

In Memoriam

* Marvin James Thurmond *

Members of the Thirty-Third Alaska State Legislature honor the life and memory of Marvin James Thurmond who peacefully passed away on July 24, 2020, surrounded by family and loved ones.

Marvin was born January 21, 1960, in Nulato, Alaska, to Archie and Virginia Thurmond. He attended Galena City School and graduated in 1979. He was active in sports and excelled in many different events throughout his high school years. He played basketball and was a star point guard for the Galena Hawks. He also was an avid cross-country runner and won many races.

During his early years, Marvin ran Yuki Lumber Company for his father before studying process technology in Kenai. He returned to Galena and worked for Galena Construction for five years. He then took over Yutana Barge, taking the job that his dad Archie had for many years.

He took great pride in his more than thirty-two years with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, where he worked until his retirement in 2020. He started as a heavy-equipment operator and worked his way up to be Galena airport manager.

Galena's airport is an important hub for many communities. Through his exemplary dedication and selfless commitment to operating and maintaining it, Marvin helped many beyond it, providing a high level of service that will be hard to equal, let alone surpass.

Not that it was easy. Among the challenges he faced over his career were a major flood in 2013 and an intense wildfire in 2015. Throughout it all, he performed above and beyond his regular duties and made keeping the public safe his number one priority. His professionalism, integrity, and dependability – accompanied by a kind and welcoming manner – serve as a fine example for others to emulate.

Marvin loved hunting, especially with close family relatives Beanie, Sonny, and son Wesley. They had many adventures and shared many stories when they returned home. He loved fishing, especially for pike. His most cherished moments were spending time with his children and grandchildren.

Marvin was preceded in death by his parents Archie and Virginia Thurmond, son Wesley, siblings Charlene, Archie Junior, Marlene, Stewart, Cyndy Ann, Tostie, and many relatives – too many to mention.

He is survived by daughters Lindsey and Robin, grandchildren Taylor, Archie, Kellan, Draven, River, Kai, Asher, siblings Josephine, Ed Senior, Darryl, and special friend Evelyn Burgett.

Members of the Thirty-Third Alaska Legislature join the family and friends of Marvin James Thurmond to mourn their loss and celebrate a life well lived and worth emulating. We are grateful for his service and for leaving Alaska an even better place than he found it.