



Darrell Eugene Lee

June 25, 1941 - November 3, 2015

DARRELL EUGENE LEE June 25, 1941 ~ November 3, 2015 "Darrell was a larger-than-life man in constant motion, and we miss him." Darrell Eugene Lee died November 3, 2015, at the age of 74, in Vancouver, Washington. His death was mercifully painless. In his last hours, he was with his wife, children and their spouses, and grandchildren. His wife, Vicki, was leaning over him with tears falling on his chest. His last act was to open his eyes and reach up to give her a hug. Darrell had a brilliant mind that nestled a spirit of caring for the others hurting, sad or poor. Darrell Eugene Lee was born June 25, 1941, in Sedro Wooley, Washington, to Harvey Carter Lee and Eleanor Doris Rieken Lee. Darrell was the third child born after twin sisters, Dorothy (George) Lawter of Seabeck, Washington and Sarah Tracy of Tucson, Arizona. His younger sisters are Pamela (Danny) Bauwens of Tacoma, Washington, Shirley St. James of Tucson, Arizona and Leslie Lee of Vancouver, Washington. As a young child Darrell enjoyed building race cars, scouting, school patrol duty, and vacation Bible school at Riverton Heights Presbyterian where he and his sisters were baptized. When Darrell was 15, he was badly injured on November 29, 1956, on Highway 99, in Tukwila. He had been working just a week at the new Lewis & Clark theater near his home, and had gone down to get his work permit in order. Nearly home, he was just crossing Highway 99 at 5:15 p.m. when he was struck by an auto traveling much too fast to stop even though the driver saw Darrell. A headlight hit Darrell's thigh and tossed him right over the fence where he landed full force on his head.

Besides bruises and abrasions practically all over him, his ear was nearly torn off and his pelvis was broken in four places besides a painful knee injury and internal bleeding. He was in a coma for three days and was brought home after six weeks in the hospital. Back to school after the near tragic accident, Darrell applied his Thespian talents at Foster High School where he held the lead in the Junior and Senior plays winning several Thespian "Best Actor" awards. His notable performance was in "A Man Called Peter" where Darrell played the part of Peter Marshall which was listed as a memorable scene "Darrell Lee's realistic heart attack." After graduation from Foster High School in 1959 (Tukwila, Washington), Darrell attended Central Washington and University of Washington before joining the US Air Force that took him to Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, Texas. Darrell became the editor of the base paper and always talked about the perk of getting a "special midnight chow pass." After leaving the USAF, Darrell graduated from Baylor University Law School in Waco, Texas, where he received honors for his Moot Court skills. His intellect and mental memory ability allowed him to sit in class without taking notes to graduate with outstanding grades. Darrell was a member of Mensa. Darrell met his wife, Vicki, in Abilene, Texas, and married a year later in Austin, Texas on June 1, 1968. As time passed, Darrell and Vicki built several buildings in Vancouver, and when asked what were the building names, he smiled and said the "Abilene buildings" because that is where I met my wife. Darrell, in his quiet sentimental nature, named one of his two son's Austin after the city where he and Vicki got married. Derek Angus was named after the Dean of Baylor Law School, Angus McSwain. Always a visionary and adventurer, Darrell took up single engine plane flying, water skiing, snow skiing and running las Vacas (the cows), an annual, family-friendly event in Acua, just across the border at Del Rio, Texas. One winter day, Darrell and attorney Robert Mitchelson took off in a single engine plane out of Evergreen Airport and the engine stopped 200 feet in the air. Darrell brought the plane down in the back yard of the newly developed Heatherwood subdivision. The Cessna was totaled. He immediately went to Pierson Airport to take a flying

lesson so he could conquer a possible fear of flying. He continued to fly for years in his travels to Fiji, Australia, China, the North American Continent, Russia, Europe and several cruises. Darrell has the distinguished honor of being a United Airlines Million Miler. During those many miles Darrell took advantage to read his favorite writers, especially Texas author Larry McMurtry. A book a week and newspapers were his appreciations. Darrell had a devotion for the legal profession and enjoyed the intellectual challenges and creativity his cases brought to him. He was a brilliant fighter for his clients. Darrell began as a deputy King County Prosecutor, Chief Deputy Prosecutor in Cowlitz County and Defense Attorney in Clark County Washington. Darrell appreciated a comment by Judge James Ladley, on his retirement as quoted in the Columbian ..on some top criminal defense attorneys: Darrell Lee."It's just an innate ability. You've either got it or you don't. They are professional athletes who've perfected their skills." With a mind continually devising new mountains to climb, Darrell moved into other fields in gaming, becoming the leader in cardrooms in Vancouver and La Center. Eventually he became President of the New Portland Meadows Race Track at Janzten Beach. Selling his interest in the cardrooms, Darrell developed subdivisions in south Texas where he met challenges, one of which was being attacked by African Bees and an emergency room visit. Helping those in need is a part of Darrell's character. He was the first President of the Share House. Darrell and his wife opened their home to two Vietnamese families after the fall of Saigon. The Bau Du family has been an encouraging presence in the last years of Darrell's illness with many visits and sharing their lives with him. The caregivers of the Hampton at Salmon Creek extended many tender moments of laughter and encouragement with Darrell. One nephew, Jayson Graves, wrote a tribute to Uncle Darrell: Uncle: what I'm grateful for (a reflective tribute): -Your kindness to your son when we were being noisy at bedtime; -your generosity when you offered to help me with college; -your affirming chuckle when you asked me about my business and I told you about my invention; -your firmness and

boundaries when I offered you my faith perspective; -your hospitality when you showed me around the horse stables; -your welcoming questions that made me feel special and included; -your example of an assertive, principled man who didn't back down; -your willingness to confront evil sacrificially and boldly; -your vulnerable affirmation of me at grandma's graveside after I did her memorial; -your resilience in bouncing back for your car accident and being able to go on to great things; -your service to your country; -your entrepreneurial spirit and willingness to take risks to get ahead and provide for your family; -your quiet humility in your receiving back rubs in exchange for listening to spiritual teachings you may not have otherwise chosen; -your tenderness towards your children; -your ability to engage your children and stimulate their minds; -your choice in a lovely, strong woman: an example for me to follow in choosing my own bride; -your ability to be your own man and be yourself, breaking away from your family while still staying connected in your own differentiated way; -your tough, fighting spirit that staked your claim, however messy in order to get what your heart desired; -your willingness to stand on principle to defend someone who was condemned to death to effect justice, however seemingly twisted and obtuse; -your magnanimity: you were larger than life. Darrell is survived by his wife of 47 years, Vicki, and four children: Tiffani (Giovanni) Mastronardi of Austin, Texas, Brittani (Karl) Stump of Vancouver, Washington, Derek Angus Lee (Jennifer) of Vancouver, Washington and Austin Lee (Andrea) of Vancouver; Grandchildren who called Darrell "Toro": Jacob and Molly Mastronardi; Katherine, Elizabeth, Michael, Amanda and Samson Stump; Madeleine, Athena and Seamus Lee; and Nathanael Lee; his five sisters, many nieces and nephews, cousins and a brother-in-law, Hugh Balfanz of Florida Darrell's memorial will be held 11:00 AM, Saturday, December 5, 2015, at New Heights-West, 400 West Evergreen, Vancouver. Reception following. Should you desire to make a contribution in Darrell's name, please consider either: The Share House, 2306 NE Andresen Road, Vancouver, Washington 98661: New Heights Clinic, 8000 NE 58th Ave., Vancouver, Washington 98665. Please sign his guest book at: www.columbia

n.com/obits.

Tribute Wall



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Evergreen Memorial Gardens - July 03, 2025 at 08:11 PM

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“ *Darrell was very complex. With my background in show business as an entertainer, later in radio and a rock concert promoter, then involved with the La Center casinos, I always felt at ease and enjoyed seeing and being around Darrell. I never had a business issue with Darrell. His word was his bond. I trusted and respected him. I will miss him, as well as always cherish the early memories of our relationship. Ben Tracy*

Ben - Tracy - February 04, 2016 at 12:00 AM