

DAYTONA BEACH, FL - Jerry Gulley, 79, died Christmas Eve in Daytona Beach, FL, where he had been hospitalized for the past month.

The proximity of his death to the Daytona Speedway is fitting, as drag racing and hot rods were his passions and the true loves of his life.

A graduate of Dobyns-Bennett, Gulley worked and retired from the machine shop at Eastman. His speed shop on Fort Henry Drive has been a fixture in the racing culture for decades.

In the 1960s, the wheels of his dragsters and funny cars dug through the thick soil where the Bristol Dragstrip is currently located. And he raced on almost every track in the Southeast U.S. at some point.

He will be remembered as a man of few words, a fiercely loyal friend, and a lover of burgers.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Mary Ruth Bacon Gulley, and his brother, James Larry Gulley.

He is survived by his son, Jerry Thomas Gulley II (James Schend), of Kenosha, Wisconsin. He is also survived by his uncle Woody Bacon (Shirley Bacon) and aunt Sallie Bacon, countless cousins, and a network of great friends throughout the country.

A private interment will be held at the family cemetery.