

## **Rocky E. Criss**

Pine City

A lifelong member of our community passed away on Saturday, August 9, 2025 following a battle with cancer. Rocky was born on September 24, 1957 in Elmira, son of the late, Samuel and Jeannette Brock Criss. He graduated from Southside High School Class of 76. Education was always important to Rocky, he went on to earn his Bachelor of Science Degree from Elmira College and his Master's Degree in Education from Binghamton University. In service to his country, Rocky joined the United States Marine Corps in 1982, serving on active duty until 1987. During these years, he was stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C. He served in Beirut, Lebanon, completed a WestPac deployment, and helped form the brand-new Light Armored Vehicle Battalion. After active duty, Rock continued to serve in the Marine Corps Reserves, with a total of over 20 years of military service. He was a fixture at Marine Corps Base 29 Palms, California every summer, and a proud member of the 8th Tank Battalion out of Rochester, New York. In 1991, during the first Gulf War, Rock was activated and served as the Executive Officer of Bravo Company, commanding an M60 Main Battle Tank. Over the decades, he filled many key roles: Company Commander, overseas training evaluator, and Marine advisor to the 7th Naval Seabee Regiment. At the same time, Rock spent 30 years shaping young minds as a science teacher, 20 years teaching middle school and another 10 years teaching high school. Thousands of students remember him for his passion, humor, and the personal investment he made in each of their lives. He retired from the Elmira City School District after many years of dedicated service. He loved fishing, being on the water and in the outdoors. He was a member of the Mosherville Baptist Bible Church. Rocky is remembered for his quick wit and dedication to his family that survive; wife and companion of 47 years, Debra Long Criss, Pine City; son, Ben (Amie) Criss, Coltsneck, NJ; daughter, Kate (Scott) Webb, Sidney, NY; four grandchildren, Keenan, Brynn, Logan, and Reagan; a brother, Randy (Linda) Criss, Robesonia, PA; niece, Michelle (Josh) Moritz, nephew, Randy Jr. (Natalie) Criss; brother-in-law, Kevin (Robin) Long, their daughter, Nikki (Cameron) Wisniewski, with their son, Cam; a great niece, Leigha Long. In addition to his parents, Rocky was predeceased by his infant brother, Robbie and nephew, Joshua Long. Family and friends will be received at Caywood's Funeral Home & Gardens, 1126 Broadway Elmira/Southport, NY 14904 on Wednesday, August 13, 2025 between the hours of 3-6 p.m. Funeral services will take place on Thursday at the Mosherville Baptist Bible Church, 9914 Coryland Rd. Mosherville, PA at 11 a.m. with his pastor and friend Ted Rich officiating. Graveside services to follow in Alder Run Cemetery, Millerton, PA. Flowers are declined with memorials directed to the Bear Creek Trout Nursery, c/o Jim Andrews, PO Box 25 Millerton, PA 16936 in Rocky's memory.