



Raymond E. Pijanowski

October 4, 1922 - October 3, 2016

PIJANOWSKI - Raymond E.

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Raymond “Mr. Visniak” Pijanowski, President of Saturn-Visniak Beverages Co. died on Monday three days before his 94th birthday.

Born in Buffalo, Ray graduated from Sloan High School and attended the University at Buffalo while working with his father Edward Pijanowski in the family’s soft drink manufacturing business, Visniak Beverage Company. In 1944, Ray was drafted in the U. S. Army Air Corps supply division of the 102nd and was stationed in England during the height of World War II.

After the war, he returned home and resumed his duties at Visniak. In 1949, Ray met the girl of his dreams, a beautiful roller derby star named Esther “Bunny” Skorupa. The couple were wed in 1951 and blessed with three daughters, Kathleen Eastland of Amarillo, Texas, Dale Pijanowski Beightol of Colorado Springs, Colorado and Justyne Preston of Lancaster, New York. Throughout his life, Ray and his wife were active in Buffalo’s polish community and well known to business owners throughout Buffalo’s east side. His passion for history made him an amazing story teller and unbeatable resource for accurate historical facts. His

favorite hobbies were to win at trivia games and listen to live big band music.

Ray continued to operate Visniak until 2004 when the last wooden case of birch beer went out the front door of the retail storefront located on Reiman Street in Sloan, New York. Many baby boomers will recall fondly the 7 oz. glass bottles of pop at their First Holy Communion party and church picnics. His retirement years were spent traveling to visit his daughters. He came home to Buffalo, the city he loved, in April 2016 where he passed away.

He is preceded in death by his father Edward Pijanowski, mother Hattie Gawel Pijanowski and his sister Eleanore Lenartowicz Bienko. He has left behind his adoring grandchildren, Dr. Jesse Bandle, Emily Key Gear Smith, Nicolas Trivelli, Samantha Preston, Molly Preston, Gabriel Preston and three great-grandchildren, Carolina Smith, Caden Smith and Camille Bandle and two of his biggest fans, his son-in-laws, Rhys Preston and David Beightol who contributed in great part to his care. There will be no service. Donations can be made in Raymond's memory to Hospice Buffalo. Arrangements by the DANIEL R. SMOLAREK FUNERAL HOME. Leave condolences and share memories at SmolarekCares.com.

Tribute Wall

LF

“ *To the family of Raymond Pijanowski.*

My wife Elizabeth and I send our love and prayers at this very sad moment in time.

We owned the Sloan Super Market, and knew the family for years. Ray's Mom and wife, 'Bunny', were the best, and when Ray stopped by the conversations and stories were many. Through the years, they all will be and are missed. Peace be with you all.

Louis fetto

louis fetto - October 09, 2016 at 01:34 PM

JB

“ *Shared a "pop" or two with Ray at Davids Como Lounge during the 90's ! His favorite topic would be about traveling with Bunny and buying equipment along the way. I admired him and was lucky to have met him . I moved to Warsaw NY in 2002 and last saw Ray at The Wyoming County Veterans Club just a few years ago. A special man and the last of a kind! John Barrett*

john barrett - October 09, 2016 at 11:29 AM

MN

“ *My sincerest condolences.*

Growing up, Ray was a great friend of my father Emil. I remember almost every weekend was spent fixing the Visniak trucks and working at the plant. I even learned to drive on the trucks, driving them back and forth from Rieman St to Wabash and my father saying "don't stall it out on the Harlem Bridge."

The Pop, I think Plantation and the Root beer were served at pretty much every family function; first communion, my sister's weddings at Doyle 1 fire hall, my High School Graduation and my parents 50th Anniversary. Ray was always there for us.

As I got older, I got a job selling beer, I would run into Ray and Bunny occasionally and he showed me what it meant to say "Thank You" to an account. Thanks!

What a great Guy, and I know him and my father are looking down on us, glass of Johnnie Walker Red in hand and toasting a very good life.

Michael Niejadlik

Michael Niejadlik - October 09, 2016 at 07:46 AM