



Gerald M Ferlaak

April 11, 1941 - July 20, 2020

On Monday, July 20, 2020, Gerald “Jerry” M. Ferlaak of Marietta, GA, passed away with his family by his side, ending a year-long battle with lung cancer at the age of 79.

Jerry is known as a kind, generous, hard-working, loving and devoted husband, father and grandfather. Rooted with a strong work ethic, he provided for his family to ensure their wants and needs. He accomplished this by proudly working for IBM for 41 years.

Life was a journey, starting in Minneapolis/Rochester Minnesota, to Milwaukee, living 21 years in Chicago (Palatine, IL), and finally settling in Marietta, GA for the past 30 years, since 1989. Jerry forged life long relationships along the way, leaving a trail of people affected by his charm, warmth and friendship.

Jerry was born in 1941 in Minneapolis, MN to Melvin and Rose (Gersich) Ferlaak. He graduated from Ramsey High School, class of ‘59, and attained the rank of Eagle Scout. Gifted in technology and ability to analyze, he studied electronics at Dunwoody Industrial Institute. Upon graduation, was quickly recruited by IBM, spending 41 years working for this formidable company. While working full time, Jerry studied to earn his Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Training, Education, and Development to further his career as a Senior Education Specialist. He developed technical coursework for IBM’s best and brightest programmers, developers, IT Architects and sales teams.

Jerry met his beloved wife, Maria, in Rochester Minnesota in 1960 and they have been happily married for 57 years. Maria was from Lima, Peru, visiting the USA for a procedure at the Mayo Clinic. Meeting her was love at first sight! They related to the romance in the film “West Side Story”, and he often sang this song to her: “Maria, I just met a girl named Maria...”. After a year-long engagement, Jerry traveled across the equator to Lima Peru to marry into an extensive Peruvian/Chilean family, who mutually intertwined each other into their lives. He was so beloved by his late mother in law, Adriana Santa Cruz of Santiago, Chile, that she nicknamed him “Mi Rey”, which means “My King” in Spanish.

Jerry and Maria raised three children, Ron, Adriana, and Sue. He was an ever-present and engaged father, a perfect balance of loving, firm, and fair; which set his children up for success. Family time was a priority to Jerry. Although he was always prudent with his personal expenses, he generously treated his family to annual vacations to nurture family engagement. Highlights included regular trips to Peru, (visiting family in Lima, as well as exploring Machu Picchu, Cusco, and the mountains of Arequipa), as well as a yearly trip to the lovely Florida Gulf beaches as a special treat for the grandchildren. In addition, Jerry made it a priority to travel regularly with Maria, enjoying cruises and travel around the world, including Venice, Rome, the Vatican, and Cape Horn/Tierra del Fuego, the Caribbean and Alaska.

Jerry was an active member of the Windsor Oaks ALTA tennis team, and a devoted member of Transfiguration Catholic Church in Marietta, GA. Jerry has been a volunteer for many groups throughout his life. As a child, he was an altar boy, as an adult, served as a Boy Scout leader in various positions from Cub Master to Explorer leader. He coached and assistant-coached several boys and girls soccer teams, as well as assisted his subdivision's ALTA tennis teams. He proudly volunteered at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta as floor staff for the gymnastics competition.

After retirement, Jerry did not slow down. He spent 15 years volunteering at the Cobb County Senior Center leading their "Computers for Seniors" program, which entailed developing, teaching, and scheduling and staffing classes.

Throughout his life, he has been dedicated to students and family throughout his life and carried that ethic way beyond retirement.

Jerry is survived by his loving wife Maria; his three children: Ronald Ferlaak (Maricar) of Canton, GA, Adriana Blandford of Milton GA, and Suzanne Anderson (Doug) of Shakopee MN; his granddaughters Nicole and Courtney, Becky and Ally, and Alessabella; his brother John Ferlaak (Karen); and cousins Anita Stewart Lloyd and Jim Ferlaak (Nadine).

Funeral services are still being planned. Those planning an expression of sympathy may wish to consider a donation to Transfiguration Catholic Church, Marietta, GA.

The family would like to thank Dr. Silpa C. Reddy, M.D. and the staff at Atlanta Cancer Care for their loving care and dedication.

Comments



“ Dear Maria -- So sorry for your loss. I had many really positive conversations with Jerry over the past couple decades and he always showed care & love for your family and others. I hope all of the good memories as well as his wonderful actions provide comfort to you and your extended family. With love, Steve Verska

Steve Verska - August 05 at 02:22 PM



“ Dear Maria:
I am so sorry to read that your husband has passed away. I am praying for strength during this difficult time.
Bee Vermeersch

bee vermeersch - July 29 at 08:32 AM



“ Monica Zela-Koort lit a candle in memory of Gerald M Ferlaak



Monica Zela-Koort - July 28 at 11:36 PM



“ Dear Maria Julia, Ron, Nani & Suzy,
We were so very sorry to hear about the death of Jerry, faithful husband and loving father. The pain of loss is still fresh for our family as well with my father, Fritz, passing eleven months ago. I took comfort knowing that previously departed friends and relatives would be waiting to welcome my dad after he was granted admittance through the pearly gates and I know my dad, among others, was waiting to welcome Jerry with a hug and open invitation to join the other circle of souls telling jokes or doing whatever else souls do in heaven to pass the time while waiting for other loved ones to join them.

They say things happen for a reason and our families paths most definitely crossed by fate. Too young to remember exactly how our parents met, I know they met during your short tenure in Milwaukee. Memories include the Ferlaak family returning to Milwaukee, after moving to Palatine, for the annual Peruvian picnic in honor of the 28th of July (Peruvian Independence Day) and the Werkmeister family visiting the

Ferlaaks in Palatine. I remember Jerry as a gentle soul secretly enjoying the mischief we (the crazy kids) would create. Such a kind man, slow to anger "y un verdadero caballero". Later after your move to Georgia, we still enjoyed keeping in touch through less frequent in person visits or by phone.

Our hearts go out to you as you mourn the loss of your beloved husband/father. "Eternal rest grant unto Jerry, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he Rest In Peace." Amen

With deepest affection and sympathy,
Monica (Werkmeister) & Carlos Zela-Koort and family

Monica Zela-Koort - July 28 at 11:35 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Adriana Blandford - July 25 at 05:10 PM

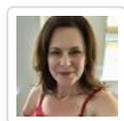


“ Jerry was my brother from another mother whom I met and learned to love as a fellow IBMer and dear friend. We met in early 1973 when I joined the IBM FE Education Center on a temporary assignment to help teach new-hire service personnel to service and support IBM System/360 Input/Output subsystems. We had a long trying work schedule during that summer because IBM needed service personnel asap. We worked 6 days each week starting at midnight Sunday and going until 9:00 am Saturday morning. My temp assignment was over in November of 1973. Jerry and I remained close friends and he was one of three instructors who pushed management to hire me into the education center in Chicago. I joined the education center full time in February 1978 when I was assigned to teach with Jerry, Al Becker, Suds Suddith, and Bill Stinchfield as the five of us taught the service and support of the IBM System/370 model 145 and 148 Central Processing Unit (CPU). Jerry and I had families that met at regular IBM employee family events and grew up together. Our careers seem to flow together as we stepped from being platform instructors to being course design and development authors to becoming members of an IBM education "swat team." In 1989, IBM management decided to consolidate all education into Marietta, Georgia; so, our families were given a choice, relocate to Georgia or find a new job outside of IBM. About 100 families decided to relocate to Georgia. While Jerry and I still remained close "brothers;" our careers split apart as Jerry became a Senior Education Specialist dealing with course design and development and I moved into being a Senior Advisory course development project manager. It was a sad day for me when Jerry decided to retire after 41 years of

faithful IBM service; however, our families still stayed friends. Brother, I know how much you love your wife and children and grandchildren and I know that you have been called home to prepare a place in God's heavenly realm for them. LORD Jesus, may your eternal light shine upon Jerry as you welcome him into his heavenly home. I hope and pray that your servant hears, "welcome home my true and faithful servant whom I am well pleased in. You have served my kingdom greatly. Now, it is time to rest." Amen



John Klenzak - July 25 at 11:10 AM



“ Thank you John for your kind words. My dad thought the world of you

Adriana - July 25 at 05:11 PM



“ John Klenzak lit a candle in memory of Gerald M Ferlaak



John Klenzak - July 25 at 10:18 AM



“ Querida Maria, solo llegue a conocer a Jerry una vez que te fui a visitar en Palatine, pero me acuerdo cómo se llevaban bien y se querían tanto. Jerry, tu y familia están registrados en el Prayer Chain de mi parroquia. Durante dos semanas unas 40 personas estarán rezando. También estoy ofreciendo una Misa por su alma y por la familia. Un gran abrazo para ti, amiga de la infancia...Francoise

Francoise Pietzner - July 24 at 10:45 PM



“ So sorry to find out about this. I had the pleasure of working with Jerry for many years In the Computers for Seniors program at the Cobb Senior Center. His dedication and knowledge kept me centered as I volunteered in this program. He was a great guy. My deepest sympathies to is family.

Hank Berwald - July 24 at 08:53 PM



“ My children grew up on Hillside court with Jerry & Maria next door. We shared the happenings of the neighborhood, dog lives, cats catching moles & birds, children moving into and out of other homes on the street. It is sad to know that Jerry will not be there when we can visit. We love you Maria and hope that you and Phil Webber will share a drive to come visit us. Jerry will smile as we enjoy the company of each other. With love and affection, Your neighbors, Clay & Rene' Hardin



Rene Hardin - July 24 at 06:48 PM



“ We have been friends for many years. The Schneider family sends our deepest sympathies and prayers for peace. Jerry was a wonderful gentleman and friend. God bless you all
Jill Schneider and family

Jill Schneider - July 24 at 05:50 PM



“ 4 files added to the album Memories Album



Adriana Blandford - July 24 at 05:20 PM