

Life stories

A celebration of lives well lived and people well loved
Read more Life Stories on yorkregion.com

Dave Joslin was friend and inspiration to many

BY KIM ZARZOUR
kzarzour@yrmg.com

When Dave Joslin passed away Feb. 21 at age 75, many residents of Richmond Hill felt the town had lost a good friend.

The eulogy by Mayor Dave Barrow brought mourners to tears.

"Jozzy", the mayor said, was one of the best friends anybody could have.

"We all have a piece of Dave in our memories. Keep it there and think of him when you need a friend."

Dave was a kind, gentle soul who loved life and loved his community and according to his sons, Jeff, Mark and Paul, he was following in the footsteps of his father, Herbert Joslin, a hero to the community 54 years ago.

Herbert died while trying to stop an explosion that nearly flattened much of Vaughan and Richmond Hill in 1962.

Herbert had worked as a store clerk for Superior Propane and was a volunteer firefighter in Vaughan.

He'd rushed to the scene of a gas leak, shutting of a valve at the plan to save countless lives. Seven houses were demolished that day but damage could have been much, much worse.

Knowing his father died a hero (awarded, post-humously, the Queen's congressional award for bravery) impacted Dave deeply.

He and his twin sister, Peggy Viverette, carried on Herbert's legacy, striving to be a good human beings, respected, loved and giving to the community. He raised his own children and grandchildren Derek, Brett, Jamie, Kyle and Charlotte the same way, Paul said.

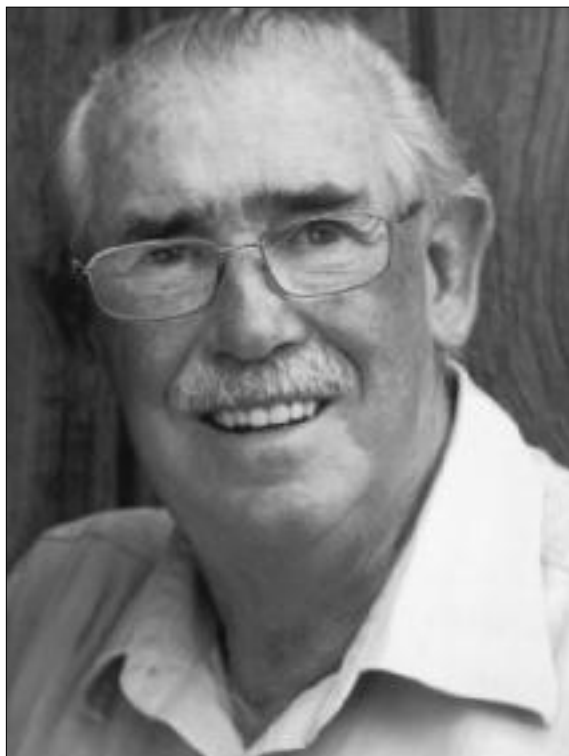
For the five grandchildren it was simple: "Our great grandad was a hero and our grandad was a legend."

Today, his family remains well-known in Richmond Hill. Daughter-in-law Darlene Joslin is director of the town's parks and recreation department, Paul is a firefighter for the town and another son, Mark, is a professional hockey trainer/coach in town.

Judy, his wife of 54 years, was the love of his life and family was everything to him. Their life together revolved around the boys' games and tournaments and Dave volunteered as coach, convener and cheerleader.

Even after the boys grew older and could drive themselves to games, Dave and his wife Judy could be found perched in the stands, cheering them on — a tradition they carried on with their grandchildren.

"I don't think that he realized



how he was positively affecting 13 kids — making us feel like all stars," said Mark Tullock, one of the athletes Dave coached.

"That encouraged me to want to coach myself using Mr. J's method — fun first, winning second."

When the time came to plan

for the celebration of life and as tributes and condolences poured in online, it became clear the facilities at Marshall Funeral Home would not be large enough.

The service was held instead in the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts on a Friday morning, March 4.

Dave Joslin passed away at age 75, with family and friends offering tributes to the man as a goodwill ambassador in hockey arenas and ball diamonds, on the golf course and in the wider community of Richmond Hill. Even the downtown theatre wasn't large enough to accommodate all those wishing to pay their respects.

Even that large venue couldn't contain all the well-wishers who wanted to celebrate Dave's life, leaving standing-room only to hear sister-in-law Jackie Richardson and nieces Kim Richardson and Cori Byberg sing, the mayor eulogize and friends reunite and reminisce.

"Every time I and everybody else turned around, we were running into people that we haven't seen in a long time and we had stories to share with each other," Bill Neilson, family friend, said.

"He was a friend to Richmond Hill."

And he was a friend to many who frequented nearby Eagles Nest golf course, where Dave spent the past 12 years as the club's best known, most respected greeter/starter.

"He truly was a goodwill ambassador, not only for the golf course, but for mankind," said Ron Nicholson.

April 29, opening day at the course this year, will also be Dave's birthday and it will be bittersweet, as golfers learn about Dave's passing, and friends and family take his place at tee-off to greet them and offer tributes to a man well loved.

Life stories



Celebrate a life well lived!

"Adored by children, universally respected and an inspiration to her peers, Mrs. McCluskey was a tireless volunteer, quick to deflect the praise heaped on her."

Your community newspaper is celebrating the achievements and contributions of everyday, ordinary people, who have affected the lives of others in extraordinary ways. Leaving a lasting impression on the community, our award-winning journalists will write a fitting tribute in memory of those who have a special story to share. Through your community newspaper and LifeNews.ca, we celebrate those no longer with us and remember the memories we share.

FOR MORE INFORMATION or to contact one

of our professional writers please call

Newmarket/Aurora EG

Tracy Kibble905-853-8888

Georgina & Bradford

Ted McFadden905-853-8888

Markham,

Bernie O'Neill905-294-2200

Stouffville

Jim Mason905-640-2612

Vaughan & King

Paul Futhey905-264-8703

Richmond Hill/Thornhill

Marney Beck905-294-2200