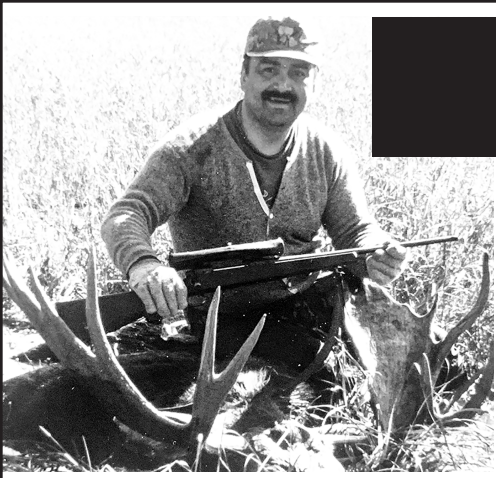


# Obituary: Daniel James Gross Jr.,

December 3, 1953 - May 21, 2024



Daniel James Gross Jr., a lifelong Wrangell resident, walked quietly into the forest on May 21, 2024. Dan was born in Wrangell on December 3, 1953, to Margaret June (DeWitt) Gross-Hope and Daniel James Gross Sr., the 4th of 7 children. Following his matrilineal heritage, Dan was an Eagle/Killer Whale/Wolf and a member of the Tlingit Naanyaa.aayi clan.

Dan graduated from Wrangell High School in 1973, and attended Central Peninsula College in Port Townsend, Washington, graduating in 1975 with an associate degree in heavy duty mechanics. He worked on the Alaska pipeline, was a millwright at the local sawmills, and was part of the original crew that rebuilt the 6-Mile mill. He worked for the State of Alaska Department of Transportation as an operator/mechanic for 27 years and retired in April 2023.

Dan and Cathy first laid eyes on each other in the busy aisles of City Market in 1980. Luckily, she was already 18, because the attraction was an immediate magnetic force that nothing could stop. Each one inquired about who the other was through Lana and Harley Johnson, both being friends with them. They were soon introduced by the couple and the rest is history.

Together, Dan and Cathy found a love that was rare and beautiful in this world, a profound bond that was absolutely unbreakable, and would last the duration of this life and likely to the next. Dan and Cathy were married in 1985. They had two children, Dani and Jared, and

raised them together with trust, respect, and absolute unconditional love. Through this they were a living example of what true love should look like. The best part of their relationship had to be the banter though, nobody could harass each other like Dan and Cathy could. They spent 44 years living, loving, and always laughing together, even if it was at the expense of one another. What he leaves us with is that example of how to love someone like they deserve. To love someone freely, without expectations or conditions, to love someone not based on what you get in return, but based on the amount of happiness you can create for them instead.

Dan never had to say he loved you, because he didn't have to. If he loved you he made it an active practice, a way to live his life that spoke louder and carried farther than any cow call through a bull magnet ever could, and that lesson is enduring and will carry on through the seasons of time, and forever in the hearts of those lucky enough to witness or experience it.

Dan started running the Stikine at an early age with his friends, exploring every part of the river he could reach, and areas that he probably shouldn't have gone. There were endless adventures, stops by Stan and Opal Livingston's place for pancakes, weekend camping trips that turned into two-week adventures, winter snowmobile trips, hunting and fishing. He spent many years slough burning, jumping beaver dams and soaking in the hot tubs. There wasn't a part of the river he didn't know

and there wasn't anyone he couldn't cook out of the tubs.

He loved the river when it was low, scraping across rocks, bumping over submerged trees, sneaking through the skinny areas and running as close to the banks as possible. When the boat would lift up as he skimmed the banks, you could see the joy it brought him. The big smile and the laughter said it all. He also loved to explore when the river was high. He burned into areas that were seldom if ever seen. He enjoyed the beauty, the wildlife, but most importantly, he loved sharing these adventures with his family and friends. His river scow was seldom seen without Cathy and the kids along for the adventures, unless it was moose season (Cathy said there was way too much testosterone in the cabin and no, she wasn't the camp cook).

There were many weekends spent up the river. You didn't see Dan, Cathy and the kids during summertime adventures without seeing the Mills and the Gladsjos traveling alongside, burning through the sloughs and backwaters, baiting Brent to boldly go where no man has gone before and sitting back laughing while the pileups happened (we called his scow the Enterprise). The Gross, Gladsjos and Mills were family, and raised their kids together. There was sunshine, laughter, love and adventure on every trip.

Dan may have been a man of few words, but he was a man of many moose, a confidante to those who loved and trusted him, and a true partner to those lucky enough to hunt and fish

around him. He may not have always stopped to chat but if you needed a gallon of gas, a ride down river, a tug off the sandbar, a shot of whiskey or the shirt off his back, he was there. Always.

He was the king of moose hunting and had many successful hunts on the Stikine. He was the luck, he was the magic, moose migrated to be close to him. He spent years teaching and sharing his skills with Dani and Jared, and those lucky enough to have a spot at Gross Moose Camp. The cabin was a full-on hunt every fall, and his innate ability to call and harvest moose earned him the title "The Moose Whisperer."

Dan was deeply connected to this community and all who live here. Wrangell lost a great man on May 21st, and he will be missed by those of us who were lucky enough to be part of his life.

Dan was preceded in death by his father, Dan Gross Sr., mother Margaret Gross-Hope and stepfather Fred Hope; sisters Janette and Charlene Gross; brother Darrel Gross; and father-in-law Roy Weatherford. He is survived by his wife Cathy Gross; daughter Kristin "Dani" Gross (Timothy Johnson); son Jared Gross; sisters Peggy (Mike) Amiotte, Peachie Wolff and brother Greg Gross; mother-in-law Frannie Weatherford; sister-in-law Dee Gross; brother-in-law Spunky Weatherford; best friend Karl Gladsjo (Dorothy); many nieces, nephews and cousins; and friends he considered cherished family.

A celebration of life was held July 13, 2024, at the Wrangell Elks Lodge.