



David R. Stefanik

JUN 10, 1959 - APR 28, 2011



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David R. Stefanik

JUN 10, 1959 - APR 28, 2011

David R. "Duff" Stefanik 51, of North Syracuse, drove to the finish line on Thursday at Upstate Hospital, a champion 'til the end surrounded by his adoring family. He was born in Rome NY, the son of Stanley and Evelyn Stefanik. A 1977 graduate of Adirondack Central High School, David furthered his love for agriculture through attendance at SUNY Delhi. His long association with the Oneida County 4-H Club instilled in him a love for horses, later sparked an interest in harness racing, and eventually led to his career decision to become a professional horse trainer and driver. Driving his beautiful horses and spending countless hours nurturing them provided much joy to David, as did the vast fan club of friends and extended family who came to cheer him on and help celebrate his many racing victories. Harness racing provided much exhilaration in his life, but David saved his biggest passion, devoting time to his family, for us. His unwavering support throughout both good times and bad will never be forgotten. We will forever cherish our memories of the many summers spent with David on the river at A-Bay and of the fun-packed family getaways taken each winter to Palm Beach, Fl. Our family's familiar journeys will never be the same without Davey's spirited, adventurous presence here to lead our way. David is survived by his devoted wife of 22 years and best friend, Kathleen Merola; his parents, Stanley and Evelyn Stefanik of Rome, NY; his two brothers, Michael Stefanik of Rome, NY, and Frederick (Susan) Stefanik of Verona, NY; his two sisters, Pamela (Herbert) Kwasniewski of W. Virginia and Susan (Stephen) Hayes of Rome, NY; and several nieces, nephews and cousins. David's family would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to all the special friends who provided care for David's horses when he could no longer do so. Much gratitude is also extended to the 10th floor nurses at Upstate Hospital, especially Lynn, for the kindness and compassion shown to David during his final days. Funeral Services will be held Tuesday at 9:30am in the THOMAS J. PIRRO JR. FUNERAL HOME 3401



Obituary

David R. Stefanik

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Vickery Rd. (corner of Buckley) North Syracuse, NY 13212 and 11:00am in St. Cecilia's Church 1001 Woods Rd. Solvay, NY where a funeral mass will be celebrated. Rev. Amedeo Guida will be officiating. Family and friends may call the funeral home on Monday from 4 to 7pm. Contributions may be made to Standardbred Retirement Foundation, 108F Old York Road, Hamilton, NJ 08620.

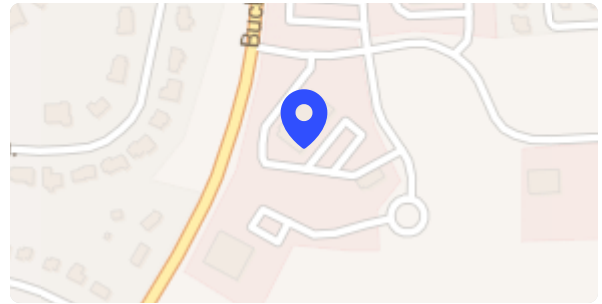


Events

David R. Stefanik
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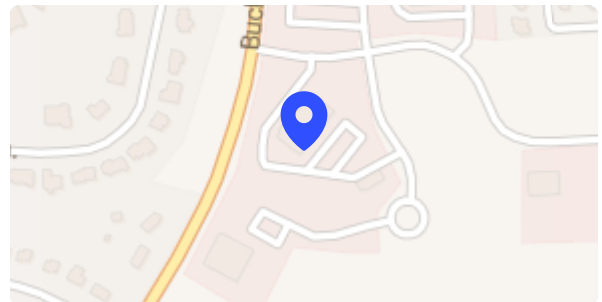
Visitation

- Monday**, May 2, 2011
- 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM ET
- Thomas J. Pirro Jr. Funeral Home**
3401 Vickery Rd, Syracuse NY 13212



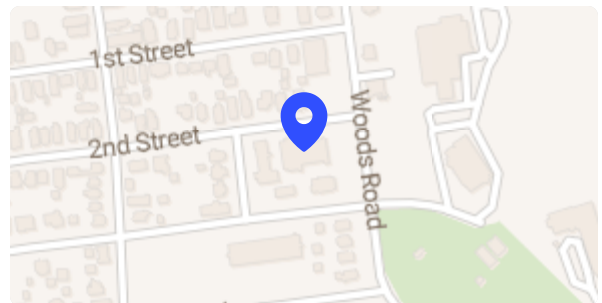
Service

- Tuesday**, May 3, 2011
- 9:30 AM ET
- Thomas J. Pirro Jr. Funeral Home**
3401 Vickery Rd, Syracuse NY 13212



Funeral Mass

- Tuesday**, May 3, 2011
- 11:00 AM ET
- St. Cecilia**
1001 Woods Road, Solvay NY 13209-1590





Tribute Wall

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Thomas J. Pirro Jr. Funeral Home shared a **Tribute Video**.



April 27 at 8:00 PM



Todd Keister, Lt. - Nysp posted:

My sincerest and deepest condolences to the entire Stefanik family. I did not know David, but served with his brother Woody in the troopers. I can only imagine the sense of loss the family must feel, and my thoughts and prayers are with you all...

May 9 at 5:31 AM



Nadine Szewczyk lit a candle in honor of David .

I went to Adirondack High School with Dave. I was very shocked to hear the news of his passing. I used to live on top of Stokes Hill just around the corner from Dave growing up. My deepest condolences to the family. Nadine Szewczyk



May 5 at 11:24 AM



Carol Minckler posted:

Hope they have your pineapple upside down cake there Duff, like I used to make for you!!!! We Love & Miss you Forever!!!!!!

May 5 at 7:11 AM



Rick Recuparo posted:

Kathy, I am so sorry for your loss. I only met Dave a couple of times but each time I did, it was like we were old friends. He remembered who I was and was always very engaging. This made me feel very comfortable around him and I think that was always his goal. My thoughts are with you in this time of sorrow and remember, you have a great family around you and friends that love you and will support you in your time of need. If there is anything I can do please do not hesitate to ask. Rick Recuparo

May 4 at 3:02 AM



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JM

Joy Magee posted:

May Gods' love heal your sorrow and may His peace replace your heartache with warm and loving memories. I feel so blessed to have known David as short a time as I did. Know that David lives in the hearts of many forever. Joy Magee

May 3 at 11:44 AM

LR

Luke Ruszczyk lit a candle in honor of David .

Our thoughts and prayers are with you and very sorry about your loss. John and Luke Ruszczyk (Embassy Suites)

May 3 at 2:58 AM



JZ

Janice Zimmer lit a candle in honor of David .

May 2 at 12:51 PM



MW

Melissa Williams posted:

Our thoughts are with you during this hard time. Kyle & Melissa (Stefanik) Williams

May 2 at 12:22 PM

JL

Jack And Barbara Lake posted:

Barbara and I would like to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the MEROLA and STEFANIK families for the loss of this terrific young man. We are all saddened by the much much too early passing of DAVID, and we wish we could be there to join you in saying farewell to him. I must say however, if you were ever feeling sad and gloomy for whatever reason; DAVID STEFANIK was the guy to meet up with!! He would get you feeling BETTER about whatever was bothering you, RIGHT QUICK! This sometimes would involve a glass of "Vino", and a few of his stories. We could lose several "pitch games" in a row, with many "sets", and he would still have us laughing and feeling better. He was definitely a card-table "raconteur", in the finest sense of the word. GOD BLESS HIS FAMILIES AND FRIENDS, as we will all miss Him. From Jack and Barbara Lake

May 2 at 11:53 AM



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DC

Denise Delguidice Chapman posted:

Kathy, and family, please accept my heart felt sympathy. I am so very sorry for your loss. I will hold you all in my prayers. Denise DelGuidice-Chapman

May 2 at 6:57 AM

ZK

Zoila (Zee) Khouri posted:

There was always fun when David was around us. We have shared wonderful times with him and he will be remembered with love forever. It deeply saddens us that he has left us so soon, but the Lord knows why and we shall always thank Him for sharing David's life with us. May David rest in peace and may Kathy find comfort in the memories of their life together. David, WE WILL MISS YOU! Zee and Georges Khouri

May 2 at 6:38 AM

RZ

Rich Zakala posted:

R.I.P. My Good Friend Duffy...I Will Love And Miss You Forever

May 2 at 4:44 AM

CK

Cari Kreps posted:

Kathy and family - I am so sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you all. I am hoping that the love and support of your family and friends will help comfort you during this time. God bless you. Cari Collins Kreps & Family

May 2 at 3:09 AM

JZ

Janice Zimmer May 2 at 12:49 PM

Kathy and family - I am so sorry for your loss. You are in my thoughts and prayers. May the love and support of your many friends and family comfort you during this difficult time. Janice Zimmer

JC

Jackie Cannizzo posted:

So so sorry of your loss. Thinking of you Kathy, MJ and the whole family. Love you

May 1 at 6:43 PM



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KW

Katharine Waida posted:

David was my best friend that i had for a long time and he was the nice person to me.

May 1 at 5:56 PM

NQ

Nancy L. Quigg May 2 at 8:33 AM

Dear Kathy, I am so sorry to hear of your loss..David will be greatly missed. May God handle him lovingly..My best to you and your family. Nancy L. Quigg

CC

Charlene & Norman Coleman posted:

Our deepest sympathy to Kathy and her family and David's family. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

May 1 at 4:56 PM

JS

Jill Siegenthaler posted:

Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this difficult time.Jill & Bill and Walter & Julia Siegenthaler

May 1 at 3:46 PM

WB

William Black posted:

i am glad i knew you wildman b.black

May 1 at 3:07 PM



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WT

Willard Tolles posted:

The World lost a "Good Man" on thursday but his spirit will live on in the minds and hearts of those who knew and loved him,his many friends and acquaintences.Dave affected one and all the same way he put a smile on their face and laughter in their heart under any condition.Not many men are impossible to not like but "Duffy" was just that. He came to our lives courtesy of the Merola Family through the love of his life Kate and he infected us with his good nature and ever present smile.Dave was a great influence on his many nieces and nephews whom he taught to smile,persevere,and be dignified under any circumstance, I personally would like to say "I'll miss you Duff,thanks for the memories

May 1 at 11:36 AM

JE

Judith Everts May 5 at 2:04 PM

David was always welcoming, He enjoyed life and a good game of pitch, drinks and food. As long as he could win at cards he was happy. When in his company there was always laughter, I will miss him. Judy Everts

MW

Mae Heilig Wilcox posted:

Our deepest sympathy to you and your family. Duff will be deeply missed. It was a pleasure to have known a great person/and horsemen.

May 1 at 10:51 AM

RM

Richard "Burr" And Julie Minckler shared an album called **Duff the Horseman**.



May 1 at 8:09 AM



Media

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Thomas J. Pirro Jr. Funeral Home shared a **Tribute Video**.

April 27 at 8:00 PM

TRIBUTE VIDEO

A JOURNEY
of
REMEMBRANCE



SCAN TO WATCH



Media

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Richard "Burr" And Julie Minckler shared a photo to the **Duff the Horseman** album.

May 1 at 8:09 AM



Photo By John Minckler @ Minckler Stables



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring David by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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