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## In Memory



July 24, 1953 - Nov. 7 Resident of Moraga

Gordon Paul Erspamer, age 61, passed away on Nov. 7 at his home in Moraga after a 9-month battle with brain cancer. He was born on July 24, 1953, in Ironwood, Mich., to E. Gordon Erspamer and Jean McDonell Erspamer, the third of eight boys. He received his BA from Hamline College in 1975 and his JD from the University of Michigan Law School in 1978. He met his future wife, Trish Bare, in law school and they moved to San Francisco in 1978.

Gordy began his legal career at the San Francisco firm of Steinhart & Falconer before moving to Morrison & Foerster in 1982, where he spent the next 30 years focusing on energy and intellectual property law. His passion and life's work, however, was his pro bono work on behalf of military veterans. Over the past 30 years, he spearheaded a series of lawsuits that brought about significant changes both in the law and in public opinion. Most recently, Gordy brought suit on behalf of soldiers used as guinea pigs in the testing of chemical and biological weapons at Edgewood

Arsenal from 1943-1975. Gordy's tireless advocacy on behalf of veterans earned him extensive recognition during his lifetime, including being named Trial Lawyer of the Year by Trial Lawyers for Public Justice in 1992, the American Bar Association Pro Bono Publico award in 2009, the American Lawyer Magazine Lifetime Achievement Award in 2011 and the National Veterans Legal Service Program Outstanding Public Service Award in 2013.

Gordy was also an avid collector of Native American artifacts and art, an enthusiastic poet and photographer, and he spent many thousands of hours perfecting his cactus gardens at his Moraga home. He is survived by his wife of 32 years, Trish Bare; four children, Kevin (Jessica Fain), Kerry (Ben Ginsberg), Brian, and Brett; his mother, Jean; brothers Dave (Heidi), Mike, Paul, Roy, and Marty and many nieces, nephews and cousins. He was predeceased by his father E. Gordon Erspamer, his younger brother Peter and his oldest brother Dan.

No memorial service will be held as family and friends celebrated Gordy's life and accomplishments in July at the Hacienda de las Flores in Moraga. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Gordy's name to Swords to Plowshares at [www.swords-to-plowshares.org](http://www.swords-to-plowshares.org). The family wishes to thank their many friends who provided endless support during Gordy's illness, particularly Jim and Jody Balich and Rocky and Chris Unruh.

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