



Lee Phillips

November 3, 1942 - March 15, 2005

Lee Phillips, 62, born Fillmore P. Esberg, Jr., died peacefully after a lifelong battle with heart disease and diabetes March 15, 2005 at New Britain General Hospital. A native and lifelong New Britain resident, Lee was a lifelong business owner among which he operated Fantasy Deliveries and The Balloonary in New Britain. He was a member of St. John's the Evangelist Church in New Britain; served on the Parks and Recreation Commission; the Main Street USA Committee; a was a member of the Amber Club and Interstate Police Organization; and had an avid love for playing poker. Surviving is his wife Bonnie Deschaine of New Britain; his mother, Helen Maleski Esberg of New Britain; a son, Paul Esberg of New Britain; two daughters, Sheila Esberg of Middletown and Debbie Kozlowski of Mississippi; a brother, James Esberg of Portsmouth, NH; and three granddaughters including Haley Sage Irwin. He was predeceased by his father Fillmore P. Esberg Sr. in 1995; and a daughter, Phyllis Kozlowski.

Funeral services will be held Saturday 9:00 AM at Carlson Funeral Home, 45 Franklin Square, New Britain followed by a Mass of Christian Burial 10 AM at St. John's the Evangelist Church, 655 East Street, New Britain. Burial will be in Sacred Heart Cemetery, New Britain. Calling hours will be held Friday evening 5 to 8 PM at Carlson Funeral Home. Lee's family and friends will miss his wonderful sense of humor. Please share a memory of Lee with his family on our online guestbook by clicking on "GUESTBOOK" at the bottom of this page.

Tribute Wall

GP

“ To Lee Phillips, as your son #2 I will miss the events and fairs that Paulie and I worked so hard. I know I could have spent my weekends doing something dumb, but I chose to work for you. You were like no other man i have met, for your sense of humor, to greet me every day with a joke. Your wittiness, to say the perfect one-liners at the right moments and most of all, your compassion for allowing me into your family's life with open arms. I am forever grateful.

Remembering the fairs with Paulie, placing tattoos on girls where no one would ever find them. Walking in the parade as a California raisin never wearing black stockings ever again. Spenting Xmas with you and bonnie, never deserving anything but coal, but you gave everything including your heart. That is what I will miss the most, isyou.

My only regret Lee is not keeping intouch with you. Paulie and I may have had our differences, but you were still dad #2. I am ashamed that so many years has passed between us. But for all that went wrong, something good would always come out of it. Paulie and I are together again, like two peas in a pod. I will not say Good-bye dad, but only farewell. For I will see you again, with a winning hand and even better than that, a winning smile with Love always..

Your Son #2 Georgie

George Paiva - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

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Your Son #2 Georgie

George Paiva - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

GD

“ I WILL MISS LEE VERY MUCH. EVEN THOUGH WE RARELY SAW ONE ANOTHER WHEN WE DID HE WOULD ALWAYS HAVE A SMILE AND A HAND SHAKE FOR ME. HE ALWAYS HELPED ME WHEN I NEEDED SOME GUIDANCE WHEN IT CAME TO THINGS SUCH AS EBAY AND PLAYING POKER ONLINE WHICH HE INTRODUCED ME TO BOTH.I WILL MISS OUR CONVERSATION OF A DART MATCH BETWEEN LEE AND I BACK IN 1989 WHICH LEE CAME OUT ON TOP. THAT MATCH ALWAYS SEEM TO COME UP WHEN WE WOULD TALK OF THE OLD DAYS. I'M SORRY I DIDN'T HAVE THE CHANCE TO SAY GOODBYE TO HIM AS I FOUND OUT OF HIS PASSING THE EVENING IN WHICH HE WAS LAID TO REST. I HOPE HE KNEW HOW MUCH I THOUGHT OF HIM AND HOW MUCH I APPRECIATED HIS HELP AND FRIENDSHIP. I WILL MISS GOING TO HIS TABLE AT PARTY POKER AND WATCHING HIM PLAY WHICH I DID EVERY TIME I SAW HE WAS PLAYING. I WILL MISS YOU LEE.

GARY DUBE - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

ST

“ The sunday dinners, The fairs, and all the traveling when i was a young boy, We sure went everywhere,When i was around Lee every thing was fun. He took me to so many events i could not count them all,He knew i did not have a father around me when i was a boy.You could always count on Lee,He made a huge difference in my life. He was just so nessesary, I will always love my brother inlaw , I hope some day when i pass we will meet again.

Steven - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

DB

“ My wife and I along with my daughter Katelyn had a really nice visit with Lee the day he passed. Among other things we talked about was what he had to do to get better. He had been sick many times in the past & battled back every time. He was a fighter and that was because he had so much to live for. He had a zest for life like no one else I ever knew. For Lee life was so precious and he enjoyed it like few others. When we left him that day he was feeling good and in no pain. After spending the rest of the night chatting with Bonnie he went to sleep and passed during the night. He never suffered and for that I am grateful Lord.

I will always remember the huge smile he always gave me when I walked into a room. And the stories he loved telling, the stories of his life. The time he took and the details that he was always so careful not to leave out. I've heard many of them more than once but never did I grow tired of them. I guess that's because he lived such a full and complete life. With all the illnesses he went through in his life not only was he a cheerful person, he had a way of cheering up others around him. He brought life into every room he entered. He always had a lot to say & he loved sharing his thoughts with others. I'll miss his laughter and the way he cheered me up when I was down. I'll miss the way he talked to my kids & the smiles he brought to their faces.

Lee was not a rich man but when it came to his Santa suit he spared no expense. Two years ago he spent \$700. upgrading that suit. When it came to playing Santa Lee was the absolute best ever. For him playing Santa wasn't about making money, it was about the kids and the joy he brought into their lives. I truly believe he enjoyed being Santa every bit as the kids enjoyed him. The memories he gave us in his big Red Santa suit will last us all, as well as our children a life time. I'll miss our trips to the movies, the casino, our dinner's together, but most of all i'll miss the friendship that we shared. My life will never be the same without you but i'm sure heaven is a better place now that you are there. You will forever be in my thoughts and prays.

God bless you Bonnie. It was always a comfort for me to know you

were there for Lee.

He often told me how lucky he felt to have you in his life. It is because of you his final years were happy and full.

Dale Blauvelt

Dale Blauvelt - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

CC

“ *To all members of Lee's family we send our deepest. Our thoughts will be with you.*

Chris & Roland Caron - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JD

“ *Lee was a close friend of my brothers; Dale Blauvelt and his wife Eileen. In the summer each year they rented a cottage in Old Saybrook and Lee and Bonnie would come down for a day or two. I can see Lee sitting on the beach with his cheerful smile like he didn't have a care in the world. Whenever or wherever I saw Lee he always just seemed to be enjoying whatever he happened to be doing at the time.*

What many people, especially children, and I will remember and miss most is each year at Christmas when Lee put on 'The Suit'; I won't say what suit in case any children might be reading. I'll just say that for many years he came to our family Christmas parties and for a little while we all believed;

For the joy he gave my daughter and all my nieces and nephews, I am eternally grateful.

My condolences to all who knew and loved him.

Jennifer Douyard

Jennifer Douyard - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JJ

“ My last quality time with Cousin Lee was spent a few years ago when he and the precious Bonnie took a vacation and stayed with me at my home in Las Vegas.

From the moment we connected after they landed, till the time they left, the journey was filled with laughter, family stories, sight seeing to name a few, and of course, poker tournaments.

What better place to play the cards!!

My cousin also became good friends with my dog Junior the dog hated everyone. Only Lee could pull that off.

The one thing I will never forget, through the long years, no matter what happened, that great smile that never melted away.

Love and Peace to the Best Royal Flush.

Judy and Junior

Judy and Junior - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

DG

“ We were so sorry to hear the sad new about Lee. He was a long time friend of our family, The Torello's, and a "beach" friend to Joe & I. He rented a cottage of ours for years. We will keep his fond memories close to our heart. We will miss him at our summer parties and at our set-back games on Tuesday nights. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, especially his little Haley.

Debbie Gallo - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JO

“ I met Lee when I first started in Show Business in 1984. He along with his staff were kind, honest and fair with me from the very beginning. He introduced me to the Entertainment Business and for that I am eternally grateful. He saw potential in a young, shy kid that I never knew existed. What I learned from him at the beginning of my career was immeasurable. Beyond that, it was always fun to work with him. Through out the years I would meet up with Lee at local events and we always talked and laughed about our times together.

He will be deeply missed.

I pray for God's comfort for Lee and his family.

God Bless,

Joby Rogers

Joby - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

HI

“ My poppop was the most graceful man in the world! I never wanted any other poppop than him. We used to go to the fairs together, go to RockCats games and every summer we would go to the beach. He would never stop talking about me. If he had \$1.00 in his pocket, he would spend it on me! I love my poppop more than anything in the world, and I will love him forever! I am happy to know that where he is now there is no pain and no sadness. A girl's heart is a huge gate of memories, and he is the first memory waiting at that gate. I will miss him very much. I love you poppop, you are my angel.

Haley Irwin - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

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Haley Irwin - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ I remember doing theatre with Lee - I first met him when we were both cast in Gemini at the Hole in the Wall Theatre when it was on North Street in New Britain. I always enjoyed his sense of humor. At one of the performances of Gemini - someone tripped and dropped a tray of donuts - without missing beat Lee said "Gimme a break Lucille, I'm chasin' donuts out here". I remember working part-time making balloon deliveries as Mae West - with Lee as W.C. Fields. He always seemed to have a smile - a friendly nature - a gold chain around his neck and a flair for being bigger than life. And that is how I will remember him.

God Bless you all

Melody

Melody Sutter - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

BP

“ *Back in the early '80's was when I met Lee Phillips. He was the owner and operator of "The Balloonary", a small business within the apartment complex I supervised. He was very instrumental to me in overseeing the perplexities involved in managing an apartment building. A true friendship cultivated between us and has been ongoing ever since.*

Lee, and his wife, Bonnie, frequented Foxwoods Resort in Ledyard quite often; inviting me yo join them in their many gaming rooms.

Lee was a Bingo caller for Marchegian Society, Acon Street, New Britain where Bonnie and I religiously attended on a weekly basis.

My condolences are extended to Bonnie, his family, and friends. Everyone who had the priviledge of knowing Lee will miss his amusing jokes.

Bob Pratt - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM