



## Martin David Francioni

January 11, 1942 - February 27, 2021

Where the Soul of Man Never Dies  
(Written by William M Golden; 1914)

To Canaan's land, I'm on my way  
Where the soul of man never dies  
My darkest night will turn to day  
Where the soul of man never dies

No sad farewells (Dear friends there'll be no sad farewells)  
No tear dimmed eyes (There'll be no tear dimmed eyes.)  
Where all is love (Where all is peace and joy and love)  
And the soul never dies (And the soul of man never dies)

The rose is blooming there for me  
Where the soul of man never dies  
And I will spend eternity  
Where the soul of man never dies

No sad farewells (Dear friends there'll be no sad farewells)  
No tear dimmed eyes (There'll be no tear dimmed eyes)  
Where all is love (Where all is peace and joy and love)  
And the soul never dies (And the soul of man never dies)

The love light beams across the foam  
Where the soul of man never dies  
It shines and lights the way to home  
Where the soul of man never dies

No sad farewells (Dear friends there'll be no sad farewells)  
No tear dimmed eyes (There'll be no tear dimmed eyes)

Where all is love (Where all is peace and joy and love)  
And the soul never dies (And the soul of man never dies)  
No sad farewells (Dear friends there'll be no sad farewells)  
No tear dimmed eyes (There'll be no tear dimmed eyes)  
Where all is love (Where all is peace and joy and love)  
And the soul never dies (And the soul of man never dies)

On Saturday, February 27, 2021, Martin David Francioni (79), son of the late Martin Franklin Francioni and Velma Elizabeth (Woolridge) Francioni, joined his loving wife (married 56 years), Erma in their heavenly home. Dave was born on January 11, 1942, growing up in Petersburg, Virginia. Although he later relocated to Delaware for his job, Petersburg was always in his heart and his true earthly home. He would frequently share fond memories of his childhood in Petersburg and Colonial Heights. His grandfather, "Papa Tony," was a young, Italian immigrant who came to the United States where he began a successful restaurant business in Petersburg. Dave spent lots of time with his grandfather working in the restaurant when he was young. For many years, his mother's family, the Woolridge's, operated a dry-cleaning business in Petersburg.

Dave is survived by his daughter, Cheryl Lynn Kirkpatrick (son-in-law Dale); son, Anthony David Francioni; and granddaughter, Jenna Lynn Kirkpatrick. Dave had five siblings: George Francioni (deceased), Jeanette Francioni Gainer, Shelley Hatch Gravatt, Vincent Hatch, Robinson "Bobby" Neblett Hatch (deceased), and Alfred Morin (deceased).

Dave was also a foster father from approximately 1980-1985 at a group home sponsored by his church family, Newark Church of Christ. He was a foster father to many children who lived there and continued to maintain a life-long relationship with Tom and Alex Duzan, John and Robert Hutcheson, and Lisa (Davis) Ciconte. Dave was also a beloved uncle to many of his nieces and nephews, many even considering him a father figure in their lives.

As a teenager, Dave acquired a love for aviation and building models (particularly World War I and World War II fighters and bombers). At age 17, he had constructed over 500 model airplanes, ships, and vehicles and was featured in the local newspaper. He was quoted as saying he wanted to fly planes not make them, after being told by his father of his experiences as a WWII Navy pilot.

After high school, Dave served in the United States Army from 1960 to 1963; however, upon leaving the Army his career path led him to restaurant management (like his

grandfather and father) and eventually retiring as a professional bus driver. Growing up in Petersburg, Dave was also an avid collector of Civil War relics, many of which he uncovered near his home with his metal detector. Dave and Erma were both very fond of cats and spent much time caring for their own cats as well as other feral cats in the community.

Dave will be remembered for his dedication to his family, missed for his stories, and always loved by his family.

A private family burial will occur at a later date at Odd Fellows Cemetery in Oak Hill, West Virginia. Dave and his wife, Erma, will be buried there jointly. The family appreciates any memories that are shared. To send an online condolence, visit [www.stranofeeley.com](http://www.stranofeeley.com)

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

1 John 5:4 ESV

(Note: Photo shown for obituary was taken during summer 2018. Dave is posing alongside his granddaughter, Jenna, who is teaching him how to take a “selfie.”)

# Cemetery

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Private

# Comments

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“ I'm sorry to hear that Dave has passed away. I remember many days in the break room at Aletheia when Dave would have the staff laughing when he told one of his hilarious stories. I so enjoyed his quirky sense of humor and I still smile when I think of Dave. I'm sending prayers and blessings to your family . Linda Barbas

**Linda K Barbas** - March 14, 2021 at 03:44 PM



“ Thank you for sharing your memories of dad. Means alot to me.

Cheryl

**Cheryl Kirkpatrick** - March 15, 2021 at 11:59 PM

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“ I'll love you forever, Grandpa. You were always so funny and such a gift-giver

**Jenna Kirkpatrick** - March 11, 2021 at 02:15 PM

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“ Dave Francioni was one of my foster fathers, when I was a teenager. He was strict, but was funny & sweet.

**Lisa Ciconte** - March 10, 2021 at 05:26 PM