



## Daniel Charles Leary

April 27, 1939 - September 29, 2020

Daniel Charles Leary, 81, of Martinez passed away at his home after a brief illness, on September 29th, surrounded by his family. He had been a resident of Martinez for over 50 years. Dan's parents, Louis and Patricia (Clyne) Leary, lived in Vallejo when he was born on April 27, 1939. His brother, Patrick Donlon, was born five years later. The family moved into the Clyne family home in Benicia when Dan was 12 years old. Dan attended St. Basil School and then St. Vincent Ferrer High School in Vallejo, graduating in 1957. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees from St. Mary's College in Moraga.

After graduating from St. Mary's, Dan served the country in the Army Reserve for five years. At the same time, he started his teaching career as a middle school teacher first in Pittsburg (St. Peter Martyr School) and then Benicia Unified School District. Dan spent 32 years in the Walnut Creek School District as a teacher and later as an administrator. When he retired in 1995, Dan was the Principal of Walnut Creek Intermediate School. For the last 15 years, Dan was a substitute teacher in the Martinez Unified School District, working past his 80th birthday.

Dan and his wife Linda (Bentley) were married in 1963, enjoying a 57-year marriage. They have four children--Daniel, Neil, Katie and Jim—who provided them with 13 wonderful grandchildren. His family was his first and foremost priority. Dan was actively involved in caring for his grandchildren after he retired, never failing to lend a helping hand or miss a game or a performance. Grandpa will be so missed by his family!

Religion was very important to Dan. He was a faithful member of Christ the King Catholic Church in Pleasant Hill. Dan led religious education classes for youth of the church when his children were attending the classes.

Starting in 1972, Dan officiated high school football, basketball and softball. Refereeing was a way for Dan to give back to the youth of Contra Costa County. He did that for almost fifty years with expertise, dedication and grace, earning the respect of thousands of student athletes and their coaches. Dan was a Past President and longtime

Corresponding Secretary of the Contra Costa Football Officials Association. Dan was inducted into the Contra Costa Basketball Officials Association Hall of Fame in 2011. Dan also officiated softball, football, and basketball games for local adult leagues. He used his Irish charm and good humor to keep even the most challenging players, coaches and fans in line and engaged in competitive fair play.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his children Daniel (Carolyn) Leary Jr., Neil (Kathleen) Leary, Katie Leary (Paul) Carnazola and Jim (Laura) Leary and his grandchildren Andrew, Julia, Joe, Grace, Anna, Luke, Natnael, Mason, Daniel, Seth, Matthew, Teddy and James. He was preceded in death by his parents Louis Daniel Leary and Patricia Edna (Clyne) Leary and his brother Patrick Donlon Leary.

Visitation will be from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, October 6, at Passalacqua Funeral Chapel, 901 West Second Street, Benicia. A Catholic Funeral Mass will be held at 11:00 a.m. Wednesday, October 7, at St. Dominic's Church, 475 East I Street, Benicia. Burial will be private. In lieu of flowers, please honor Dan by making a donation in his name to: Monument Crisis Center, PO Box 23973, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 or [monumentcrisiscenter.org/donate-now](http://monumentcrisiscenter.org/donate-now).

# Events

---

**OCT** **Visitation** 04:00PM - 06:00PM

**6**

---

Passalacqua Funeral Chapel  
901 W Second Street, Benicia, CA, US, 94510

**OCT** **Mass of Christian Burial** 11:00AM

**7**

---

St Dominic's Catholic Church  
475 E I St, Benicia, CA, US, 94510

# Comments

---



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Daniel Charles Leary.



October 05 at 07:30 PM

---



“ Mr. Leary, that's all I ever called him, was hired part way through my eighth grade year at St. Peter Martyr School in Pittsburg to replace our scheduled teacher who was unexpectedly hospitalized. That was sometime in 1962. It is not an understatement to say that Mr. Leary saved our eighth grade year. Saved it from a series of one-day-at-a-time substitute teachers and a replacement teacher who was not capable of controlling let alone teaching eighth graders. He could not have had much experience teaching at that time but he certainly knew how to deal with eighth graders, especially eighth grade boys. He took no nonsense but accomplished that without any harsh words or threats. And that aloud teaching to take place. He just seemed to have an innate sense of what we needed. He also coached our baseball team. I have great respect for Mr. Leary as a teacher, coach and mentor.

I added a picture of Mr. Leary taken at that time. Sorry for its poor quality. It's been in a shoe box of pictures for many, many years.

Alexander Grillo, Ph.D.



**Alexander Grillo** - October 04 at 11:58 PM

---



“ i first met Mr. Leary when he was my 8th grade Principal at WCI. He was a very caring Principal and treated me with kindness. Mr. Leary made my 8th grade year enjoyable and allowed me to have two TA classes, which was against the rules but knew that was what I need. He always was looking to do what was right for his students even if it bended the rules.

Six years later I was fortunate enough to run into Mr. Leary when he was Officiating on of my husbands basketball games. We chatted about WCI and he seemed happy that I was working in education. We always looked forward to having Mr. Leary as the Ref for the games. He always treated all the players and Coaches with respect.

When I became a Principal at a Middle School it was great to see him Officiating the Middle School Sports program. He always made time to chat about school and how I was doing. We would talk about the old days and how school had changed but he always seemed proud of me and I always appreciated that. I always loved introducing him as my Intermediate Principal to my students and families.

I always looked forward to having Mr. Leary and Tony G (they came as a package) ref the games these last five years. He always had a smile on his face and a kind word. Even though it was Middle School Sports he took the games seriously not matter how poor the kids played.

Thank you Mr. Leary for always being such a great Role Model and a caring person. I will miss you.

-- Love Lisa (Troy's wife to most officials).

**Lisa Sullivan** - October 04 at 05:28 PM

---



“ Contra Costa Football Officials Association purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Daniel Charles Leary.



**Contra Costa Football Officials Association** - October 04 at 02:20 PM

---



“ Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Daniel Charles Leary.



October 03 at 08:32 PM

---



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Daniel Charles Leary.



October 01 at 01:08 PM

---



“ Dan hired me and was my first principal when I started my teaching year. He had a quiet strength and rarely gave compliments-but when he did they were golden. I remember everyone was afraid to take a day off because Dan would find out-those days when people would play bookie to attend a baseball game or go skiing. I will always have very fond memories of him, and I send my love and prayers to his family.

**Kari Stewart** - October 01 at 10:01 AM



“ Dan Leary was one of the greatest influences on my educational career. He gave me my start at WCI in 1990. Dan earned the respect of all who worked under him because of the way he conducted himself every day. Dan was a man's man, who treated everyone with respect had our backs even when we screwed up. Like Kari Stewart mentioned, Dan wasn't always quick to praise, but when he did, it was heartfelt and meaningful. I will never forget Dan Leary. To Dan's family, remember all the cherished moments with him. I'm sure there are many.

**Brad Hoy** - October 09 at 03:06 PM