



Mr. Bruce G. Dostal

July 9, 1943 - March 21, 2016

Bruce G. Dostal Sr., 72 of Union Street, Johnstown, New York passed away suddenly on Monday, March 21, 2016 with his loving wife of 53 years, Bonnie and family friend Kreig Heroth by his side. Bruce was born in Cleveland, Ohio on July 9, 1943. He was the son of Gerard and Grace Dostal. Bruce moved to the Fonda, New York area in 1946. He attended the Fonda-Fultonville school and lived in this area until his passing.

He is survived by his wife the former Bonnie Smith who he married on May 12, 1962. He is also survived by a son Bruce G. Dostal Jr. of Riverview, Florida and a brother Jeffery Dostal of Oneonta, N.Y. along with nieces and nephews.

Bruce was a full-time race car driver in his younger days, racing on both asphalt and dirt tracks throughout the Northeast. He was also known for his welding and fabrication work and many of his competitors sought out his skills. He opened his A & B Speed Equipment business in the early 1970's and was one of the longest continuously operating speed shops on the East coast. Besides the speed shop in Johnstown he would tow his parts trailer to many of the speedways throughout the Northeast, supplying race teams with parts and knowledge. Many of the teams in the area would not have been able to race if it were not for the skill and generosity of Bruce, who was also known for his quick wit and endless library of jokes.

No one was more dedicated to preserving the true history of auto racing and his involvement. Various groups Northeast Stock Car Old Timers, the New York State Stock Car Association, the Saratoga Automobile Museum, his time as curator of the Fonda Speedway Museum and Hall of Fame, and his Racers Reunion Celebration Bash are second to none. Bruce was looking forward to his involvement with the Fonda Speedway Museum in 2016, along with holding another Racers Reunion Bash.

When Kiddie rides were on the schedule for his two local tracks Glen Ridge Motorsports Park or Fonda Speedway, the replica of his vintage #69 coupe would be one of the first cars in line to give the children the thrill of riding in a piece of history, of which he had been a part of since his father took him to the very first opening day at Fonda Speedway in

1953.

Bruce received many honors from his peers in racing including but not limited to being inducted into the Fonda Speedway Hall of Fame, the NYSSCA Life Time Contribution to Racing Award in

Memory of Kenny Shoemaker, the NESCOLT Superior Achievement in Motorsports Award, and in January of 2016 he was inducted into the NYSSCA Hall of Fame on the same day his long time friend Jerry Cook was inducted into the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

To help the family with Bruce's passing, donations in lieu of flowers may be sent to First Niagara Bank, 138 N. Comrie Avenue, Johnstown, N.Y. 12095, for the benefit of Bruce Dostal. There will be no service as this was Bruce's wish, but a celebration of his life will be held at a later date. To leave messages of condolences please visit www.ehleandbarnett.com

Comments



“ "Don't be hostile" never applied to Bruce. He was a man who always had a kind word/words/story/stories and the time to tell them. Knowing him for most of my adult life I never heard him express a "hostile" word. May he rest in peace knowing he left this earth a better place by his time spent on it.

Clancy Miller - March 31, 2016 at 01:01 PM



“ Hi Bonnie Its Bill Thomas sorry to hear about Bruce wish you the best Stoney D1 New York

William Thomas - March 31, 2016 at 09:49 AM



“ Several years ago I brought a 1937 Chevy stock car that had been raced at Fonda to Bruce to have him fabricate new bars on it. Bruce asked me to just leave it with him and he wanted to do the bars as they would have been in the 1970's. When I returned several weeks later the car looked great and I told him he did a great job. He was so pleased with the job and explained he raced against the team that once owned it. It made my day and his! His handy work will live on because of these projects he took on. My thoughts and prayers are with his family at this difficult time. Don Wemple

Donald Wemple Jr. - March 31, 2016 at 06:52 AM



“ Dear Bonnie and Family,
I am sorry to hear of Bruce's sudden passing. I always enjoyed stopping by the shop and reliving the "Golden Days" of Racing with Bruce. The area racing scene has lost a great source of technical knowledge and historical reference.
May he rest in peace.
Bob Novak

Bob Novak - March 30, 2016 at 08:06 PM



“ I DID NOT KNOW BRUCE THAT WELL. I ONLY KNEW HIM FROM THE RACES, BUT BRUCE WAS A SWEET MAN WHO WAS KIND TO EVERYONE HE MET. HE WAS ALWAYS NICE TO ME, AND MY BOYS, AND THAT IS HOW I WILL REMEMBER HIM. RIP BRUCE.

KAREN DANFORTH

karen danforth - March 30, 2016 at 04:20 AM



“ Dear Mrs. Dostal and Family: My name is Rita Gorman and back in the 60s when Bruce was just about beginning his racing career, I was the Sec'y.-Treas. of NYSSCA for 3 yrs. under the presidencies of Ken Shoemaker and Rene Charland. I am terribly sorry to learn of his passing. Bruce never, ever seemed to give up. He was there, contributed to the happiness of the children and grown ups who attended the races at Fonda, and when something had to be done for someone else, Bruce was always the first one there.

Please accept my sincere condolences to you and the family and know that Bruce will always be remembered.

May God bless.

Sincerely,
Rita M. Gorman
(my former last name was Carlson back in the day)

Rita M. Gorman - March 29, 2016 at 02:48 PM



“ Thank you so very much for your thoughts, it really means a lot to my mom and myself. It is nice to see that my father was so respected and had so may friends.

Thank you again,
B. Gerald Dostal Jr (son)

Gerry Dostal - March 29, 2016 at 08:04 PM



“ So very very sorry to hear of Bruce's passing. He was always very nice to me at the races & I used to love going to visit his shop with my Dad.

Stephanie Lape Crowe

Stephanie Lape Crowe - March 30, 2016 at 08:31 AM



“ Bruce, myself, Dave Lape, Jack Johnson & Bill Kollar....We all raced go karts together in the early 60's that transformed into stock cars. I'm sure i speak for all when i say that he was a good friend who will be missed by us for a long time

Bob Weaver

Robert Weaver - March 30, 2016 at 12:10 PM



“ When I first started working for Dave Lape back in 1996, the very first job I was given was to go to the fuel truck and get 10 gallons of 'blue.' Never mind that I had no clue what 'blue' actually was, but I will always remember who was there awaiting an eager-to-prove-himself 14-year-old; it was Bruce.

He topped off the gas cans, gave me a fuel slip and sent me on my way. We met like that for the next 18 years until Lape retired. Bruce was always kind and always eager to tell you a joke or to at least get a laugh out of you. He treated me, a no-name kid, with the same

respect he would Jack, David or Louie. I'll never forget that and I'm forever indebted to him.

Rest well Bruce and thank you for the stories, the laughter and the lessons you taught me in your own way. I'll carry them with me for the rest of my days and I'll always crack a little smile whenever I see a young kid with a gas can in a pit area at a racetrack and think of you.

God bless,

Matt Noles

Matthew Noles - March 30, 2016 at 06:16 PM