



Raoul A. Vanelli

APR 28, 1933 - FEB 18, 2020



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MEMORIAL PARK
Funeral Home & Cemetery

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Raoul Arthur Vanelli, 86, passed away peacefully February 18, 2020. He was preceded in death by his wife, Rose Sciara Vanelli. He is survived by his children, Chris (Lisa), Daniel (Cindy), Phil, Charles, Thomas (Jennifer), and Mary Margaret (John Paul), grandchildren, Matthew (Lauren), Anthony (Mallary), Alison (Scott), David, Christina, Laura, Nicholas, Lydia, Mark, and Vincent, great grandchildren, Olive and Karis. He also leaves his brothers, Joe (Ruth), Anthony, Robert (Rebecca) and Mike (Karen), and sisters, Angela Andreuccetti, Yolanda Lazarini, and Tina Long (David).

Anyone who knew Raoul would certainly describe him as a character. He was intelligent, witty, sarcastic and silly. A devoted husband to Rose, he and she raised six children and, in leading the CYO at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church together for 18 years, became second parents to hundreds of kids. They were married for 60 years, sharing a strong love for the church, for family and for each other. They started the CYO at OLPH because they had met at CYO, and wanted their children to also have a youth group where they could be with friends and grow in the church. Raoul loved being Catholic, and was proud to also serve the church as a Eucharistic Minister, a Lector, a Parish Council member, a Fourth Degree member of the Knights of Columbus, and on countless other committees.

Most people will remember his occupation as being “The Banana Man,” selling bananas wholesale. He embraced the silly side of running a banana business by amassing and displaying a collection of banana-themed items. He had banana t-shirts, banana phones, banana ties, banana bowls, figurines with bananas, stuffed animals that looked like bananas (yes, really), banana paperweights, anything else he could find with a banana on it, and even a dog at work named Nana. He ate a banana every single day.

If you met him more than once, you no doubt noticed he was missing half of his index finger on his left hand. You would have noticed this because he invariably would put the nub finger up to



Obituary

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his nostril so it looked like his finger was all the way into his nose. This was an endless source of humor for him. Is this the kind of story that should be in an obituary? In Raoul Vanelli's obituary it is.

Raoul was a proud veteran of the Naval Air Reserves, through which he traveled around the country, always sending love letters and postcards back to his wife. He traveled more regionally as a certified judge for Memphis in May, going to barbecue contests all around the area. He wrote articles for the National Barbecue News about contests he attended, and enjoyed having his press pass, which enabled him to talk to (and sample barbecue from) all of the teams. He truly loved everything about this. The judging, the eating, the traveling, the eating, the friends, the eating, the writing, and the eating.

Over the past 15 years, there was a slow but severe decline in Raoul's memory. The result of several strokes, his dementia took away the intelligent, witty, silly person we loved (but somehow not quite all the sarcasm...) and he eventually needed full-time care. The family would like to thank the people of Ave Maria Home, where he lived for the last six years, but most especially the amazing ladies at the St. Joseph House at Ave Maria. Their tireless efforts and genuine love for him were such a blessing, and they mean the absolute world to us.

Raoul's release from dementia's world of lost knowledge, disability, and missing memories brings him Home, whole and well again, to his beautiful Rose.

The family will receive friends on Sunday, February 23, from 5:00-7:00 p.m. with a rosary at 7:00 p.m. at Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery, 5668 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38119 (901) 767-8930. The funeral Mass will be held on Monday, February 24, at 11:00 a.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, 8151 Poplar Ave, Germantown, TN 38138. Burial will follow the funeral Mass in Southwoods Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Alzheimer's Association in memory of him.



Events

Raoul A. Vanelli

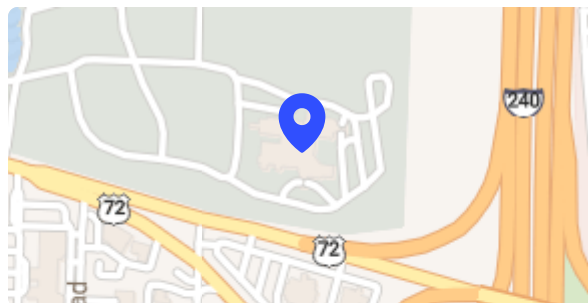
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Visitation

 **Sunday**, February 23, 2020

 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM CT

 **Memorial Park Funeral Home**
5668 Poplar Ave, Memphis TN 38119

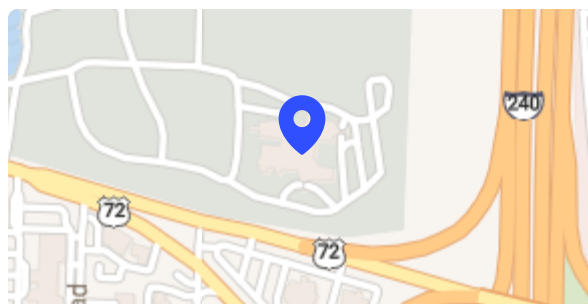


Rosary

 **Sunday**, February 23, 2020

 7:00 PM - 7:30 PM CT


 **Memorial Park Funeral Home**
5668 Poplar Ave, Memphis TN 38119

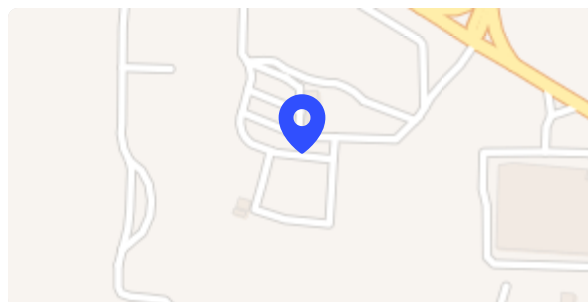


Mass of Christian Burial

 **Monday**, February 24, 2020

 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM CT

 **Our Lady of Perpetual Help**
8151 Poplar Ave, Germantown TN 38138





Tribute Wall

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AF

Anthony Favazza posted:

Raoul was truly a person loved by everyone. He never met a stranger. My early life was full of stories that Raoul inspired. No one had a personality like Raoul. He really knew how to pick things up and make it into a good time. I will remember him always. Tony Favazza

February 24 at 2:48 PM

MM

Mitch Rubin And Susan Mccool sent a Divine Peace Bouquet to the Vanelli family.



February 23 at 9:19 AM

DC

Darren Crimmins posted:

So sorry for your all's loss. Thoughts and prayers for you all. The Crimmins family

February 23 at 4:58 AM

MG

Mary S. Gadd posted:

May the precious love of Jesus unite my cousin Rose Sciara and Raoul in heaven in eternal peace.

February 21 at 4:16 PM

TC

Tammy Canale lit a candle in honor of Raoul .

Mr. Vanelli was one of the finest, hard working, and kindest men I've ever known. Mr and Mrs. Vanelli were such an integral part of my youth and teenage years. Now they are rejoicing in Heaven where they are together for all eternity. I know my Mom and Dad were there to welcome him with open arms...



February 20 at 6:22 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Raoul by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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