



Bernard Gabriel Van Leeuwen

July 18, 1932 - March 29, 2020

After too many poker games to count against St. Peter, our Dad, stubborn as ever, won his way into heaven.

Born in tiny town Kansas in 1932, the son of a sometime cattle farmer, horse peddler and gambler, Dad learned the art of the deal. And deal he did! His career began as the doorman for Hallmark Cards in Kansas City. Ambitions noticed, he was promoted into sales for their Chicago territory, leading to ownership with his then wife Eleanor, of Hallmark Cards' third largest, national chain of 23 retail stores. The Hall of Cards. We joked that Dad was the starter, his hard-working family were the finishers.

He has three children who benefited from dad's many talents in business, negotiations, love of friendship and God, work ethic and testimonial of a simple yet in-depth journey of life. There were, however, a few of dad's traits we choose not to imbibe! His favorites were his princess daughters, Elisa Duncan and Laura Coons with his son Steve Van Leeuwen, a distant third. We all wanted for nothing, taking comfort that dad was always there for gentle wisdoms and proud smiles. Gifting Dad were his grandchildren Lydia, Sarah and Tyler, Dad's greatest success, in a life of many. His four amazing siblings, Joe, Sis, Father Joe who are deceased and Roddy who is still living. Other beloved sons and daughter are Doug Duncan and Johnny Coons and Sherrall Van Leeuwen. He loved his nieces Kim, Joyce and Debbie, and nephews Rich

and Denny and families as if they were his own children and he was adored by all. His life companion Jeannie Rose gave him years of happiness, hope and promised love. The Stonecroft nursing team and Premier Hospice team were simply wonderful. Thank you all.

So, goodbye for now Dad. Thank you for your life examples, thank you for your dedication to us seen and unseen, thank you for giving us your sweet time these later years. We are strong, we are independent, we are successful, we are stubborn, we are God fearing and we are loved... as you planned us to be. Well done!

May all his friends, most of whom are sitting with him at a poker table by our Lord, raise a bourbon Manhattan to Ben Van Leeuwen and sing his life's song, Frank Sinatra's, "I Did It My Way!" We Love You, Your Kids.

A memorial mass will be scheduled in the near future when we are allowed to gather again safely together. Cremation Rites have been accorded.

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory have been entrusted with arrangements. Online condolences, photos, and memories may be shared with family and friends at www.allencares.com

Tribute Wall

BE

“ Dear Lisa, I just wanted to send hugs to you and your family. I am sorry to hear about your dad's passing. I pray you have many more good memories come to mind as time goes on and hoping this just makes your family bonds stronger. Much Love,
Beth Bomber Chambers

Beth - April 02, 2020 at 03:12 PM

SR

“ Linda and I were saddened to hear of Ben's passing. When we were young and inexperienced, he gave us more than just jobs. He gave us a place to anchor our lives and to plan for the next half century, where we are now. During those early years, we worked alongside wonderful people, learned many, many things about life and work and even managed to "meet" Santa Claus a time or two along the way! We have always thought fondly of those times. We hope you will keep these kinds of memories and many, many more foremost in your thoughts during this tough time.

Steve & Linda Rolfe

Steve Rolfe - March 31, 2020 at 08:27 PM

DC

“ Ben was a good friend of Phil Carter, my husband/partner. I really enjoyed Ben. He was so kind. I never knew him as a card player; I knew him as a golfer and casino patron. The last time I saw him was a Phil's funeral two years ago. I have no doubt Ben, Phil, Don Stone, and others are having a reunion in Heaven.

Donna Cartery - March 31, 2020 at 10:11 AM

SS

“ *Such a beautiful and perfect obit. Except for one thing. Steve, you were NOT distant third. He was SO proud of you, and so proud of your having given him a new car! Ben was a part of our family when lived in Florida, a wonderful part of our everyday life, and we loved him.*

Savina Schoenhofet - March 30, 2020 at 10:20 AM