



Samuel Joseph LaPresta

January 26, 1943 - May 9, 2019

Samuel Joseph LaPresta was born in St. Louis, Missouri on January 26, 1943 to Joseph and Mary LaPresta neé Valt. He grew up in Crystal City, Missouri.

Active from an early age in the Boy Scouts, he achieved that organization's highest rank of Eagle Scout.

A member of the Crystal City High School class of 1961, Sam was salutatorian of his graduating class and, upon graduation, received awards for mathematics and community service from the PTA. He played Basketball for the "Hornets" high-school basketball team, captained by his life-long friend and future Hall of Famer, Bill Bradley. Sam was the team's starting shooting guard as they made their way to the Missouri State Basketball Championship, losing by one point in sudden death triple-overtime to a school several times their size, St. Louis University High School; a story he recounted many times throughout his life.

On June 13th, 1963, Sam married the one and only love of his life, Gail.

He obtained his bachelor's degree in Metallurgical Engineering from the Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy in 1964.

Fresh out of college he moved to Detroit Michigan, beginning his career with

the Ford Motor Company where he worked in Ford's foundry department from 1965 to 1969, developing castings for the iconic Ford Mustangs of the late 1960's; a contribution in which he took great pride later in life.

While in Detroit, Sam and Gail adopted their first child, Erik.

In 1969, Sam went back to school, eventually earning a Masters Degree in Engineering Business Management from The University of Missouri at Rolla.

Having completed graduate school in 1971, and interested in a career in sales, Sam moved to the Chicago area to work for The Climax Molybdenum Company.

That same year Sam and Gail adopted their second son, Gary.

In 1973 Sam became a salesman with The Foote Mineral Company, where he would work on the cutting edge iron technology of the day, ductile iron; alongside Mr. Keith Millis, the inventor of this new material. At Foote Mineral, Sam forged a reputation as a focused and meticulous employee of the utmost integrity. He joined both the Ductile Iron Society as well as the American Foundry Society and would continue his association with these groups throughout his career.

In 1976, Sam and Gail adopted their third child, a daughter, Stacey.

In 1982, Foote Mineral sold the rights to their proprietary product line, sales for which Sam had been responsible, to SKW Alloys in Niagara Falls, New York and he accepted a position there to continue his work with these products, moving his young family to Western New York where they would stay for the next two decades.

In 1992, shifting from the raw materials side to the temperature control side of the metals industry, Sam took a position with the Danish industrial insulation producer, Skamol, and opened the company's first U.S. Sales Office, marketing specialized insulation products to line the kilns of aluminum producers in the United States and Canada. He opened an office in Niagara Falls, New York and worked from that location until 2006 when he relocated back to Rolla, Missouri where he would spend the rest of his life.

Sam's work ethic and ability elevated him to the position of Vice President of Sales and head of Skamol North America where he developed strong bonds of friendship and respect with his colleagues around the world and continued in this role for over twenty years; retiring in 2016. He truly loved his job which also included world travel with immersion, specifically, in Scandinavia. Sam remained active as a respected consultant in his industry up until a few months before his death.

Sam was loyal and supportive to friends and compassionate to strangers. He campaigned for his childhood friend and basketball teammate, Bill Bradley, in his 2000 run for President of the United States and stood behind him proudly at the moment he announced his candidacy. Sam consistently volunteered at blood drives and was a lifelong donor of his much needed O negative blood.

He was also a committed and proud member of The Rotary Club of Rolla, Missouri and gained the respect and friendship of many in his local community for the time and effort he dedicated to raise money for the causes of veterans, the Special Olympics and the safety of local children at the Rolla Middle School. On Friday, May 17, 2019 Sam will be honored by the Rotary Club of Rolla with an outstanding service award to be presented to his wife Gail on his behalf.

Beyond all his professional accomplishments, what was most fulfilling was his family; especially his love for his five grandchildren. He will be remembered and cherished for being a model of humility and generosity. He loved life and loved giving to others. He exemplified selflessness in a way very few of us are able. His very last words were to his closest partner in life, Gail; "I love you" he said.

Sam is survived by his beloved wife Gail, brother Charles Rudolph LaPresta, son Erik Joseph LaPresta, son Gary Charles LaPresta, daughter Stacey Marie Chrysostom, daughter-in-law Christine Elizabeth LaPresta, son-in-law Justin Wallace Chrysostom, granddaughters Chloe Maria LaPresta, Ivy Alejandra LaPresta, Sofia Anaisa LaPresta, grandsons Jacob Charles LaPresta and Benjamin Kevin LaPresta.

He was preceded in death by his parents Joseph and Mary Louise LaPresta.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests Memorial Contributions in honor of Sam be directed to the Rotary Club of Rolla ("Noon") c/o Aaron Jeffers (Club Treasurer), P.O. Box 1282, Rolla, Missouri 65402. Cards are also available at all James & Gahr locations.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

MAY 14. 12:00 PM (CT)

St. Patrick's Catholic Church
Rolla, MO

Tribute Wall



“ *Samuel Joseph LaPresta*

January 30, 2023 at 04:37 AM



“ *Samuel Joseph LaPresta*

January 30, 2023 at 02:54 AM



“ *What a truly deserving tribute to Sam. It was truly an honor and a privilege to work with Sam at Foote Mineral Company. He was always very professional, kind and a pleasure to have a work relationship.*

*Nancy Marvel Ohms
Administrative Assistance
Ferroalloys Division*

Nancy Marvel Ohms - July 06, 2021 at 05:49 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Samuel Joseph LaPresta.*



May 14, 2019 at 06:17 AM

AD

“ Sam truly was a kind, humble man. He was one of my favorite patients... always cheerful and understanding. Sam did much to encourage me! I will miss his great smile!

Andy Cassidy, DDS - May 13, 2019 at 05:14 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Samuel Joseph LaPresta.



May 13, 2019 at 04:50 PM

HN

“ Henriette & Tomas Torp - Gitte & John Nielsen purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Samuel Joseph LaPresta.



Henriette & Tomas Torp - Gitte & John Nielsen - May 13, 2019 at 09:52 AM



“ *If you are fortunate in life, once in a while you come across someone who you know is the best of the best in terms of character, as a person, and as someone who truly represents the best in humanity. This is the way that I felt about Sam. I was blessed to be his friend and I truly believe that Sam was one of the best people that I will ever know in my lifetime. Sam had a tremendous amount of good qualities and a goodness about him. He loved his family dearly and had a great, positive influence to many people that he came in contact with and touched.*

Chris Cox - May 13, 2019 at 12:01 AM



“ *Sam was a trusted friend, mentor and colleague. His kindness and generosity was stuff of legend. I would not be who I am today without him. And I am eternally grateful. Rest In Peace my dear friend. Jo*

jo Lobsiger - May 11, 2019 at 08:48 PM