



Dennis Laurence Michael Donovan

May 15, 1950 - April 25, 2021

On Sunday, April 25, 2021, our beloved Dennis Laurence Michael Donovan passed away peacefully in his sleep, at the age of 70.

Dennis was born on May 15, 1950 in San Francisco, CA. He lived in there until he was 5 years old, when his family moved to Millbrae. His father, Laurence Donovan, was an attorney. His mother Eleanor (West) Donovan was a Registered Nurse. His father Larry was also an amateur musician, and he taught Dennis how to play the saxophone when he was 5 years old by standing him on a chair so that he could reach the mouthpiece, and the rest is musical history.

Dennis was a professional musician for over 50 years. He was also an arranger, songwriter, and specialist in event production, sound, lighting, and recording. Dennis worked as an instrumental music instructor and band director, teaching saxophone, flute, clarinet, guitar, ukulele, mandolin, and banjo. He was also a choral director and instructor of music theory, ear training, and percussion. He loved his position as a former manager and baritone saxophonist for Full Faith & Credit, a 21-piece jazz band that recorded four albums and got international airplay. He also played with James Leary Big Band and Puro Bandido. He taught individual and group music lessons for years, and he was a highly recommended teacher by several local music shops.

Dennis was a life-long learner. He received a Bachelor's in Economics (with a minor in Music) from the University of San Francisco. Dennis later received an AA in Music Theory and Composition (College of Marin). A Certificate in Graphic Communications and Print Production Design and Pre-press (City College San Francisco) prepared him for various positions as a results-oriented Creative Project Manager.

Music was such a huge part of Dennis's life and it defined him as a person. He was deeply knowledgeable about all genres of music, and he enjoyed playing and listening to all types of music. He was able to play many musical instruments, sing, and compose music. He loved to share his musical gift with others, and was a thoughtful and patient music teacher.

Dennis expressed his love for life and people through music. He gladly and enthusiastically played anytime - lifting others up with his joy for music.

He married the love of his life, Maryam Mahvi on June 14th, 1998. Together they had two gorgeous, talented and kind daughters, Lily and Abby. He was a devoted and loving husband and father. His devotion to his “three girls” was evident in all that he did.

Dennis was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his wife Maryam, daughters Lily and Abby, and siblings Tom, Bill, Mary and Patti. A small family memorial service will be held at Skylawn Funeral Home in San Mateo, on Saturday May 1st, 2021, at noon. A celebration of life for Dennis will be held in early June.

Donations for flowers or towards funeral costs may be sent to @Maryam-Donovan on Venmo.

Events

MAY **Memorial Service** 12:00PM - 01:30PM

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Skylawn Funeral Home
Hwy 92 at Skyline Blvd., San Mateo, CA, US, 94402

Comments



“ Dennis was more than a friend; he was an event. Out of high school, he got me my first job doing piece work in a box factory for 10 cents a box. Two weeks later, he said, “Hey, do you want to go to Canada?” Off we went. What a great experience being in a country where you don’t know anybody, don’t have any money, and nowhere to sleep. Coming back was a trip (literally) with Dennis saying, “Let’s hop a freight,” which we did, and after ½ of a mile when it stopped and didn’t go any further, it was time to take a bus back home. In my trumpet-playing days, he’d call me up and say there is a band that needs a trumpet. I’d say, I don’t think I’m good enough, and Dennis would say, “That’s OK. They’re desperate.” I played in the “Old Dice” garage band with him, and we played all kinds of crazy gigs, including Lodi (more than once!). An all-time “uh, oh” happened when we finished playing some function down in the South Bay at 2 in the morning. Dennis said not to bother with driving home because he knew someone who lived in that town, and we could crash there. We parked his (junker) car pointing down a hill (because it needed a rolling start) and walked down in the dark carrying our instrument cases. Dennis, very sure of himself, knocked on a door - wrong one - someone called the police - they arrived as we walked back up the hill with our cases - and boy howdy didn’t we look suspicious. Dennis always had a big heart, a wry sense of humor, and an appetite for life. He was so special. He was one of the finest humans I’ve ever known, and I will always be grateful for the times I had with him.

Prescott Cole - April 28 at 07:57 PM