



Louis Michael Santi

December 7, 1947 - January 6, 2022

Louis Michael Santi, age 74, passed away on January 6, 2022 in Memphis, Tennessee. He passed quickly and peacefully with his wife and children by his side.

Mike was born on December 7, 1947 in Memphis, Tennessee to Louis Santi and Opal Ellison Santi. He attended Christian Brothers High School and Christian Brothers College in Memphis. He received a Masters Degree in Mathematics from University of Tennessee – Knoxville and then earned a Doctorate of Mechanical Engineering from Vanderbilt University. Mike became a Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Christian Brothers University where he taught for 15 years. Mike was fascinated by space. While at Christian Brothers he began working with NASA, eventually leaving CBU to work full time with NASA. At Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, AL and Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, Ohio, Mike worked on rocket engine propulsion for the Space Shuttle among other programs until 2019. Science and teaching were not just careers for Mike, they were his calling. In the days and weeks before his passing, Mike could regularly be found helping his grandson with his geometry homework, talking with his colleagues at NASA and on occasion working engineering proofs of his own creation at home.

Mike will be remembered for his kindness and friendship, his strength and integrity, a quick smile and hearty laugh, and his keen mind and gentle heart. Mike was a great storyteller and an even better listener. He had a rare gift for taking complex subjects and distilling them down to easy-to-understand messages – whether teaching thermodynamics to college students, explaining to his 7 year old granddaughter why we have seasons, or giving an impromptu lesson on gun safety to a troop of boy scouts.

Mike loved the outdoors and travel. As a student, he enjoyed hiking in the Smoky Mountains and enjoyed walking the woods and hills of Tennessee throughout his life. He planned spectacular trips to National Parks with his family throughout the country. His favorites included visiting the geysers of Yellowstone, hiking the alien rock formations of the Dakota Badlands and flying in a 9-seater prop plane to watch bears fish for salmon in the pristine waters in Lake Clark, Alaska. Mike also enjoyed frequent trips to Colorado and

Virginia to visit his children and grandchildren. Mike loved baseball - whether taking in a Red Birds game, helping to coach his son's Little League teams or as a spectator at his grandson's Little League games. Mike was a member of the Memphis Sport Shooting Association where he combined his love of Westerns and things that go 'Boom!' as a member of the Cowboy Action shooting group at MSSA joining in many competitions and fireside chats under his cowboy name "Loosahatchie".

Through all these adventures and many others, his wife of 51 years, Jane, was by his side. Mike and Jane met in graduate school in Knoxville. She was the love of his life and best friend, and their devotion to one another throughout their lives together was an inspiration to family and friends. In addition to his wife, Jane, Mike is survived by his loving children and grandchildren: his daughter Emily Waterman and son-in-law Tim, his son Mark Santi and daughter-in-law Peggy, and his four grandchildren, Tyler, Evelyn, Isabelle, and Calvin. He is also survived by his brother Ron Santi of Florida.

Mike enjoyed life to the very end. He met pandemic restrictions and health challenges the same way he weathered all challenges in life – with grace, bravery, humor and determination and with Jane by his side.

Visitation will be held Saturday, January 22nd from 10:00am with a memorial service at 11:00am in the Fireside Chapel at the Memorial Park Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

To view the online memorial tribute video. Click the link below to view.

<https://www.tributeslides.com/tributes/show/5W7KK5GHCDP9GQKB>

To view the webcast memorial service. Please click the link below to view.

<https://www.tributeslides.com/tributes/show/C9KHJX9WNX5KMXCJ>

Events

JAN **Memorial Visitation** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

22

Memorial Park Funeral Home

5668 Poplar Ave, Memphis, TN, US, 38119

JAN **Memorial Service** 11:00AM

22

Memorial Park Funeral Home

5668 Poplar Ave, Memphis, TN, US, 38119

Comments



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Amy Chicatelli - January 23 at 02:36 PM



“ Memories of Papa



Peggy Santi - January 19 at 09:09 PM



“ My experience working with Mike was just a brief time in his later career. He was so humble about his expertise and contributions to space exploration. He was so very considerate of others and such a gentleman. I feel very privileged to have known Mike.

Jill Brown

Jill Brown - January 13 at 08:39 AM



“ I met Mike for the first time at his retirement party. During that short time, I got to hear about how much of an impact he had at NASA and what a great person he was. I even got to chat with him for a bit and a couple of picture of us were taken (attached) as I presented him one of his various gifts. From the extremely short time period that I knew him, I could tell that he was a very nice and intelligent person. May he rest in peace.



Jacob Goldenberg - January 12 at 05:14 PM



“ 6 files added to the album Jacobs Retirement 5/9/2019



Tony Miller - January 12 at 04:26 PM



“ Mike was an absolute pleasure to be around at NASA. He and I worked together for many years and he was more than a colleague, he was a true friend.

What a gift he had of explaining difficult topics and he was a master lecturer. I was always in awe and so enjoyed listening to him teach. We are completing the projects that he started with us in honor of his incredible dedication to his craft, his expert knowledge and gentle guidance. He was the kindest man I have ever known. I pray he is in the arms of Jesus and you all are secure in knowing that.

Warm regards,

Joe Leahy

joe - January 12 at 03:22 PM



“ I am blessed for the times I spent with Mike. He always made my day better.

Neal Jackson

Neal Jackson - January 11 at 05:26 PM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Louis Michael Santi.



January 11 at 10:11 AM



“ Dr. Santi was a great person. Brilliant man! I was fortunate to have worked with him at CBU. He will be missed.

Pong Malasri

Pong Malasri - January 09 at 09:47 PM



“ I met the Santi Family in the hospital under unforeseen circumstances. When I first met them. Ms Jane was very nervous under the circumstances and so was Mr Mike but he remained calm on the outside. When she left the room I sat with Mr Mike and as we spoke he started to shed a tear saying, “I have to get better because I can’t be a burden to my wife, she doesn’t deserve that”. At that moment, I knew he was a special person and immediately grew a bond with him.

Mr Mike scared me on one of his admissions, but even then he still had a sense of humor (calling Ms Jane hair a coefficient) and remained brave. Ms Jane was trying to test his memory by asking who she was, he didn’t answer but when she asked who I was he stated “Tivia” and smiled. I still laugh at this moment every time I think about it because when I told him later what happen he burst into laughter.

I know Mr Mike has left this physical world but he will never leave my heart and memory.

Ms Jane, Mark, and Emily continue to keep him alive with your great memories of this amazing man. I wish you all daily strength and healing. I love you all!

-Tivia

Tivia Pitts - January 09 at 03:44 PM



“ Mike was a great person and a gifted teacher. He will be missed by all who knew him, students and faculty alike.

Ray W Brown
CBU ME Dept

Ray W Brown - January 08 at 12:05 PM



“ Dad loved being a grandfather. To my children, he was "Bedad" - a toddler mispronunciation of Grandad. We called Dad the baby whisperer because his deep but soothing voice was certain to calm a fussy baby. As the kids grew older he was the world's best 'scary monster' - with gruff grunts followed by a slow chase with heavy treat while the kids ran to hide - followed eventually by screams and laughter when found.

Dad's patience with his grandkids, which was near infinite, was the polar opposite of his patience with crowds, which was non-existent. I remember one moment when my oldest, Tyler, had just turned 2. He was playing with a tiny pumpkin on the tray of his high chair when he accidentally dropped it on the floor. Bedad, sitting next to him, leaned over and picked it back up. Tyler found this quick action by his grown up very entertaining and proceeded to drop the same pumpkin off his chair - sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, sometimes pretending like it was an accident - about 1000 times while Bedad patiently picked it back up each time - Tyler howling with laughter and Bedad laughing at watching Tyler laughing so hard.

Emily Waterman - January 08 at 11:31 AM



“ Mike, you sure are missed. Thank you for being a loving father to Emily, father-in-law to me and grandfather to Tyler and Evelyn. I appreciate the advice and wisdom you provided over the years, our late night conversations after the family went to bed helped shape me and our family. Your ability to teach went beyond the classroom and everyone benefited from conversations with you. We love you Mike!

Tim



Tim Waterman - January 08 at 10:29 AM



“ Jane, this is Bill Sharp. I meet mike a couple of times at the track in Hohenwald. Seemed like a very nice man. Sorry for your loss. Bill

Bill Sharp - January 10 at 12:17 AM



“ Jane, this is June Defoe. I did not know your husband, but your mother and father loved him. I am so very sorry.

June - January 10 at 09:35 AM