



Daryl Dominic LaBello

October 25, 1942 - July 14, 2020

Daryl Dominic LaBello

October 25, 1942 – July 14, 2020

On July 14, 2020, the world lost a kind, beloved soul when Daryl Dominic LaBello passed at 77 years of age in St. Augustine, Florida.

Family was everything to Daryl. If you needed anything—a place to stay, a little money, a friendly ear, some sage advice, or even help running a restaurant—he was the man for you.

Born in Muskegon, Michigan, during World War II, Daryl had a tumultuous childhood that saw him moving frequently. Primarily raised by his grandmother, Linda McCleese, in Gaylord, Michigan, he would tell stories of gleaning in the fields and picking fruit in the orchards with his cousins, so there would be enough food for the winter. He learned to hunt at a young age and deer hunting was a regular activity for him during the late Michigan fall. He passed this skill to his nephews, as he mentored them when they were young. In addition, he would divide his time between Muskegon and Sault Ste. Marie, Canada, living with father's side of the family. On rare occasions, he would travel the mid-west states with his mother and step-father, assisting with the family business painting barns and houses.

After high school, Daryl joined the Navy. He proudly served aboard the USS Gyatt (DDG 1/DDG 712), the Navy's very first guided missile destroyer. The ship often patrolled the Caribbean, which allowed him the opportunity to visit many of the islands, scratching the itch to travel to exotic places. While in the Navy, he was a Machinist Mate and learned valuable skills that served him well in his civilian career. Two of his grandchildren later followed his example. Chelsea joined the Marines, while his grandson, Sam, joined the National Guard. He was deeply proud of both.

At the beginning of 1967, his tour in the Navy was up, and he went back to Muskegon where he married his first wife, Barbara. They lived in a small trailer while he worked in the automotive parts industry, eventually settling at Universal Camshaft. At the end of that year, his first son was born. Needing to expand from the trailer, he worked with his father-in-law to build his first house with his own hands in Fruitport Township, a suburb of Muskegon.

One of his passions when he was younger was muscle cars, particularly Oldsmobiles. He used to say he could have a new car every year as long as he could afford the payment (his brother-in-law was a car salesman for Oldsmobile). In 1974, he purchased what was to be his last muscle car, a Gold 1974 Oldsmobile Omega with a V8 engine, rally wheels, and black bucket seats. Alas, with burgeoning family responsibilities and the gas crisis of the 1970's, he kept the car for less than two years before moving to a more fuel efficient—but not nearly as much fun—Datsun B210 hatchback. He would never again own another muscle car, but he never lost his appreciation for them and became a lifelong NASCAR fan.

Being supportive of family, when his sister Sandy came to him with an idea to open a pizza restaurant, he partnered with her to open the North Inn in North Muskegon. Working his factory job during the day and running the restaurant in the evenings, Daryl was burning the candle at both ends. Eventually, his

sister had an offer to partner in another enterprise and the decision was made to sell the restaurant. In 1977, his second son was born, and Daryl moved up to a supervisor position at the factory.

In 1981 Crane Cams, out of Florida, bought Universal Camshaft and built a brand-new factory in Daytona Beach. In January of 1982, the company moved Daryl's whole family to the new location. At the time, the factory had close ties to the racing industry and produced both commercial and custom camshafts, rocker arms, and other engine parts for racing and production cars. Daryl did well, slowly working his way up to machine buyer for the company. This position allowed him to travel the country purchasing modern machinery for the factory.

While he was always an avid hunter and fisherman in Michigan, there were three sports for which Daryl had a lifelong passion: hockey, NASCAR, and golf.

He played a lot of hockey as a kid, in pickup games and minor leagues. Daryl inherited his love of the game from his father, who was once a member of a minor professional hockey team.

His love of NASCAR came out of his enjoyment for muscle cars and his work in the camshaft and automotive parts industry. Because his company was tied into racing sports, Daryl attended yearly events sponsored by his company with the drivers of the Daytona 500. He got to know many of the 1980's drivers through bowling and receptions. He remained a regular attendant at the Daytona 500 for decades.

Golf is the sport of business, and as such, Daryl developed an appreciation and love for the sport as he climbed the corporate ladder. Deals are often

made or broken on the golf course, and he played his share. His love for the game transcended business, and he continued to play right into his last year. It was his favorite activity with his best friend, Fritz, who preceded him in death by less than a year. Some of his fondest memories were of playing with and watching his grandson, Sam, play the game when he was young. He never missed a practice, game, or tournament.

Unfortunately, the late 80's were not kind to the camshaft company, which went belly-up. During this time, Daryl also divorced his first wife, Barbara. Looking at everything as opportunity, he moved back to Michigan for a couple of years to help his sister, Sandy, in her latest venture, a bar named the Old Homestead. He became the manager of the establishment and enjoyed his freedom and time with family in Michigan that he had not seen in quite a while. The Old Homestead remains in the family under the ownership of his nephew, Douglas.

Eventually, opportunity in Florida knocked again and he moved to St. Augustine to run the aluminum extrusion lines of VAW. This reunited him with his sons, Daryl, who was just graduating college and moving to St. Augustine to teach middle school, and Dominic, who came to live with him while attending high school. He loved the St. Augustine area, particularly Anastasia Island, where the beach was just a walk away and the sea breeze remained steady all day long.

It didn't take long, and Daryl met the second love of his life, Gloria. He was married again in 1991, becoming a step-father to Gloria's two grown daughters, Leslie and Susan, and grandfather to Leslie's two children, Ashley and Douglas. In the next few years, three more grandchildren came along: Leslie's daughter, Hayley, and Susan's children, Chelsea and Sam. Daryl doted on and spoiled them all.

Daryl loved having relatives come and stay at the house and often hosted his cousins from Canada and other family. He never complained, even when he accidentally fried fish coated in powder sugar that he had mistakenly taken for flour.

Even though these few words compress the events of his life, his deeds touched the hearts of many and his memory will be cherished.

Daryl was preceded in death by his mother Willmena (Billy), father Dominic, step-father Harry, sister Sandra, brother Maurice, brother Buddy, and first wife Barbara. He is survived by his second wife Gloria, son Daryl, son Dominic, step-daughter Leslie, step-daughter Susan, grandchildren Ashley, Douglas, Hayley, Chelsea, and Sam, great-grandchildren, and his dog, Fancie, who loved him most of all.

Tribute Wall



“ *St. Johns Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Daryl Dominic Labello*



St. Johns Family Funeral Home - September 10, 2020 at 11:53 AM

MA

So. Sorry. For. Your. Lost. Gloria and. Family

Mary. - September 10, 2020 at 11:12 PM

DG

Beautiful , dick and deb glover. Miss you.

debra gl9ver - September 11, 2020 at 04:11 PM

VM

Wonderful tribute. Prayers for Gloria and the family. Love, Von McLeod (widow of Steve McLeod from VAW)

Von McLeod - October 09, 2020 at 03:32 PM

NH

“ *I'm so sorry to hear. Gloria I will keep you in my prayers. I would see and chat with Daryl in the afternoons when he and Fancie would go for their bike ride. Antwon and I would be on our walk. I will miss seeing him in the neighborhood.*

Nancy Hersey - September 22, 2020 at 12:09 AM

LC

“ I work with Daryl many years ago at Universal Camshaft. We parted ways when they close up Universal Camshaft, on Broadway. For the Universal crew, we all remember the funniest issue he had with Blue Dykem. I will always remember that for the rest of my life. My thoughts and prayers for the LaBello family.
Larry Chan

Larry Chan - September 13, 2020 at 10:39 AM

PS

“ Was so sad to read this. He was the Godfather of our youngest daughter Patti. My parents were "Big Al " and June Scholten. Thank you for sharing. Patricia {Scholten} Stahl.

Patricia (Scholten) Stahl - September 10, 2020 at 02:08 PM

CB

Dear Gloria & Family, My Prayers 🙏 and Love go out to you all. May you find Peace in knowing he is not suffering any more. So sorry for your loss. He was a good person & friend. Rest in Peace. 🙏❤️
😭😭 Carol Blackaby

Carol blackaby - September 12, 2020 at 05:43 PM

DS

So sorry my dear friend, he was such a nice guy. He we be missed by us all.

Dee Sochor - September 21, 2020 at 04:22 PM



“ 16 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



St. Johns Family Funeral Home - September 10, 2020 at 11:52 AM