



## Steve Fernandez

December 23, 1941 - December 14, 2012

Steve Fernandez, age 70 of Dedham and formerly of Ankeny, died Friday, December 14, 2012 at the Manilla Manor Nursing Home in Manilla surrounded by his family.

A funeral service will be held at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, December 19, 2012 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Dedham. Officiating will be Deacon Louis Meiners. Soloist will be Jeremy Mathany. Readings will be by Steve's granddaughter, Hailey Birdsall. Petitions will be read by Steve's grandchildren. Urn Bearer will be Bob Volp. Burial will be at a later date at St. Joseph's Cemetery in Dedham.

Steve's family will greet friends and family one hour prior to services at the church on Wednesday. Steve's family will direct memorials to the Cuban Refugees and those families affected from the Newtown, Connecticut School Tragedy.

A celebration of life service for Steve will also be held on Friday, December 21, 2012 at the Vittoria Lodge, 7200 NW 2nd Ave. Ankeny, Iowa, 50021 from 7 p.m. – 12 a.m.

Funeral arrangements were under the direction of the Sharp Funeral Home in Carroll and online condolences may be left for Steve's family at [www.sharpfuneral.com](http://www.sharpfuneral.com).

Steve Fernandez, born Jesus Esteban Fernandez Martinez, was born in Cienfuegos, Cuba on December 23, 1941. He was the only son of Etelvino and Lida (Martinez) Fernandez. Together, very hard working, they owned and

operated the Hotel Union in Cienfuegos. During his late teenage years he was imprisoned for two months during the Cuban Revolution for distributing anti Castro propaganda. Due to his father's connection with law enforcement he was released from prison. Fearing further imprisonment he fled to Spain to live with his paternal grandmother for two years.

In 1962 he arrived in the United States. Steve knew little English and settled briefly in Long Island, New York with a close cousin Roger. While there he met his first wife, Linda. Together they moved to Gainesville, Florida where he played college and semi pro baseball. During this time baseball was not a lucrative career so he went back to his roots and his love of the sea and became a life guard.

In May of 1967, he became a citizen of the United States and legally changed his name to Steve Fernandez. Steve and Linda then moved to the Ankeny area. While in Ankeny, Steve coached baseball as one of his hobbies. He raised two children, Robert and Cary and settled into a career at Firestone where he worked 25 years until retirement. On October 4, 2005 Steve married Dixie Christensen at the Botanical Center in Des Moines, Iowa. Following their marriage the couple made their home in Dedham, Iowa. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, dancing, and was an avid Chicago Cubs and Iowa Hawkeyes fan. Steve loved his family and loved people. He would entertain them with his Cuban humor and Cuban accent. He will be remembered most for his sensitivity and his unselfish character. Most dear to Steve were his friends, family, and his family that remains in Cuba and Florida.

Left to cherish his memory are his wife Dixie Christensen Fernandez of Dedham; his children: Robert Fernandez and fiancé Janine Buchanan of Indianola and Cary Birdsall and husband Scott of Huxley; his step-daughter, Megan Volp and her husband Bob of West Des Moines; his grandchildren: Alysia Fernandez, Jessica (Pete) Augustine, Erica Fernandez, Victoria Fernandez, Hailey Birdsall, Riley Birdsall, Ava Birdsall, Elizabeth Reams, and Danielle Brady; his step-grandchildren: Aiden Volp and Cora Volp; his great-granddaughter, Emma Augustine; his sister-in-law, Debbie Mathany; his close

friend and fishing buddy, Art Valentine; as well as his close cousins and dear friends in Florida.

Steve was preceded in death by his parents; and his cousin Roger Fernandez.

# Tribute Wall

SV

“ Hi Dixie & Family, We were sure sorry to hear about Steve passing this past weekend. The poor guy has had to endure a lot more than the good Lord should allow. We want to wish you and your family the best during this difficult holiday season too. The Vollstedt's, Steve & Janell

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**Steve Vollstedt** - December 19, 2012 at 09:08 AM

CK

“ I was so very sorry, Dixie, Megan, and ALL, to hear the news about Steve! (Christine had told me that he was ill.) I don't think that we can make the service, I'll try tomorrow, but it's quite difficult to find someone to work for you, especially at this time of year! I can still see and remember him "tickling Debbie's feet", at one of the gatherings. TAKE CARE! CAROL, Larry, Kevin, & ALL

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**Carol Volp, Larry & Kevin Koeneke** - December 18, 2012 at 02:51 PM

JL

“ So sorry to hear of Steve's passing. I Remember the good times we had playing softball for OLIH in Ankeny.

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**Jack & Vi Leinen** - December 18, 2012 at 10:30 AM

CH

“ Our thoughts are will you all during this difficult time. The times that were spent with Steve were always full of laughter and cheer. He will be missed by many.

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**Christine and Tony Hodgkins** - December 17, 2012 at 08:32 PM

CB

“ Dixie, Our thoughts and prays go out to you and your family during this difficult time. My God be with you during your time of need.

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**Christina Bricker** - December 17, 2012 at 04:58 PM

KD

“ Dixie and Family: My deepest sympathy to you all. I cannot remember a time when I ever saw or spoke to Steve, that he didn't have me laughing. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.

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**Karol Dammann** - December 17, 2012 at 03:59 PM

SB

“ Dixie, So sorry to hear of your loss. Thinking of you. My prayers are with you during this difficult time.

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**Sue Bjelland** - December 17, 2012 at 02:51 PM