



Dan Ver Ploeg

August 8, 1935 - March 26, 2020

Dan Arthur Ver Ploeg, 84, of Anchorage, Alaska, and formerly of Columbus, Ohio, and Oskaloosa, Iowa, passed away Thursday, March 26, 2020, at the Pioneer Home in Anchorage, Alaska.

Dan Ver Ploeg, son of Byron M. and Gladys A. (Brenton) Ver Ploeg, was born August 8, 1935, in Oskaloosa, Iowa. He was a 1953 graduate of Oskaloosa High School and a 1957 graduate from Grinnell College, where he earned a degree in chemistry. He continued his education at the University of Iowa, where he earned a Master's Degree in Biochemistry in 1960. He received his Doctorate Degree in Physical Chemistry from the University of Wisconsin and then did postdoctoral studies for three years in biochemistry at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. Dan moved to Columbus, Ohio, in 1970; there he worked for Chemical Abstracts Service, writing abstracts of scientific research papers. In 1987, Dan joined the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Division of Drinking Water, where he wrote regulations for public water systems, retiring in 1999.

Dan married Gail Davenport on Leap Day, 1964; to this union, two children, Eric and Kathryn, were born.

His second marriage was on August 8, 1988, to Angela Henn Bollinger. They liked the date 8-8-88, and Dan found his anniversary easier to remember since it was also his birthday, 8-8. After his retirement, they moved to Anchorage, Alaska, for her work as a school psychologist in remote Alaskan villages. Angela passed away in 2015.

Dan was a licensed pilot and long-time spelunker, exploring caves in his free time. He was an avid bicyclist his whole life -- once riding 620 miles in 2.5 days.

Dan was famous for his home-baked bread and his very precise cheesecake recipe. He was a regular square dancer and was always in charge of keeping the coffee pot full. Dan enjoyed construction projects and did electrical wiring for Habitat for Humanity. He was always civic-minded and planted raspberries in his front yard for the neighborhood children to nibble on.

His family includes his children and their spouses: Eric and Debra (Hassing) Ver Ploeg of Menlo Park, California, and Kathryn (Ver Ploeg) and Eric (Williams) Verwillow of Palo Alto, California; five grandchildren: Lauren, Ava, and Brooke Ver Ploeg, and Anna and Neil Verwillow; and a brother, Brenton Ver Ploeg of Coconut Grove, Florida.

And as Dan would always say, “When all else fails -- try reading the directions.”

Funeral arrangements are pending at Langkamp Funeral Chapel in Oskaloosa, Iowa.

Burial will be in Forest Cemetery in Oskaloosa. Memorial Contributions can be made to William Penn University in Oskaloosa.

Cemetery

Forest Cemetery

934 North 9th ST

Oskaloosa, IA, 52577

Comments



“ To the Family of "Raspberry Dan",

I am sorry for your loss. I was a Piedmont Rd neighbor of Dan and he was affectionately known to our children (and ALL the children on our street) as "Raspberry Dan". Being a good example, I first asked if it was alright for our children to pick, and EAT, the raspberries. He said of course because he grew "the good ones" in the backyard.

My children loved to walk down, or ride their bikes as they grew older, to pick raspberries, often eating them in his front yard. My daughter would take a cup hoping to pick enough to bake muffins and our sons were thrilled when the golden ones grew. It was "gold" to them and felt very lucky.

All three are in their 20s now and still share stories about Raspberry Dan. Usually around Halloween because another memory they loved about him was what he gave out to Trick or Treaters. He would offer candy OR coins OR both. He would make them think and use their math computations...a piece of candy and 5 pennies OR a quarter OR 2 dimes and 4 nickels OR... The numbers have probably changed over the years, but the fun of retelling the story where each of them share the thought of how they got the best "treat".

His memory will forever live on and I can see one of my children growing raspberries when they have their first home/yard.

What a beautiful obituary. Thank you for sharing it in the Columbus Dispatch. What an amazing life. It was wonderful reading about all his gifts.

Beth Mahler
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Beth Mahler - April 10, 2020 at 12:01 PM