

Cancer claims Gaile Kady, tireless community volunteer

By Carol Graham
Herald Staff Writer

Friends say Gaile Kady was a true friend. A mentor who led by perfect example. She was a selfless inspiration who gave her time and talents to her community.

Kady died of cancer Monday in Grand Forks. She was 56. Services will be at 10 a.m. today in United Lutheran Church.

Bob Gustafson, president of the Grand Forks Chamber of Commerce, said about Kady, "What you see is what you get." She was very candid, he said.

One of her gifts to the community has been her years of volunteer work. She was president of the Grand Forks Exchange Club, president of the Greater Gateway Association and chairwoman of the Grand Forks Beautification Committee. She also was a member of the board of directors and served on the executive committee of the Chamber of Commerce. Kady was instrumental in bringing the Adopt-A-Highway program to eastern North Dakota.

Friends remember Kady as someone with a cheerful and pleasant disposition. She had a great sense of humor.

Julie Starren, receptionist at Butler Machinery, said Kady "was the heart and soul of Butler Machinery," where she had worked for 20 years. As office manager, she did everything from greeting the customers to working in the parts department and training the service managers.



Gaile Kady

Kady was a friend to everyone who worked for Butler and a great mentor. She was the first woman in a leadership role at Butler, which has more than 300 employees in eight offices in North Dakota and South Dakota. A caring co-worker, she remembered birthdays and anniversaries of many of her colleagues.

"She was the heartbeat of this place," Starren said of her friend.

After work, projects and her flowers, there was fishing for Kady. Especially muskie fishing on Leech Lake near Walker, Minn. Kady and her husband, Thomas, lived for several years in a houseboat on the lake and recently built a home there. Kady loved to catch the big ones, and she liked telling stories about catching the big ones even more. Kady enjoyed sharing her love of fishing with her two daughters and five grandchildren.

Another friend, Donna Whaley, remembers that Kady couldn't tell a story to save her soul. "Laughing the whole time, she would ask friends and family for help when she couldn't get the punch line right," Whaley said.

Whaley also remembers her friend as a small, elegant woman, fastidious about her appearance, who often wore hats. Winter and summer.

"I re-evaluated in my mind's eye why she was a role model for me," said Cindy Beyer, who sits on the Grand Forks City Council and worked with Beyer on the beautification projects. "She worked in a man's world at Butler. But she was always a tough and classy woman. She wasn't afraid express her opinion about anything. Then she would stand behind that opinion."