



## Mr. Donald E. Lehto

April 21, 1932 - February 23, 2009

HUMAN BEING, MAN, SON, HUSBAND, FATHER, BROTHER, 1ST GENERATION FINNLANDER, SOLDIER, GRANDFATHER, UNCLE, FRIEND, NEIGHBOR, ENTREPRENEUR, COMEDIAN, MUSICIAN, INVENTOR, WOODWORKER, HORTICULTURIST: Mr. Donald E. Lehto was born April, 21, 1932 in Newberry, MI, the son of Liam and Jacob Lehto, who also preceded him in death. Donald's family immigrated from Helsinki, Finland in the early 1900's. Their family name was Lehtinen, which is a very common Finnish name. He married Ann Y. Hetrick on November 23, 1953, his loving wife of 55 years. Donald was a very proud Father of his four daughters and seven grandchildren, which include, children: Debra Adams of Ann Arbor, MI, Susan Fuller-Sutherland (husband Harry) of Arlington, TX; Vickie Lehto (deceased); and Jaime Lehto (husband Michael Fraser) of Paw Paw, MI; grandchildren: Damien Fuller-Sutherland; Adam Zemke, Cameron Wooley, Katharine Soter (significant other Kyle Selvidge); Lindsay Carpenter (husband Brandon Carpenter), Maya Soter and Jillian Soter (Furry grandchildren); 9 brothers and sisters: Surviving siblings, Nora VanEnklevort, Gloria Durga, Shelley Tann, Raymond Lehto, Ernie Lehto, and Melvin Lehto; deceased siblings: Mike, John and Harry Lehto. Donald had a special fondness for all of his sister and brother-in-laws. Donald had over 75 nieces and nephews. A special mention of the niece who was with him daily while in Borgess Hospital, Mrs. Ramona Crawford (with the giggle he loved). Donald enlisted in the U.S. Army at the age of 19, getting promoted to the rank of Sergeant over the six

years he served. He bravely defended the American efforts in the Korean conflict and as a result suffered from PTSD for the remainder of his life. This never stood in the way of his comical character, and he frequently teased his family members that he would "remember us all in his Will". Donald was an amazing man. He did not complete High School, but he was an incredible entrepreneur, becoming an expert horticulturist and eventually expanding his artistic talent into a woodworking business. There are many Michigan neighbors who own Don's windmills and birdhouses, displaying them in their yards. Donald's talents included the ability to learn and play music by ear. He taught himself how to play the accordion and the harmonica, delighting his family with tunes that included love songs and polkas. Donald also had an incredible perspective on life to live in the present appreciate the things you've got and to love and cherish your loved ones unconditionally. Friends may meet with the family 1:00 p.m. Sunday, April 19, 2009 for a Celebration of The Life, at 7738 3rd Street, Mattawan, MI.

# Tribute Wall



“ Harper Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Donald E. Lehto



Harper Funeral Home - February 23, 2009 at 12:00 AM



“ Mr. Donald E. Lehto

October 23, 2023 at 06:06 AM



“ Mr. Donald E. Lehto

October 06, 2023 at 10:42 AM



“ We just heard about uncle Donnie on 3/27/09 Sorry we couldn't be there. We want you to know are memories of Uncle Donnie inspire us to always enjoy life. We will miss him. Scott###imported-begin###Scott & Pam Lehto###imported-end###

March 30, 2009 at 07:28 AM



“ Dear Aunt Ann and family,

*I just heard from Aunt Gloria about Uncle Donny passing. I am so sorry to hear this. I hardly ever get to see any of Dad's family anymore but think of you frequently and wonder about my many cousins. My deepest sympathy to all of you.*

*Love,*

*Harriet (Harry's oldest daughter)##imported-begin##Harriet (Lehto)Kitchen##imported-end##*

---

March 20, 2009 at 04:12 PM



“ The family of Don Lehto ...

*Our hearts and prayers go out to you and your family.##imported-begin##Karen, Ted, Lyndsay, and Abby Hammond##imported-end##*

---

February 27, 2009 at 10:09 PM



“ *I have loved you all my life and always will.##imported-begin##Ann##imported-end##*

---

February 27, 2009 at 07:22 PM



“ *There are no words*

*Know that we love you all always*

*Steve###imported-begin##Steve & Cindy Lehto###imported-end##*

---

February 27, 2009 at 11:58 AM



“ *My father didn't tell me how to live. He lived, and let me watch him do it.*

*Love you, Leit.###imported-begin##Susan Fuller-Sutherland###imported-end##*

---

February 26, 2009 at 10:47 PM



“ *Uncle Donald, I miss seeing you every day at the hospital. I know your pain is gone but the talks we shared will forever be in my heart. Thank you for encouraging me about my dad. And for all the times you called and checked on him. You were a great uncle and brother. Dad will miss you greatly also. We will do our best to look after Aunt Annie until the day we are all together again. Our thoughts and prayers are with Annie and the family. Please give my mom a big hug. I love you, Mona###imported-begin##Ramona Crawford###imported-end##*

---

February 26, 2009 at 09:24 PM



“ Aunt Annie & Family:  
*Our hearts and prayers go out to you and your family.##imported-  
begin##Theresa Schmitt and Karen Lockett##imported-end##*

---

February 26, 2009 at 08:09 PM



“ An Indian Prayer:

*O Great spirit,  
Whose voice I hear in the winds,  
And whose breath gives life to all the world, Hear me!  
I am small and weak, I need your strength and wisdom.*

*Let me walk in Beauty,  
and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.*

*Make my hands respect the things you  
have made and my ears sharp to hear your voice.*

*Make me wise so that I may  
understand the things you have taught my people.*

*Let me learn the lessons you have  
hidden in every leaf and rock.*

*I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother, but to fight my  
greatest enemy - myself.*

*Make me always ready to come to you with clean hands and  
straight eyes.*

*So when life fades, as the fading sunset, my spirit may come to you  
without shame.##imported-begin##Anita LeBlanc##imported-end##*

---

February 26, 2009 at 03:37 PM



“ Donny: I will truly miss our consultant phone calls, I am very happy to think you had so much confidence in my knowledge to call as often as you did, even if you would tell me from time to time, don't let the old lady know I call, as she will get annoyed with me, I would laugh and tell you okey, and a few days later would talk to Ann and she would tell me, I heard the old man has ben calling you again, yes, he has, and we would laugh. Don, you lived a long and for the most part a healthy life, you gave it your all while on earth, you will never be forgotten, and will continue seeing about the family, just from a distance, with many family members to watch over us with, your family as well as ours, We will meet agin one day, until then love you old man.##imported-begin##Linda Hetrick Velarde##imported-end##

---

February 26, 2009 at 12:17 PM



“ *Death is nothing at all.  
I have only slipped away into the next room.  
I am I and you are you.  
Whatever we were to each other,  
that we still are.*

*Call me by my old familiar name.  
Speak to me in the easy way  
which you always used.  
Put no difference in your tone.  
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.*

*Laugh as we always laughed  
at the little jokes we enjoyed together.  
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.  
Let my name be ever the household word  
that it always was.  
Let it be spoken without affect,  
without the trace of a shadow on it.*

*Life means all that it ever meant.  
It is the same that it ever was.  
There is absolutely unbroken continuity.  
Why should I be out of mind  
because I am out of sight?*

*I am waiting for you,  
for an interval,  
somewhere very near,  
just around the corner.*

*All is well.  
~ Henry Scott Holland###imported-begin##Susan Fuller-  
Sutherland###imported-end##*

---

February 25, 2009 at 10:10 PM



“ Grandpa Lehto will truly be missed, all his jokes, laughter, quick comebacks, and most of all his big heart. He was a wonderful man, husband, and father/grandpa. Our hearts go out to you all in this time of loss and remembrance. We love you and we are just a call away.

Love,

Jasmin and Grandma and Harp Family##imported-begin##Jasmin Harp##imported-end##

---

February 25, 2009 at 08:52 PM



“ Our prayers are with you and we are thinking of you. Matthew Sr. says love you##imported-begin##Karen Hetrick and family##imported-end##

---

February 25, 2009 at 08:05 PM



“ Grandpa,  
how I miss your laugh already!! I miss coming home and seeing your laughter! However, I know you are at a better place, with mom and with the angels. I'm sure you're having a grand ole time and you deserve every second of it.  
Even though it is hard right now and we miss you soooo much, I know you will be looking down upon us making sure we are doing alright. And if anything...you will probably play a few pranks on us still. You were an amazing grandpa to me and an amazing father. I couldn't have asked for anyone better grandpa, no would I. :)  
I love you with all my heart.##imported-begin##Maya##imported-end##

---

February 25, 2009 at 07:47 PM



“ I being the youngest of the family, can only tell things second hand. What I am about to tell, I was too young to really remember. Brother Ernest tells me that when I was so young I couldn't see over the steering wheel of the old Model A, or whatever it was, Donald put me behind the wheel and told me to really step on it hard when it started as they pushed. That I did and Ernie tells me I wnet right accross the road and into the ditch.

Another time Donald came to the house telling me there were baby kittens in the barn. I was excited and ran as fast as I could. When I got into the barn, there laid Ernie on the floor with a hayfork around his neck (middle prong broken out) and I thought he was gone. Donald caught me before I got to the house to tell our mother. Many more pranks but not enough time. Donald, you will be missed by many but there are many good memories. Sorry we could never get you up on the water skies. Ann our love and prayers to all of you.

Gloria###imported-begin##Gloria###imported-end##

---

February 25, 2009 at 02:34 PM



“ Donny was one of the most unique and entertaining people I have ever met. He always had a dream and he always made all his dreams seem possible. The thing I admired the most in Donny was his committment to his family. He was always proud of his girls.

My heart goes out to Annie, and the girls at this time. You are all in my thoughts and my prayers. I know that Donny is in Heaven hatching up a new project with God. Love Aunt Rosie###imported-begin##Rosalie###imported-end##

---

February 25, 2009 at 11:03 AM



“ Uncle Donald was a funny, funny old man!!!... I stayed with him and Aunt Anne the week my Grandmother, Aunt Annie’s Mother, was buried... The story I am about to share is one I shared with many of my friends about Uncle Donald’s spontaneous comedy.... Uncle Donald and I went to this thrift shop; Donald said he liked to go there every week to check out all the goody’s that were on sale... There was this empty rifle laying on a table, Donnie walked towards it and I followed him there, he reached for the rifle and placed his hands on it, he turned his head to me and said “Alright sonny boy, I’ve about had enough of you”, and him and I proceeded to bust out with laughter, I was laughing so hard it made my sides hurt, meanwhile the store clerk is standing in the corner with a scared look on his face wondering if Donald was serious and that just made us even harder because Donald and I knew it was just a joke... Too his immediate family, I would like to say that losing my Grandmother was hard, what gets me by everyday is knowing that one day I will be with her again... I want you to know that this separation from Uncle Donald is temporary, we will all be with him again, and you better be ready, because he is going to split our sides with the new jokes and pranks that I’m sure he is learning at this very moment....###imported-begin###Tony Anthony###imported-end###

---

February 25, 2009 at 10:32 AM



“ "To live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die."  
--Thomas Campbell###imported-begin###Susan Fuller-Sutherland###imported-end###

---

February 24, 2009 at 10:46 PM



“ Dad;

*I do hope that you and Vick are having a nice reunion.*

*Love, Susan##imported-begin##Susan Fuller-Sutherland##imported-end##*

---

February 24, 2009 at 10:35 PM



“ Grandpa,

*There are no words to describe how much I've missed you already and everyday you will be in my heart and my thoughts. I want you to know that though you may be physically gone from us now, you will still live on in all of us. And my promise to you is to try to live everyday the way I thought you did-loving everyone and everything, laughing, and being thankful for every minute. Grandpa, I love you so much. I know you'll be really busy in Heaven with my Mom, but don't forget to check in on us from time to time.##imported-begin##Kater-bug##imported-end##*

---

February 24, 2009 at 10:05 PM



“ Dear Dad,

*I love you and you will always reside in my heart.*

*Debra##imported-begin##Debra Adams##imported-end##*

---

February 24, 2009 at 08:06 PM



“ Aunt Ann & Family, our deepest sympathies...our prayers are with you all throughout this difficult time. Uncle Donnie will be sadly missed, he truly was one of a kind! Jill & family, Lori & family, Mel & Carmen###imported-begin##Jill Davis##imported-end##

---

February 23, 2009 at 04:57 PM