



William L Santora

May 6, 1934 - April 21, 2014

William Leonard Santora, 79, lifelong resident of Stamford, passed away peacefully at home surrounded by his family on the afternoon of Monday, April, 21, 2014. Born May 6, 1934 to the late Leonard William and Anna (Gugliemo) Santora, Billy was a loyal son, a loving husband, father and uncle, and an extremely proud grandfather and great grandfather. He was affectionately known to his loved ones as Billy, Uncle Billy and Poppy.

Billy grew up on the east side of Stamford, attended Stamford public schools and graduated from Stamford High School with the class of 1952 - where he was voted as the class "Beau Brummell" for his dapper style and love of fine clothing. Following graduation he enlisted in the U.S. Army and was stationed in Japan during the Korean Conflict. After his time in the service, Billy returned home and courted the love of his life, Maryanne Cogna. Billy and Maryanne were married in 1957, and wasted no time in making their home and starting a family. Together with his father, Leonard W. Santora (Lenny, Ned, Narde), he owned and operated Santora Land Maintenance, Inc. for over 30 years. Following his early retirement due to long term health concerns, Billy continued working by indulging himself in his love of floral design and began working part time as an arranger at Springdale Florist. What began as part time work evolved into a full time passion and Billy was blessed with many good years working alongside people he loved, doing what he was uniquely qualified to do.

Anyone who knew Billy knew him to be a vibrant, charismatic and talented man. Although he lacked a formal education and training in the arts, he was an extraordinarily gifted individual. He was a true artist, a master floral designer, and he possessed a keen, critical eye for design of any kind. He had an innate sense of style and flair, and wasn't shy about sharing his design expertise and opinions. He'll always be remembered for; his generosity, his laughter, his love, his crying at the drop of a hat, his inappropriate sense of humor, his vodka gimlets, his love of white rice (and his habit of eating it too fast and choking), his love of music and dancing with his wife, his expertise in anything that grew out of the Earth, and his love for his entire extended family. Growing up as an only child, Billy always felt blessed to have married into the Cogna clan and being part of a large, robust family. He cherished the family clambakes hosted at his Westover Road home, the many family reunions and life events, the games of canasta, and the love and laughter he shared with his entire family.

Bill is survived by his wife of 57 years; Maryanne Cogna Santora, who served as his rock throughout his life, and was his selfless care taker at the end. He also leaves behind his loving children; Anne M. Santora, Patti and Gene Griffiths, Beth Watters, Lee and Luci Santora, his surrogate son, Robert Karpinski, his nine grandchildren; Krista Ritter, Justin Griffiths, Alex and Joe Mish, Cailin, Sophie and Tommy Watters, Billy, Maddie and Lucy Santora, and his great granddaughter, Tessa Michael Ritter. Billy is also survived by his "brother" and sister-in-law, Joe and Mona Cogna, sister-in-law, Irene Cogna, "brother", Conrad Kramer, and many nieces, nephews and dear friends whom he loved without condition, especially his two special angels; Sara and Ellie Vitti. Billy was preceded in death by his brother-in-laws and sister-in-laws; Michael Cogna (Rose), Jeff Cogna, Frank Cogna, Sr. (Tillie) and Nick Cogna, Sr. (Naida), his nephews; Pasquale Cogna, Joseph Cogna, Jr., Pasquale Cogna and Jack Dazzo, and his dear

friend, Charles Redfield.

The Santora family will receive the sympathy and condolences of friends and family, TODAY, Wednesday, April 23rd from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Bosak Funeral Home, 453 Shippan Avenue, in Stamford. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Thursday, April 24th at 10 a.m. at St. Maurice R.C. Church, 358 Glenbrook Road, in Stamford. The Rev. Fr. Bert Pinciario will officiate. A committal service and entombment will take place immediately after mass at St. George's Mausoleum at Woodland Cemetery, 66 Woodland Place, in Stamford.

The Santora family would like to thank all the doctors who provided excellent care to Bill over the years, especially Dr. Mark Heiman and Dr. Shara Israel, and to the fine people at Masoniccare Home Health and Hospice for their compassion and kindness. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Billy's memory for the medical care of Riley Perna to the Umbrella Club of Stamford, P.O. Box 112238, Stamford, CT 06911-2238.

The Santora family has entrusted the funeral arrangements to Bosak Funeral Home, 453 Shippan Avenue, in Stamford. If you'd like to leave an online condolence message for the family you may sign the guestbook on www.bosakfuneralhome.com or visit the funeral home on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bosakfuneralhome.

Tribute Wall

MD

“ Billy, you were always a beacon of light and so warm to welcome me to the Springdale family from the first time I visited. The basement will be a little quieter without your laugh. Safe travels, thanks for sharing a little of your light with me.

MDoyle - April 24, 2014 at 12:00 AM

RP

“ Dear Maryanne and Family, There is a beautiful quote I would like to share with you, "I think of Heaven as a garden where I shall find again those Dear Ones who have made my world." I am so sorry for your great loss. Billy made the garden of our lives beautiful here on this earth. I am certain he is peaceful in his new heavenly garden watching over all of you with great love. His kindness, humor, love of life and dedication to his family were admired by all. It was my blessing to have known him. You are all in my prayers. Rita Pingue Philadelphia, Pa.

Rita Pingue - April 24, 2014 at 12:00 AM

TO

“ Billy was truly an artist. In 1989 my wife Donna and I purchased our first single family home in Stamford. One early morning just after the purchase, we awoke to the beeping of a truck backing up in our driveway. When I looked out the window to see what was going on I saw Billy and my father-in-law (Dom Cingari) on the front lawn directing an army of landscapers. This new home gift of a complete new "Billy Santoro" landscape design package was totally a surprise to us - but that is Dom. Billy had guys pulling out the old plantings and digging holes - while he kept his eye on Dom (the helper?). No Dom, not there. No Dom, not like that. No Dom, that is the wrong color. Dom, just stand over there until I need you. The yelling continued until Billy's standards were met. The final product was one of perfection. The plants were specifically placed by color and position that created a masterpiece second to none. After the the final project was complete, I treated the yard as the rare gem that it had become. We moved out of that house eight years ago after enjoying the beauty of that property year in and year out. Today, I continue to make a special trip over to my old house every May to see the over eighty azaleas and forty rhododendrons in bloom. Billy - Thank you for adding that beauty to my life!

Tom Ormond - April 24, 2014 at 12:00 AM

TD

“ Dearest Santora Family, Our deepest sympathies go out to all of you. Billy and "the clan" had a very special bond with my Dad (Red). My father would have been a shell if not for his 2nd family over the years. I feel comfort that they are together now making private jokes, drinking vodka and having hotdogs from Duchess (and Billy and my mother sneaking cigs on the side). Our deepest condolences. The DeRubis Family (Dan, Tracey, Daniel, Haley)
xoxoxoxoo

Tracey & DanDeRubis - April 23, 2014 at 12:00 AM

ME

“ *To Cailin & Family - I know how special your grandfather is to you and your entire family. Thinking of you all during this hard time. Lots of love, Melanie*

MelanieDiGeorge - April 23, 2014 at 12:00 AM