



Donald Alfano

July 18, 1923 - July 21, 2020

Donald R. Alfano

On Tuesday July 21, 2020. Visalia lost one of the few remaining from, "The Greatest Generation." Don R. Alfano passed at home peacefully with his family by his side. He was born in Portland, Oregon on July 18, 1923. He passed the same day and time of his wife Margie but 13 years later. He lived a full 97 years and touched so many lives. You could not find a more humble person with such a positive attitude.

He grew up in Portland, Oregon and attended Grant High School. There he excelled in baseball and received many awards. Don was very proud of his high school and it has been in many Hollywood movies. His passion was baseball and he wanted to pursue it professionally.

That dream would be delayed because of WWII. He was soon drafted after high school into the army. Soon he was shipped to Fort Benning for basic training, paratrooper school and then gliders. Fort Ord was the final place before deployment. From there he was sent to Europe under General Matt Ridgeway. He landed in France. His unit was a major player in the "Battle of the Bulge." During his time in the military he received 3 bronze stars as well as many other honors. Nobody knew of his military awards until recently.

After WWII he returned home to Portland to pursue a career in baseball. The

Chicago Cubs soon signed him. It was 1946 and he was sent to a small town, Visalia. Its population was about 9500. It was Visalia's first professional team. He loved the town's enthusiasm and support as well as the climate. Upon arriving in Visalia at the Hotel Johnson, while sitting in the lobby waiting for the team to return from morning practice he noticed a young lady delivering a telegram. Later that day at the afternoon practice the team had to wait for a woman's baseball team to finish practice and there was that same young lady. He noticed she could play baseball very well. Margie Silva and Don would be married in 1950. Don and Margie would travel all over the US pursuing his baseball career. She loved it as much as he did.

After retiring from baseball in 1952 they settled in Visalia. Don held many different jobs in town. Sometimes juggling multiple jobs at one time. Finally he landed a job at the Visalia City Fire department after an interview with Chief Walter Wood. He was very proud to be a fireman. After 23 years with the department and at the rank of captain he retired.

They had 2 sons Danny and Donnie. Don was a loving father who supported his sons in all their endeavors. Both played multiple sports and he was their biggest fan. He coached Little League and Babe Ruth baseball. His enthusiasm has touched many young men here in Visalia. After his sons high school years he followed Donnie's professional baseball career and attended many of the games. As his son Dan started coaching for Visalia Unified he was frequently employed as his sons assistant. The players loved his knowledge of the game and his ability to demonstrate skills. He loved the game of baseball like nobody else. His love and enthusiasm for the game spread like wildfire. Despite his age he could throw batting practice all day long. He was truly Visalia's "Mr. Baseball."

He loved his hunting trips to Beaver Utah and eating at a restaurant named El Bambi. He was 90 on his last trip that was with his son and grandson. At 96 he was riding a bike every day, mowing his yard and maintaining his home. He never stopped moving but had time to talk with anyone anytime! There were only 2 teams worth rooting for according to our dad, Notre Dame Fighting Irish

and the New York Yankees. He never missed a game unless his sons were playing.

His parents, Dominic and Margaret Alfano and his brother William Alfano preceded him in death. He leaves 2 sons, Danny (Laurelyn) and Donnie (Jill). Three grandsons Dirk (Mendee), Jeff (Harlow), and Mike (Osako). One grand daughter Kristy (Blake), and 10 great grandchildren.

Don's family would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Kaweah Hospice for all their support. In leu of flowers please make donations in Don's name to Mt. Whitney Baseball or Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Memorial will be held at Salser and Dillard Funeral Chapel Friday Aug. 7, 2020 at 10:00 AM followed by graveside service at 12:00 PM at Visalia City Cemetary. Live streaming of the memorial is available for those who are unable to attend at www.salseranddillard.com

Our Dad's last comment in his letters or cards was always

"KEEP HUSTLING"

Previous Events

Memorial

AUG 7. 10:00 AM (PT)

Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel
127 E. Caldwell Ave.
Visalia, CA 93277

Graveside

AUG 7. 12:00 PM (PT)

Visalia District Cemetery
1300 W Goshen Ave
Visalia, CA 93291

Tribute Wall



“ *Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel created a Webcast in memory of Donald Alfano*



Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel - August 07, 2020 at 12:55 PM



“ *Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Donald Alfano*



Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel - August 07, 2020 at 12:55 PM

MO

“ *Don, so sorry to hear of your passing, you were truly Mr baseball of Visalia, miss our meetings at local games. Rest In Peace my good friend. Always your friend , Manny Oliveira*

Manny. Oliveira - August 13, 2020 at 08:12 PM

DR

“ Don Alfano was truly one of those unforgettable individuals who was such a big part of so many of us growing up in Visalia. I went to Mt Whitney with Donnie, and my memories of Don are so clear and bright - as an ever present and comfortingly familiar figure in the stands - always there, steadfast and true, rooting for his boys. His impact on not only his sons, but on so many athletes in Visalia is undeniable. Later, as an adult, I would come to know him as a man of deep conviction, integrity and grace. Indeed, one of the very best examples of the "greatest generation" - who lived his life believing in the goodness of mankind and the philosophy that positivity would win the day. And it surely did. Wishing Don a swift and safe journey as he rounds third base for a smooth slide into home....

Denise A Robertson

Denise A Robertson - August 03, 2020 at 04:42 PM

LW

“ Don was a very kind man. Always had a smile on his face! He was a good friend to my dad and I know he will be missed. - Laura (Bollinger) Wilson

laura wilson - July 31, 2020 at 04:05 PM

RM

“ I grew up around the Alfano's, with Son being a food friend of my parents. He always had a kind word for people, treated everyone with respect. You will be missed Don. Indeed, keep hustling. ⚾

Ryan McMillan - July 29, 2020 at 03:40 PM

JF

“ 40 years ago when I first came to Visalia, I met Don through my best friend and partner in crime Dan Alfano. I instantly enjoyed Don’s sense of humor and enjoyed talking about baseball, hunting and all other things about life on our long all- night drives to Beaver, Utah. Don made everyone around him feel good and he had a real love of life and family. He is truly of the greatest generation and I will miss the pleasure of being around him.

john Field - July 26 at 02:27 PM

John Field - July 28, 2020 at 10:28 PM

KE

“ I was so sad to hear of Mr. Alfano's passing. He and my grandfather played ball together and at my grandpa's funeral, he shared the greatest story about him. My prayers and sympathy to the family of this great man.

Kelly - July 27, 2020 at 01:19 AM

RF

“ I enjoyed a visit with Mr. Alfano a while back at his home. He was always around sporting events when I was in school at the same time as his boys. He always had a great smile and encouraging words. He and my Uncle Larry Powell were in baseball during the same years and both went to war. They were great heroes of the greatest generation, we need way more like them today. My deepest condolences and regards to Danny and Donnie. Your dad was a great American and one to be very proud of.
Randy Ford

Randy Ford - July 26, 2020 at 04:18 PM

JL

“ I taught with Danny Alfano for 30 years and had the pleasure of being around his Dad many times. He always greeted me by name and with a great smile made me feel he was glad to see me. He had a great sense of humor and always left me smiling.

Jerrilyn Lyerla - July 25, 2020 at 11:13 PM

JF

40 years ago when I first came to Visalia, I met Don through my best friend and partner in crime Dan Alfano. I instantly enjoyed Don's sense of humor and enjoyed talking about baseball, hunting and all other things about life on our long all- night drives to Beaver, Utah. Don made everyone around him feel good and he had a real love of life and family. He is truly of the greatest generation and I will miss the pleasure of being around him.

john Field - July 26, 2020 at 04:27 PM