

Lou Riedmann Did it His Way

Thank you for coming this evening. I am Lisa Riedmann Lackovic. Lou's youngest of five. We knew there would be a crowd this evening. Dad had lots of friends and family and was loved by so many like he was their own father, grandfather, or uncle. Let's face it. He was the best friend and neighbor you could ask for. He was an advisor, teacher, and role model. He was kind, generous and had a great sense of humor. His smile was contagious and he never turned down a hug.

His favorite song was I Did It My Way by Frank Sinatra. We played it for him quite a bit in his final days. He shared a story about seeing Frank Sinatra at the Golden Nugget in Las Vegas with his buddies Del Powell and Tony Iwan- his own "Rat Pack" Dad was famous for his stories. A master storyteller. As the story goes Del and Tony and dad were seated in the front row of the Frank Sinatra Show after tipping the Maître d' a couple bucks. They were pretty much treated like rock stars...Frank Sinatra sang right to them as they sipped on their Scotch and waters. I would sing a bit of the song for you but Riedmann's are not allowed to sing. Dad always told us we would be moved to the back of the church if a Riedmann started singing at mass because none of us could carry a tune. (Well one of us can sing and you will hear her tomorrow)

The song starts like this:

*And now the end is near.
And so I face the final curtain.
My friend, I'll say it clear.
I'll state my case of which I'm certain.
I've lived a life that's full.
I've traveled each and every highway
And more, much more than this
I did it my way.*

That is so true about Dad. He did everything his way. He worked hard and he played hard. He traveled the highways of world to learn how to build the best block plant in the US. He worked at Watkins Concrete Block for 53 years and was considered an icon in the industry. A trailblazer and visionary. He was Chairman of the Board (like Frank Sinatra) of Watkins and retired in 2007. He also traveled the world vacationing with his wife Sharon of 30 years. We lost her almost 10 years ago and he never stopped missing her every day. I am pretty sure they are dancing to Frank Sinatra now.

Dad also traveled to Canada every year with friends for fishing trips. As we learned from his many Canada stories...he did not fish. He was actually the head chef and was responsible for the creating the menus, doing the grocery shopping, and cooking for 20 guys for a week. He thoroughly enjoyed running the show and keeping these guys fed with his home cooking. He would come back and bestow all these cooking lessons on us. How to grill steaks for 20, the correct way to cook 10 lbs of bacon, and the proper way to pack a cooler. Apparently, we were doing it wrong all these years. He did it his way. Dad was a single father of 5 for many years. He had to learn these cooking skills way before Canada trips. Hopefully he did not make the guys in Canada eat Spam casserole like he used to fix for us.

Dad was notorious in our family as Mr. Fixit. He would say a little bailing wire, bubble gum would fix it...which eventually was upgraded to duct tape and super glue. Dad could fix anything. Our broken hearts, struggles at work or the trials and tribulations of parenting. He had such great advice. I think many people went to him for his fatherly advice and mentoring. Many a problem was solved over a cold beer in his man garage. Mr Fixit always had time to listen. His toolbox overflowed with compassion, empathy, and love.

His last major fix was the lower level of his lake house. The flood of 2019 was a huge setback for everyone at Hanson Lakes. It was probably one of the biggest challenges of his lifetime. He lived with us for 3 months during the recovery and would get up every morning, head to the lake and fight the battle to save his home. He was like the energizer bunny power washing everything he could salvage. Fortunately, he was able to rebuild

and made his home better than it was before. We owe many of you here thanks for the help you offered him during that tough time.

Dad never stopped fixing. Up until his final days he was finishing his unending to-do list. New light fixtures, new window shades, having trees cut down and installing handrails on the front of the house. He was not going down without a fight. He loved his lake home and wanted to leave it in tip top shape for his family to enjoy.

Chip, Beth, Gayle, Joyce, and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being here today to help us celebrate the legendary Lou Riedmann.

As Frank Sinatra sang:

*Regrets I've had a few
But then again too few to mention
I did what I had to do
And saw it through without exemption
I planned each chartered course
Each careful step along the by-way
And more, much more than this
I did it my way*

- Lisa Lackovic