 PM

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“ Dear Gerda, Lew was a great guy and always fun to talk to. I enjoyed our chats on the bus when he would drive us to the ski lodge @The Balsams. He will be greatly missed. Dahlia Kotlyar

**dahlia kotlyar** - March 22, 2015 at 01:19 PM

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“ I am so very sorry for your loss. I offer the family and friends of Mr. Melanson my sincere condolences. Would this be the father of my late friend, Kelly Melanson, (from Acushnet, MA) who passed on her birthday on Feb. 10, 1974? I never stopped visiting her gravesite at Sacred Heart cemetery in New Bedford, if so. Kelly had a sister Nicole, who I just learned had also passed. My condondolences to all. This is why I'm inquiring because of the similarities. She lived on Nestles Lane in Acushnet. Again, I am so sorry for the loss of Mr. Melanson....

Robin Ray

email: callmetiny@comcast.net



R. J. Ray - March 18, 2015 at 10:25 PM

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“ Sorry to learn of Lew's death. We always enjoyed his friendly nature and talking with him. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Patty and Les

Les Klinefelter - March 15, 2015 at 08:27 PM

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“ Dear Gerda,  
Our condolences to you and your family in the passing of Lew, a fellow snowmobiler. May your memories of him help you find peace and comfort during this difficult time.  
In Sympathy  
The Colebrook Ski-Bees.

Colebrook Ski Bees - March 14, 2015 at 01:09 PM

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“ Gerda,

I am so truly sorry to hear of Lew's passing. It seems just like yesterday that we all went to the top of the mountain for your wedding. Lew always had a twinkle in his eye and a smile on his face. You were truly loved and he made everyone happier just being around him. I will keep you and him in my thoughts and prayers. Hang in there my dear friend.

Paula Noll

Paula Noll - March 13, 2015 at 02:52 PM

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“ Dear Gerda You know how we feel about Lew . He was our older brother and we loved him so much. The good times at the Balsams. We had a lot of fun. You know you can call on us anytime. We will miss him dearly. All our love .Our prayers thoughts are with you. Love Dianne & Howard, Michelle & Paul & Andrew

Dianne Foisy,Sister - March 13, 2015 at 05:29 AM

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“ Dear Gerda- we have been privileged to know you and Lew for these many years. Our fondest memories are of snowmobiling together, watching you two walking up our driveway for visits, dinners at your house with such good conversation, Lew's many stories and his freely given wisdom. There was always joy around both of you and we know how deeply you loved one another. We know he is at peace and hope that you find peace, too, in knowing that you are loved by your friends and the many people who knew Lew and are here for you now.

Leslie and Ray Bell

leslie bell - March 12, 2015 at 02:31 PM

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“ Gerda. So sorry to hear of Lew's passing. You are in my thoughts and prayers.  
Barbara

Barbara McKinnon Tombstone - March 11, 2015 at 05:55 PM

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“ Gerda,

I'm very sorry to hear of Lews passing.I knew him as someone who liked people and always had an upbeat outlook on life, It was always a pleasure to talk with him. Please accept my condolences for your loss of a husband and friend and also for Coralee and Scott who have lost one of their adopted family. You are in my prayers..

Bill Sambito

**Bill Sambito** - March 11, 2015 at 02:08 PM

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“ Jackie & Lenny Caires lit a candle in memory of Joseph "Lew" Melanson



**Jackie & Lenny Caires** - March 11, 2015 at 09:21 AM

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“ Gerda, Dylan and I are so sad to hear the news of Lew's passing. Knowing you both for many years, it was allways so clear, the bond you two share!! Where there was Gerda, Lew was always close behind. He will be beside you, Always!!

You are in our thoughts

Ben and Dylan Carpino

**Ben Carpino** - March 10, 2015 at 04:08 PM

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“ Gerda and family. We are so very sorry for your loss. You are in our thoughts and prayers.



**Dick & Judy Budge** - March 10, 2015 at 03:36 PM

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“ Gerda and family, I am so sorry for your loss! Tho I only met Lew a few times it was very clear that he was a great and loving man.

**Tanya Williams** - March 10, 2015 at 08:04 AM

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“ Gerda and family members, sorry to hear of Lew's passing...my prayers are with you. May he rest in peace...

**Bill Hamblen**

**bill hamblen** - March 09, 2015 at 07:40 PM

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“ gerta den and I are very sorry to hear of lew passing we are going to miss seeing him at the iga and talking to u both .love dennis and nancy santamore



**dennis+nancy santamore** - March 09, 2015 at 11:49 AM

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“ Dear Gerda,  
There just are no words to express our feelings of sorrow for the loss of your very beloved "Lew". No one could ever have loved and taken better care of him over these last months than you. You were both such an inspiration to everyone who had the joy of knowing you and watching first hand the love and joy in both your faces, no matter what circumstance you found yourselves facing. The dinners and Christmas parties we were fortunate enough to share with you both will forever be in our minds and hearts.  
We wish there was some way to ease your pain at this dark time in your life but know that we cannot fix your broken heart. Just know that "Lew" and you are loved by all whose life you entered and that we are here always for whatever you may need. We love you and know that we are only two of many. Judy and Michael Sullivan

**Michael and Judy Sullivan** - March 09, 2015 at 10:11 AM

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“ Oh Gerda, I am crushed. The way Lew carried himself, loved life and yourself openly and freely, well...when we were around him, it was like being around a flowering flower...or like being around warmth that kept on coming.... I really liked bumping into him, he helped me remember what's important in life. I can't understand the magnitude of your loss, but please know how much I care about it and you...  
Attending your wedding was one of the most fun and special experiences I ever got to be a part of, but it never beat just seeing you two together in action. Very special, and very inspiring, forever. Take care, much love, my prayers are with you, I look forward to giving you a big hug. - Jamey Tillotson

**Jamey Tillotson** - March 09, 2015 at 09:45 AM

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“ Dear Gerda - our thoughts and prayers are with you at this difficult time.  
Our cabin times with you and Lew will always hold special memories of an endearing friendship. If you were to look up friend in the dictionary, you would find Lew's name. He was a special man and he will be greatly missed. We love you, Linda and Marty

**Marty & Linda Zarli** - March 09, 2015 at 06:57 AM

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“ Gerda and family our deepest condolences go out to you on your loss.

**Haven & Peggy Haynes** - March 09, 2015 at 01:12 AM

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“ So Sorry for your loss Gerda & family & caring neighbors, Scott & Coralie our thoughts & prayers are with you, his beautiful smile and eyes will always be with us. You all have an angel looking out for you. He was & still is a great person.  
Love Sue & Jeff

**Sue Carrier** - March 08, 2015 at 08:24 PM

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“ Sorry for your loss Gerda. I always enjoyed talking with Lew about anything and everything when we were lucky enough to be up at the Bungy. I go fishing with Lew each time I am on the river since he passed his waders on to me a few years back, he was a great guy. love from Tyler, Laurie and Isabel

**tylaur** - March 08, 2015 at 07:25 PM

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“ Will miss seeing Lew's smiling face at the Welcome Center, deepest sympathies for Gerda and the family. Tonya Rowe



**Tonya Rowe** - March 08, 2015 at 06:35 PM

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“ We loved getting together with Lew and Gerta on our visits to the cabin. I loved how their eyes showed such excitement to see us, but especially our son , Paul!  
Gerta, my heart aches for you... Lew was one sweet guy. Thanks for sharing him with us.

Love, Kerry and Kim Dubuque

**kerry dubuque** - March 08, 2015 at 06:33 PM

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“ My deepest sympathies to Gerda and the family. I will miss seeing Lew around town and his smiling face.  
Michele Gosselin

Michele Gosselin - March 08, 2015 at 06:17 PM

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“ Our heartfelt sympathy, and condolences go out to Gerda, and family.  
Bob and Lisa Vashaw



Lisa Vashaw - March 08, 2015 at 05:49 PM

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“ Thinking of you Gerda, sorry for your loss Lew was a friend and good man. He will be missed

Daniel Sullivan - March 08, 2015 at 05:41 PM

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“ Our thoughts and prayers are with Gerda and her family. Remembering what great times we had with Lew and Gerda at The Balsams.

Rick and Donna Kaye Erwin

Rick Erwin - March 08, 2015 at 05:37 PM

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“ Gerda and Family - many thoughts and prayers for you all at this sad time of your loss.

Ginger Jannenga

Ginger Jannenga - March 08, 2015 at 04:45 PM



“Gerda and Family I'm sorry to hear the passing of Lew. I remember the first time I had met him at The Balsams and will never forget the sparkle in his eyes. My thought and prayers with all of you at this difficult time.

Angel Brown

Angel Brown - March 08, 2015 at 04:39 PM

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“Gerda, I am so sorry to hear of Lew passing. He was a lucky man to be loved by his special German Bride!! Prayers and love being sent to you!! Jenn

Jennifer Taylor - March 08, 2015 at 01:46 PM

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“Gerda and family, comforting thoughts and hugs are being sent your way at this sad time. Lew was special to so many and he will always be remembered fondly and with love. My sincere sympathies to you.

Carolyn Foss-Monson - March 08, 2015 at 01:36 PM

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“Thinking of you Gerda. Your love for Lew was always written all over your face and I remember well how happy you two were at the hotel. Lots of love.

MJ Learned - March 08, 2015 at 01:28 PM

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“ Gerta, WE are so sorry to hear the passing of Lew He was a very nice man He will be missed by everyone that got to know him. He is no longer suffering Think of all the good memories you had together.



**Lester and Theresa Brooks** - March 08, 2015 at 01:19 PM

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“ Thinking of you Gerda. He was such a nice man.

Haley and Daniel Giroux

**Haley Giroux** - March 08, 2015 at 01:15 PM

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“ Sending my deepest sympathy to Gerta and Family. I am so sorry for your loss!  
Rachele Thivierge

**rachele thivierge** - March 08, 2015 at 12:19 PM

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“ Gerda and family we are so sorry to hear of Lew's passing. He was a great man and will be missed by many. Keep all the great memories close to the heart.  
Normand and Debbie Boivin



**Debbie Boivin** - March 08, 2015 at 12:12 PM

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“ What an extraordinary man Lew was! He made everyone in his presence smile. He was greatly loved and will be sorely missed, but always fondly remembered. We love you Gerda!!

**Danielle Barba** - March 08, 2015 at 11:52 AM

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“ Gerda I am so sorry to hear of Lews passing, I hope you can find solace in the memories you had with him. He was indeed a very special man

**Kim Bennett** - March 08, 2015 at 09:07 AM