



Donald E. Lavin Sr.

November 10, 1926 - December 21, 2020

Donald (Don) E. Lavin died at 2:35 a.m. on December 21, 2020. Adoring husband of Ellena “Dolly” Lavin (nee Finn), who passed onto God on February 22, 2015. Father of Deborah (Joseph) White, Donald E. (the late Layne) Lavin Jr. and the late Dennis Michael Lavin. Grandfather to Dr. Christine (Brandon Tuley) White, Michael J. (Rebecca Krisel) White, and Meghan Lavin White. Great-grandfather to Colin and Kathleen Tuley. Uncle to many beloved nieces and nephews.

Born and raised in North St. Louis, he was a proud alumnus of St. Louis University High School, where he graduated at age 16. He then enlisted in the Navy and served aboard the USS Borie and, after being honorably discharged, he completed his studies at St. Louis University. His career in the automotive industry spanned more than forty years, thirty-two of which he spent at Chrysler where he was known for his integrity, dependability and talent for fostering long-term business relationships. A tireless worker whose corporate transfers involved moves to Detroit, Cincinnati, Kansas City and Chicago, even in his retirement he served as an independent consultant who coordinated buy-sell agreements between dealers.

But Don’s true legacy rests on his achievements as a selfless servant of God who prioritized his family and faith. His sparkling Irish eyes told the story of his limitless capacity for kindness and laughter, and he couldn’t have fallen in love with a better partner than Dolly, a woman of larger-than-life charisma, strength and entertainment who kept him on his toes for 64 years of marriage. Don and Dolly suffered one of life’s cruelest blows when their youngest child Dennis died of congenital heart disease at two years old, but time proved their bond unbreakable; this tragedy only brought them closer to each other and God. Particularly devoted to the Jesuits, in the ensuing years Don attended nearly twenty-five silent retreats at the White House Retreat Center.

To his family and friends Don Lavin was the sweetest man in the world. He raised smiles with everyone he encountered, from boardrooms to backyards to the drive-thru at McDonald’s. He was an epic storyteller, die-hard Cardinals fan, ping-pong wizard and fierce poker player whose smirks and comical taunts spelled nothing but trouble at the table. His notorious lob on the tennis court drove his opponents to near insanity.

Don was 94 years old when he contracted Covid and passed on less than one week later.

Despite that hospital restrictions prevented his family from visiting his bedside, his dedicated nurses, Chuck and Lexi, arranged Zoom calls that allowed his family to bid their final farewells. His memory as an unparalleled role model looms large among his relatives who miss him dearly. They wish to offer a special thanks to Dr. James Hollis, the staff at the Covid Unit at Mercy Hospital and the loving caretakers at The Glen at Aberdeen, especially Don's "personal trainer" Maria. Due to circumstances related to the pandemic, funeral services will be held privately. A celebration of Don's life will take place at a safer time. God bless all health care heroes for standing in as family to America's loved ones. Contributions to Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital would be appreciated. A Buchholz Mortuary West Service.

Cemetery

Calvary Cemetery

5239 West Florissant Avenue

Saint Louis, MO, 63115

Comments



“ Clayton Evans lit a candle in memory of Donald E. Lavin Sr.



Clayton Evans - December 31, 2020 at 11:05 AM



“ So sorry to hear of Don Sr. passing. What a great father and husband. I remember so many fun times and the great friend and neighbor he was to my parents. He lived a long and loving life and he will be missed.

Mark Williams - December 23, 2020 at 09:23 PM