



David Cline Croft

March 6, 1933 - August 27, 2020

David C. Croft was born on March 6, 1933 and died on August 27, 2020. He is survived by: his wife of 57 years (Geraldine Croft), his three sons Michael Croft (Bo), Richard Croft and Gregory Croft (Petie), his two stepdaughters Gail Stafford (William) and Terry Burdette (James), 13 grandchildren, 20 great grandchildren and 3 great great grandchildren.

David entered this world in a unique manner and he has been unique ever since. His mother was residing on top of a mountain in Tennessee when she went into labor. His mother saddled a horse and rode all the way down mountain to the City of Pikeville, Tennessee to give birth. David cooperated by delaying his birth until his mother arrived in Pikeville.

Anyone who knew David knew about the time he served his country. He was particularly fond of the time he spent in Okinawa, Japan. He was fascinated by a place know as Suicide Cliff (renamed Peace Prayer Park) where hundreds of Japanese chose to jump to their deaths rather than be captured. David valued life too much to understand why these soldiers would choose death over life. He could not understand why their country would encourage this.

David loved his country. He thought the American flag the most beautiful thing in the world. Every time he would pass an American flag waving in the wind, he would point it out and "Isn't that the most beautiful thing you have ever seen?"

David worked for 44 years at Jefferson Smurfitt, papermill. He retired as a supervisor. His friends at work were his second family and he loved all of them. They remained his "extended family" long after he retired.

While David was working as a millwright, he decided he would like to learn how to be a hairdresser. Thus, he had a parallel career. He was a good hairdresser. He travelled to New York City to attend the wild and crazy hairdresser competitions which he enjoyed.

David was an avid golfer. He played every chance he got. He even played in Pro/Am

portion of the GJO (Greater Jacksonville Open) which was the predecessor to the TPC (Tournament Players Championship). When he played, he was teamed with Gary Player. Until the day he passed, he had a picture of himself and Gary Player hanging in his home. In addition, David was one of the few players invited to play at the Augusta National Golf Club which is home to the Master's Tournament.

David was an outdoorsman. He loved to fish, hunt and do anything on the water. He taught his kids to water ski and drive a boat early. Needless to say, he was a patient man.

David liked to give back to his community. He was an active member of the Masonic Lodge for most of his adult life. He was a Shriner and became a member of the elite "Jesters".

David loved his wife of 57 years, Geraldine. He once gifted her with the song, "When a Man Loves a Woman" and thought her to be the prettiest woman alive. When asked to point out his wife, he would point to the group and say "That's her, the pretty one". This occurred even when they reached their eighties.

David loved to travel. He and Geraldine went up and down the east coast and the west coast. They traveled to Hawaii and Alaska. The western states were David's favorite. He loved old westerns and in his later years, if you visited his home, there was usually an old western like Bonanza or Wagon Train being played in the background. He loved those old westerns so much that he tried to learn how to "quick draw" thereby shooting a hole in the wall and almost his own foot.

David was a kind man. When his stepdaughters were young and struggling, he would make sure they had a Christmas tree every year. He would go to the forest and cut down a small pine tree. Sometimes they were so small you had to tie two of them together. The smell was wonderful.

David loved kids. He especially loved his grandchildren. He would spend hours with his granddaughter, Misty Parnell (Kristen), playing his guitar while she danced. They loved to sing duos together. At Misty's wedding rehearsal dinner, they serenaded the crowd with a heartwarming rendition of "Three, Six, Nine, The Goose Drank Wine".

David's grandson Michael Croft (Bianca) remembers him as the man who taught him a lot about fishing and driving a boat. Most importantly, Michael says that David is the man he wants to pattern his life after. That pattern being to "work hard so you can play hard".

David will be missed and remembered by many. We all say “thank you David for the good times”.

David will be laid to rest 12:30 p.m., Friday, September 18, 2020 at Jacksonville National Cemetery, the interment service is for immediate family members only due to covid restriction.

Because of COVID 19, no flowers are allowed. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that donations be made to the Alzheimer’s Foundation, Saint Augustine, Florida .

St. Johns Family Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

Comments



“ A tribute video has been added.



St. Johns Family Funeral Home - September 01 at 03:40 PM



“ I met David when I was a teenager in junior high. His wife and my mother we're good friends and I was friends with his step daughters. Patience and kindness are the things I remember most about him. He put up with teenage girls and their slumber parties, and even pretended not to notice when We snuck out at night. Later on when we were older, all three of us girls found ourselves pregnant at the same time! David and his wife Geri took me into their home and made sure I had good food and a place to be. It took quite a lot of that patience for him to have so many pregnant women living under the same roof! He was a kind and generous man, and although I had not seen him in many years, I believe he was one of the best people I have known. He and his wife made a lasting impression on me and a big difference in my life. Pops will be missed.
Kathi Atwater Turner

Kathi Atwater Turner - September 08 at 12:01 PM



“ David, thanks so much for teaching me to drive. It took a lot of patience and BRAVERY. If not for you I would still be bumming rides. Of course, everyone says I drive just like you. Why do they laugh when they say that???.....

I asked God to take you to his best golf courses and fishing holes. I hope you enjoy them. I love you Pops! It must be wonderful in your new home...

Love, Gail Stafford

Gail Stafford - September 04 at 12:14 PM



“ Granddaddy was the best man I've ever known he loved his grandchildren and created so many meaningful memories with us the best times in my life were all with him and nanny i love just being around them they were so much fun i was sure nobody had the kind of grandparent's i did and i still feel like that today no one could ever take his place or be as cool as my granddaddy he was the kindest most loving

person and i sure will miss him i wish my children knew him they sure missed out i love you granddaddy and ill miss you forever the same way i still miss granny croft i hope yall are together and cant wait to see yall some day until then fly high my sweet granddaddy love your granddaughter charlie and

Charlie Buckland - September 02 at 10:56 PM



“ Terry And Butch lit a candle in memory of David Cline Croft



Terry and Butch - September 02 at 09:44 PM



“ 15 files added to the album LifeTributes



St. Johns Family Funeral Home - September 01 at 03:32 PM