



Ronald Edward Davis

February 25, 1947 - January 29, 2021

IN MEMORIAM RONALD EDWARD DAVIS, SR.

Ronald Edward Davis Sr. a dedicated family patriarch, loyal friend, and devoted husband lived life fully and died peacefully of COVID-19 complications on January 29, 2021. Ron worked 29 years as a Juvenile Probation Officer for Hennepin County and “found it rewarding” especially when he ran into former clients who were doing well or thanked him for helping them.

The son of Gail and Mary (Burke) Davis was born on February 25, 1947, grew up in Perry, Iowa, and attended Northeast Missouri State University earning an B.S.E. degree in 1969. There he met Beverly J. Smith who became his wife in 2005. According to him, "the third time was the charm" and she adds: "met the love of my life at 17. Married him at 56. We were meant to be." He would also quip, “Proud of you my wife Dr. Beverly Jean Davis Ed.D. Harvard. Love you -"madly".

As a couple, Ron and Beverly traveled in the states and abroad visiting family and friends. In 2013, they became “snowbirds” on Amelia Island, Florida. Ron “enjoyed stepping out of the snow onto the sands of American Beach surrounded by nature and good neighbors”. In Florida and Minnesota, he spent hours riding his bike, taking pictures, exploring during long walks,

listening to his extensive music collection and books on Audible. Most of all Ron looked forward to playing golf and talking “trash” with friends. Nature and history also fascinated Ron and he knew a lot about both.

Being with family however captured his heart. Walks with his grandchildren were moments of joy, playful and teasing. With eagle-eye precision Ron and grandson Ty found lost coins and were delighted with every penny found. Math skills were reinforced when Ron and Beverly had their grandchildren add the sum of the numbers in addresses, creating a friendly competition among Willie, Summyr, Ty, and Kyra. And “I spy with my own little eyes” was a hit when riding in the car with the grands or great-granddaughter Kamorah. Ron “laughed and did trivia with his dad and two loving sisters Carole and Jann who always had his back”. He enjoyed visiting with step-mom Margaret and sharing her favorite chocolate treats. Ron embraced being a mentor-friend to “all his wonderful nieces and nephews. I love you:” Nicole and Michelle (Dwight Davis), Michael and Audrey (Carole Morrow), Timothy and Wendell (Janice Davis).

Ron was the “proud father of Ronald and Netrea and his son-in-law Gary Miklowski.” He left no stone unturned when raising his son and daughter attending numerous basketball and volleyball games and track meets. He gave them unconditional but no-nonsense love. Ron encouraged them to set goals and “go for them” and they exchanged thousands of hugs.

Ronald “loved Perry, Iowa and the renaming of the school relays in 2006 from Perry to Davis Relays for me and my family’s athletic accomplishments”. Renown even today as a “track icon”, in 2010 Ron was inducted into the Iowa High School Hall of Fame, having rewritten the record books during his career at Perry High School and 45 years later some of those marks still stand. When he graduated in 1965, Davis held seven IHSSAA and two National Federation of High School Records. He was also a four-time All-American NCAA

(National Collegiate Athletic Association) in Track and Field: twice each in the 400 and 1600 meter relays (Northeast Missouri State now Truman University). In an interview, Ron reflected, "I have a true love and devotion to the sport. At the time I thought I contributed all I had, not realizing I had so much more." (Hall of Fame, Iowa; runjumpthrow.com)

Ronald Edward Davis Sr. decided to "leave this earth on my own terms." He was preceded in death by his mother and father, his brother Dwight, and his son Ron. He leaves his wife Beverly, daughter Netrea (Gary Miklowski), sisters Carole and Jann, close friend Jeanne, and a host of great-nieces/nephews, and cousins all who love him and will miss him dearly. Sharing our family's grief are his many friends, and acquaintances, especially his "best buds" who shared many moments "shooting the breeze" with their "brother" Ron.

"...Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."- Joshua 1:9 ESV

Scholarship Charitable Giving Opportunity

The Ronald Davis Family Scholarship has been established to honor scholar track and field athletes at Perry High School, Ron's family alma mater. In lieu of flowers, tax deductible donations can be mailed by March 30, 2021. However, this scholarship will be perpetual, so on-going donations will be greatly appreciated.

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Please make checks payable to the Ronald Davis Family and mail to:

Ronald Davis Scholarship
5144 James Avenue North

Minneapolis, MN 55430

Thank you for posting your fond remembrances under comments.
The legacy continues!

Tribute Wall

D(

“ On Friday, January 29th a Coopers Hawk was sitting up in the Arizona Ash tree while the humming bird (Simeon named Black Jack) was buzzing about the feeder. They were there 5 to 15 minutes (who gauges time on lovely mornings). It was different for this to happen & I wondered? I want to believe the hawk was Ron coming to pick up Simeon (humming bird) to lean against some clouds & talk, gossip, comment on the world around them.

Ron was one of the few who kept in touch & allowed for memories & assurances after Simeon died last May. He & Jeanne were a part of our learning to be a married couple & share time with others. Ron was generous & insightful & loving. We were Blessed to travel to Boston for Bev & Ron's wedding enjoying the city & the company.

This life without him seems some how bleaker for those of us left behind. Grateful Ron found a peaceful passing. Much love and condolences.



Dawn Gessner (Wagner) - February 16, 2021 at 11:55 AM

D(

I did not know that Ron was hospitalized or ill, he never let on; and, did not know when wondering about the birds that he died that day. Grateful to have this image of them wandering the Heavens together.

Dawn Gessner (Wagner) - February 16, 2021 at 11:57 AM



“Ronald Davis pounded the track like hail in a thunderstorm, punishing the earth. I like to think I glided over the mile and the half. We both anchored relay teams. He competed in the hurdles too. I pole vaulted, high jumped and threw the javelin once in awhile if we needed a few extra points to move up in the standings. He won every race. I, my fair share. We both qualified for the state indoor and the state outdoor. Ron qualified and won at the Drake Relays. He was tall and black. I was five inches shorter and white. I re-discovered Ron on FB a while ago. It was as if the fifty years in between evaporated.

I made a suggestion in the locker room after track practice one day. Ron was a junior. I was a sophomore.

“Hey! I read in a magazine that all those New Zealand milers? those record holders? put in lots of miles running every day. We ought to do it too!”

“Yeah right! Dream on!” was the most common reaction, except for Ron.

“Say what, Billy?”

That caught everyone's attention. He wasn't called Chief for nothing. Our school bordered farm land on the east edge of town. So we plotted a course over gravel roads that covered six miles. Sounded reasonable.

The next day at six in the morning, eleven guys showed up to try our first six mile run. Seven of us completed it. There were stitches in sides, pulled muscles, nausea, urgent, hurried stops for the call of nature in ditches

and other distractions, but we magnificent few got through it and survived.

The next couple of weeks saw our numbers dwindle until only two of us remained.

Ron and I kept at it for the rest of the year, five days a week, running in snow and rain and torrid heat, saying little. You don't talk much while running that far.

“Who's your main squeeze now, Billy?”

“Oh I don't know...Maria I guess. Maybe Eleanor or Linda...or Claudia... You still tight with Jan?”

"Yeah, Man."

That's how it went. We put in our miles and we talked a little about girls.

The next track season, Ron became a national phenom. Setting records, shaming the competition, even at the Drake Relays.

I had more victories too. My mile times had dropped dramatically to the mid-four minutes and my half miles came in regularly under two minutes. Not bad for a guy, the coaches said was too stocky to run the mile.

When Ron's senior season concluded, he owned two national titles and seven state records.

Something that has never been equaled. Look it up.

We talk more now, a lot, about track, politics and women, of course, past and present.

How I miss those six mile runs. I wish we could have done them forever.

Bill Reiter - February 16, 2021 at 02:03 AM



“ In the early days, The bond between Ron Davis and I was established after a certain ugly incident that occurred on the railroad tracks one afternoon when I was just a freshman, Ron, a sophomore. Something I like to call the Entire Railroad Massacre Rodeo.

The shortest way home from high school for any kid in our neighborhood was to turn north at 16th street then after a block or so turn left at the abandoned cattle loading yard and follow the railroad tracks west all the way to 6th street. Sometimes, one could catch a slow freight all the way, within a half-a-block of my house. Of course, I would never do such a thing since it was very dangerous we were told every day and completely against the law. On that particular afternoon there were no slow trains going west so I was just trotting between the two sets of tracks when a pair of the local toughs came riding up behind me on Lady, Li'l Eva's beautiful old bay mare that I took for rides all the time.

Lady was old and did not like to run, however. She did not like to carry two up either. But these guys (I would never reveal their names but their initials were Roger & Carl) were kicking her and slapping her, even whipping her with the tail of the reins to force her to gallop.

They tried to run me over with the horse, but she knew me and would just turn off, rearing up. Thankfully Ron came jogging up and found me dancing around these two idiots on a screaming, frightened animal.

He reached up and in one fell move, pulled them both right out of the saddle, hard onto the cinder and rocks. They ran off. Meanwhile I had picked up Lady's reins and was petting her muzzle, talking to her, trying to calm her down.

“What those guys got against you, Billy? What did you do to piss them off so much?”

“Nothing. Really. Well, they don't like it that L'il Eva lets me ride her horse so much... I think she suspects they're kind of mean to Lady too.”

“Is that all?”

“I don't know...”

"I think I get it." Ron said.

"What?"

"They don't like you being friends with us black kids do they?"

"I don't know. That might have a little something to do with it."

"Well don't worry, Billy. As long as I'm around you got nothing to worry about."

We walked the rest of the way home in silence and I took Lady to her stall and put her away. I stayed with her a long time that evening, rubbing her down, currying her, brushing her and talking to her about all the problems in the world.

Bill Reiter - February 16, 2021 at 01:50 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Ronald Edward Davis.* ”



February 15, 2021 at 08:17 PM



“ *Never in a million years did I think this would be the LAST picture we would take together. If you don't know, my dad is and forever will be my favorite person on the planet. I love him as any little girl loves her daddy. I'm heartbroken he's not with us as he had so much more to experience with his family. Dad was front and center in our lives. Especially mine.* ”



Netrea Miklowski - February 13, 2021 at 09:24 PM

D(

Condolences

Dawn Gessner (Wagner) - February 16, 2021 at 11:43 AM

CH

Netrea, I have so many fond memories of your dad. I am so sorry for your loss.

Cassy Headrick - February 16, 2021 at 10:06 PM

AR

Dear Beverly, Keith, Ezra, Mellow and I will miss Ron's hugs, laughter, stories and picture taking. Oh, and shared meals! And, his story telling! He helped himself though when he married you! Always bragging on you. You brought him joy. I know you miss him. We do too. He is one person who affected so many lives in a positive way. XOXOXOXO

Akua rustin - February 18, 2021 at 06:16 PM

BD

“ *Because I witness your peace...*

Freed.

*The long lanky track star strides
toward heaven his new home.*

*Rising smoothly, he
approaches the horizon leans into dusk.*

*His breathe even,
rides the air.*

*Eyelids closed. He is not
running blind. God
is his guide.*

*Through the barely
visible stars. Glitter
frames his silver edges, the
noble profile of a chief. He
is air borne. Still
tethered to earth but
not for long. Striding*

Flying high

Striding

Striding

Striding

Fly

home. Babes

Fly.

-Your loving wife, Beverly

Beverly Davis - February 09, 2021 at 07:23 PM

JR

Beverly, Your love and loss jump from the page. Your words, as only you could do, capture your husband in the loving obituary. My heart feels so heavy, it's hard to fathom the depth of your grief. Still, ,love is the one sustainable thing in life. Your friend always, JoAnn

JoAnn Rock - February 09, 2021 at 10:29 PM

EP

Beverly, I'm so sorry to hear of your loss. Although I didn't know Ron well, through you, he was loved and the bond between you both will live on forever. Although he is resting comfortably with our Lord, he will be missed by so many and will, forever, remain in our hearts and thoughts.

Beverly, I wish you well as you continue to strive and live life to the fullest, knowing full well, that the love of your life will live on through you. May God bless you and keep you well. Your friend, Ellen.

Ellen Phillips - February 10, 2021 at 01:53 PM

LS

Beverly, I am sorry for your loss. I did not know Ron, but I do know you had great love for him. I have through out the years that God has a beautiful place for all of us. He has reached that beautiful place. He is at peace and resting in the Lord's arm. Stay prayful and as you know God will take care of you. Love you and God Bless.

Latricia (Marching) Shelton - February 10, 2021 at 03:42 PM

SW

Ron -- we wish you peace and eternal golfing on God's "perfect" course! Beverly Jean's long-time friends thank you for bringing great love and joy into her life. We wish that you two had been blessed with many more years together, but are so grateful that you two were able to find each other again. It was meant to be. We know that you are with her in spirit always. Sue and Gordon Bannister

Susan Windham-Bannister - February 10, 2021 at 07:00 PM

AL

Beverly just want you to know how sorry I am to hear of the loss of your dear husband and my friend, Ron. I have fond memories of our times together at Northeast Missouri State University.

*God bless,
Alphonso Jackson*

Alphonso - February 11, 2021 at 04:24 PM

CC

Beverly, Ron was one of GODS gifts to the track, you, the world and me as a friend and roommate for 2 years at NMSU. The thought of him will always bring a smile and laughter to my heart.

*GOD BLESS,
Charles Currie*

Charles Currie - February 11, 2021 at 04:54 PM

JK

Beverly, your words conjured up the long lanky frame of your dynamic, elegant husband. I haven't seen him since your joyful wedding day but I see him here, clearly, and so deeply loved by his beloved, in every line. xoxo Joyce

Joyce Kulhawik - February 11, 2021 at 07:14 PM

MW

Beverly, My sincerest condolences to you on the loss of your partner, Ron. Praying that God watches over you during this sorrowful time.
Morlot Williams

Morlot Williams - February 12, 2021 at 04:12 PM

DW

Dearest Soror and BFF, My heart breaks for you because of the loss of your "forever love," Ron. I can't fathom the depth of your loss, but I know how much your reconnection and subsequent marriage meant to both of you. Yours was a magical union and, obviously, m ordained. Your poem is a beautiful tribute to your husband and captures the essence of his life and your loss. I am so grateful that you had the years together that you had because the memories will remain with you forever. May time accomplish what no words can do; May it help to know that friends are sharing the sorrow in your heart. I'm wishing you, and

Ron's family, God's peace during this difficult time.

*With love,
Carolyn*

Dr. Carolyn D. Wyatt - February 13, 2021 at 11:00 AM

MD

Beverly, my heart goes out to you in this time of grief. You and Ron were quite a team!!! Ron was a friend and pseudo roommate. I had great times with him and Fred Banks at Northeast. With Love, Melvin Dant

Melvin Dant - February 13, 2021 at 02:00 PM

PH

My friend, brother from another taught me the true essence of friendship. I miss your grace and style my dear "smooth one." See you on the other side. Thank you for teaching us how to go in peace. Much Love your forever friend. Rev. Paula Haywood

Paula Haywood - February 15, 2021 at 09:56 AM

RS

Beverly

I was deeply saddened by the passing of Ron Davis. He was a down to earth ,one-of-a-kind type of guy, outstanding trackman and my roommate at Dobson Hall. Ron was the first person I met our freshman year at Kirksville. We shared some good times laughing and joking about school and girls etc. It is hard to believe that is no longer with us. He will be deeply missed by his family and the community he served

Rest in Peace my brother

Richard Stallings

Richard Stallings - February 15, 2021 at 08:09 PM

D(

Lovely words, condolences

Dawn Gessner (Wagner) - February 16, 2021 at 11:44 AM

AN

Dear Beverly, your poem is beautiful. I can almost see Ron "striding" past the stars, following God, hurrying to be home. We will miss him at American Beach-riding his bike just after sunrise, smiling his big smile or offering to help a neighbor in his smooth Nat King Cole voice. The two of you had something many people will never experience. Always remember the gift he gave to you at the end. Hold onto that. His love for you will always be there. Annj

annj - February 23, 2021 at 01:46 PM

LM

Beverly and family, I am sending a warm hug to each of you. Ron was a true champion he always had his eye on the finish line! Feel complete knowing that you were his most loyal cheerleader! Together you were a winning team. Lynn Swann Mitchell

Lynn Swann Mitchell - March 03, 2021 at 07:36 AM