



Mieczyslaw "Michael" Wolszczak

November 15, 2019

Mieczyslaw "Michael" Wolszczak, 93, formerly of Tonawanda, NY passed away peacefully Friday in Syracuse, NY.

Mr. Wolszczak was pre-deceased by his wife of 63 years, Renata, in April of 2019. He is survived by their 4 children: Elizabeth (Ray) Appleby of Syracuse, NY, Thomas Wolszczak (Tammy Moore) of Charlotte, NC, Robert (Gina) Wolszczak of Hamburg, NY; Peter Wolszczak (Kelley Cline) of Kirkland, WA, his siblings: Wanda Zwolak and Thaddeus Wolski, 6 grandchildren: Michael, Stephanie, Megan, Robert, Samantha and Christian; great grandson P.J. and several nieces and nephews.

Special thanks go to Cynthia Mike, and the staff at The Oaks and PACE CNY for their loving assistance and care of Michael.

Funeral Services will be held TBA Wednesday AM at St. Stanislaus Church, 123 Townsend Buffalo, NY where a mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated. Burial will be held in St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Cheektowaga, NY. Calling hours will be conducted 5:00 to 7:00 PM Tuesday at Daniel R. Smolarek Funeral Home, 2510 Union Rd. Cheektowaga, NY. The local arrangements are in the care of the Sugar Funeral Home, Inc., 224 W. 2nd St. S., Fulton, NY. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in honor of Michael to the Adam Mickiewicz Library & Dramatic Circle, 612 Filmore Ave.

Buffalo, NY 14212.

Michael was a gentle man with impeccable manners, lifelong strength and fortitude, precision, skill and creativity in many talents and he demonstrated enduring faith in God. He always let music pour over him and then he moved to the groove. Michael truly loved to imbue laughter and humor into every conversation. He was a great model of dedication to family and keeping an indomitable spirit throughout life.

Michael was born in Borki, Poland. Throughout his life, he remembered the village of his youth with joy and complete love of his Polish culture and his community. He was especially fond of telling stories of searching for mushrooms under the trees and getting lost in the vast forests nearby. At the start of WWII, separated from his father, Michael and his family were sent in exile to Kazakhstan, near the Siberian border. At age 13, he was instrumental in helping his mother, sister and brother survive their many ordeals and deprivations in distant Russia. Two or three sentences cannot encompass the pain, loss and brutality of the war years, and yet, my father chose to speak of those years as an adventure, concentrating on the 'miracles' that brought him and his family through it all and on the experiences that endowed him with his photography interests and tool and die profession. After an odyssey across three continents, living in refugee camps and separated from the rest of his family, he ended up in England at No. 1 School of Technical Training at R.A.F. Halton and then served in the UK Royal Air Force before immigrating to the United States in 1951, to Buffalo, NY, to join his family, once again.

Meeting Renata Sosnowska in Buffalo, he charmed (and danced) his way into her heart and they married in 1955. They made a life in the St. Stanislaus parish area through the late 1960's. Their lives were infused with family, Polish traditions, dances and picnics. Michael and Renata made wonderful and dazzling dance and life partners. Their joy of life was shared with family – the

Sobolaks, Zwolaks and Wolskis and many friends- the Białeks, Poplewskis, Łuckis and Górskis – to name just a few. Absent in their own early years, they were determined to provide a secure and loving home for their four children and modeled hard work and determination to accomplish the American Dream. Mietek was especially fond of their home in Tonawanda – nice little Cape Cod with yard and garage. He continued to paint the house, garden and climb ladders to cut branches or fix chimneys well into his 80's!

Photography was a little thing he picked up in his teen years, making extra money taking photos of military functions and friends, while living in Polish youth refugee camps and educational training platoons in the Middle East and Africa, as part of the Allied effort. When we were younger, we used to kid him about taking so long to set the light meter and aperture on his camera, but now, we still enjoy the hundreds of slides he took of our life events. The last few years, he wondered at the digital capabilities of laptops, and phones, looking on the backside of the screen to see where all those photos and videos were hiding.

In his apprentice program in Halton, Michael learned mathematical and machining skills that served him well when he settled in Buffalo. He found a job the first week of his arrival, getting a job working for a tool and die manufacturing company. In his interview, he told the owner that what he didn't know how to do, he could teach himself. And so, that's how he continued to face life's challenges: Need an apartment for you and your wife? Construct it yourself. Get laid off? Get a great referral and start a new job immediately. A metal part doesn't exist? Tool one yourself. His talents were due to his precision (to the thousandth, as he showed us on a slide rule) and his creative and intuitive sense of how things work. As a young boy, he took his mother's sewing machine apart and put it back together, with no extra parts. He was quite proud that even after retiring from his last job at Voss Manufacturing at

70, he still was called back several times to machine a part the young guys couldn't do on the digital machines. His precision didn't only include his professional duties, it included the way he dressed, pulled his shirts tight and neat, the way he slid his hat on and tipped it. He wiped his kitchen sink clean after every washing of dishes, and he knew exactly how he wanted to lock his door and check the handle. He was a chic and organized man.

In 2011, Michael's wife Renata was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. After making the difficult decision, Michael and Renata sold their beloved home and moved to Syracuse NY, to be able to get more assistance as time went on. Michael and Renata continued to attend family functions and even did some traveling to visit family in North Carolina, the West Coast and back to Buffalo until the last several years. Michael's dedication and caring ways continued right through Renata's last moments, when he promised her, they would meet up to dance again.

Michael's last years were made easier through the commitment and devotion of many caregivers. Whether it was the staff at The Oaks, where he lived for 7 years, that watched out for him or got the TV to work, or the Certified Nursing Aides that helped him with daily activities or the medical and administrative staff at PACE CNY that helped provide the care he needed, Michael was very grateful for their kindnesses and professionalism. He always had time to share a story or a hug with them. His favorite companion/aide, Cindy Mike, was our own family angel – helping and loving both Michael and Renata during some of their most difficult times. Both his immediate and extended family generously supported him emotionally, socially and lovingly.

Michael was always interested in what his children were doing. If he could help, he wanted to offer. He was very proud to show off the many pictures of his family. He was amazed that he and his wife had created and been part of such a large group of humans. He loved visits from his now adult

grandchildren and nieces and keeping track of the younger ones and enjoying their cards and letters. His last two joyous moments were looking at a picture of himself holding a large-sized salmon, and chuckling while watching his great grandson babbling and taking a bath. Michael always looked forward to speaking with his brother Ted in Florida and his sister Wanda in Lancaster, NY. He felt that close loving connection from a lifetime of adventures with them. As his memory waned, he valued and appreciated their re-recitations of their mutual history.

During a recent viewing of a digital slideshow of his slides and more recent pictures, he said, "we lived a good life".

Indeed we did Dad, indeed you did. Thank you.

Cemetery Details

St. Stanislaus Cemetery

700 Pine Ridge Heritage Blvd.
Cheektowaga, NY 14225

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **19**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Cheektowaga - Daniel R. Smolarek Funeral Home
2510 Union Road
Buffalo, NY 14227

Mass of Christian Burial

NOV **20**. 10:30 AM (ET)

St. Stanislaus Church
123 Townsend Street
Buffalo, NY 14212

Tribute Wall

MJ

“ *Much Love ~ Julie, Taylor, and Jacob purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mieczyslaw "Michael" Wolszczak.*



Much Love ~ Julie, Taylor, and Jacob - November 18, 2019 at
11:39 AM