



Blake Willard Lyons

BLAKE WILLARD LYONS told his last joke September 21, 2019 in Salmon Arm, BC and was literally surrounded by his loving family.

When remembering Blake, people recall the deep and abiding love he shared with his wife of 52 years, Maureen. He met her at a frat house party, asked her to come upstairs with him to look at his etchings, and the rest is history. Their four children Pamela (Edd), Tess (Charles), Graeme and Mandy (Donny) have been blessed to witness that model of a great marriage. Grandchildren Nathan, Joel, Seb, Jasper, Sela, Carys, Alex and Daniel have been known to ask, "Yuk. Why do MoMo and Granddad always kiss?"

Born in Trail BC, Blake attended school – living in some place that apparently required him to walk five miles uphill to school and five more miles uphill back home. He graduated from Skeena High School in Terrace, and headed off to UBC. After meeting and marrying his dream bride Maureen, Blake moved the family to Edmonton and started working with the Alberta Civil Service Association, and later as a Labour Relations Consultant with the Alberta Hospital Association. In 1980, Blake packed up the wood panelled station wagon and took the family to Yellowknife, where he was Executive Director of the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association (NWTTA), a position he held until 1999. Blake and Maureen lived in Yellowknife for 35 years and were heavily involved in the community during that time: Blake played hockey with the Canarctic Dusters and the WIMPS (Weekend Improvement for Mediocre Players). He served with the NWT Mental Health Association (1983-87), was President of the NWT Seniors' Society, was a director of the 1990 Arctic Winter Games and was, at that time, Yellowknife's longest serving city counsellor (1988-2006). Blake also served as a Board Member for Arctic Energy Alliance from 2000-2005. Blake received an Award of Honour from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) where he served on the Board of Directors, and served as president for the NWT Association of Municipalities. He was a Director of Denedeh Investments Inc. and the Northern Employee Benefits Services. Blake chaired the FCM Municipal/Aboriginal Relations Committee. Blake volunteered with YK Daycare, YK Seniors' Society, NWT Seniors' Society and coached minor hockey. Yellowknife got to enjoy his impressive singing voice when he joined the 2000 Ptarmigan Ptheatrics production of *The Music Man*. He was also the Caribou Carnival Cop people loved to love.

Blake's Irish skin always needed a hat, and his "I'm a Tip Top Pop" and then his beloved Tilley travelled with him to Dubai, Australia, New Zealand, Vietnam, Singapore,

China, the Philippines, the UK, Hawaii, Germany, France, Portugal, Italy, Hong Kong, Slovenia, Holland... etc. Blake paired these hats with Edmonton Oilers or Wade Hamer Memorial jerseys and an endless selection of orange shirts that all missed at least one button. Blake travelled the world but was always most grateful that he had the opportunity to visit and serve communities across the Northwest Territories.

During those travels Blake picked up a lot of 'junque'. Despite Blake's love of holding garage sales, his family has no idea what to do with it. If you are in need of pins, keychains, spoons, computer carry cases and badges, please contact the family after an appropriate time has passed. This afternoon is fine.

As his wardrobe will attest, Blake was not a slave to fashion, but he was old-fashioned. Doors were opened for ladies, he walked on the outside of the sidewalk, ladies were Miss and Mrs. He guarded confidences well, loved animals and walking outdoors, believed everyone had an interesting tale to share and always wanted to hear all sides of the story before giving an opinion.

Blake loved languages and tried to speak the local language in the many countries he visited. A classic that will always be remembered occurred in Croatia where he managed to cram four languages into one sentence, "Stoppen! Un Forche, garcon, por favor."

Blake loved a good joke, and will be remembered for his quick wit.

Following his death, there was a private cremation; following Blake's request his ashes are being kept in an empty peanut butter jar (Smooth).

The family asks that everyone raises a glass and tells a corny joke to someone who needs a smile. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the NWT SPCA. We thank the many people who took time to write or visit Blake over the past months. Special love to Blake's sister Sharon Lyons, Jon and Ghislaine Ardagh, Karen and Grant Pryznyk, buddy Bob Jeppesen and Eunice Burrill, Helen Worley, Wendy Winslow and Robert Patterson, Nathan and Colleen DeBock, Trevor Kasteel, Ed and Sarah de Walle and the too-numerous-to-name friends and family who poured love into Blake and our family.

We close with one of Blake's favourites:

May the road rise up to meet you

May the wind always be at your back

May the sun shine warm upon your face;

the rains fall soft upon your fields

And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Blake, beloved husband, father and friend, we love you, we will miss you, we thank you for all you sacrificed and gave to us.