



Dave was known by many names throughout his life: Big D, Italian Stallion, Duke, Davey (don't go there!), Brockton Kid, and The Voice, just to name a few. His given name was David Allen Ruffatto, born at home on June 13, 1940, in Brockton, Montana. He was the 6th child of Antone (Tony) and Anna (Cuccia) Ruffatto. He was welcomed by 2 brothers and 3 sisters ranging in age from 21 to 8 years old. Yep, he was a come-lately!

Dave has worn many hats in his 82 years: son, brother, cousin, uncle, friend, husband, co-worker, supervisor, mentor, and my favorite, Dad. He always worked odd jobs, anything to make a few bucks. When he was 12 or 13, he made a deal with the owner of the hardware store. He wanted to make payments so he could order a gun. Things were sure different back then!! He would take in his cash for the store owner to hold on to and keep track of how close his total was to the prize. Once he made the final payment, he asked the owner to please order the gun!! The gentleman said, "I knew you were going to make it, so I went ahead and ordered it." He pulled it out from under the counter! Dad was on cloud nine!



He graduated from Brockton High School in 1958 as Salutatorian. Dad always joked that there were only two in his class. He received a full year scholarship to Carroll College in Helena. He enjoyed the year there, but I think there were more pranks and fun than actual studying. I wonder if his name is still carved inside the tower bell? Also, college is where he first had French onion chip dip. Snack time was never the same again!

After college, he moved back to Brockton and worked at the elevator. Dad ordered a brand new 1961 Ford Starliner car, black on black. He lived on the highway across from the railroad tracks and saw the train come through with his car on it! He hot footed it to Wolf Point where he paid cash for his new ride. It also happened to be his 21st birthday. I am sure it was a great one!!

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF DAVID "DAVE" RUFFATTO

June 13, 1940 - February 14, 2023

Memorial Services

Saturday, February 25, 2023 at 11:00 am
Carpenters Church ~ Sidney, Montana

Officiating

Pastor Gloria Buxbaum

Music

"How Great Thou Art"

Honorary Urnbearers

All of Dave's Beloved Family & Friends

Ushers

Jerry Tinkess Mark Hauge Dale Barkie

Luncheon After the Service

Moose Lodge ~ Sidney, Montana

Arrangements By

Fulkerson Stevenson Funeral Home
Sidney, Montana



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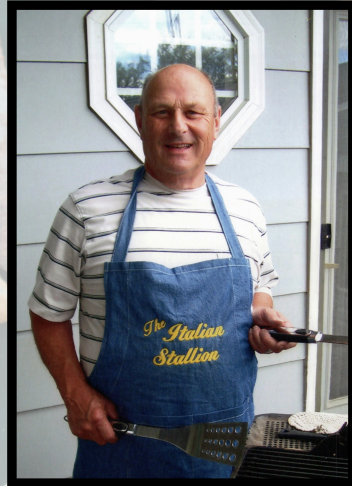
Dave met Karen Kirn in 1963 through mutual friends. 1965 was a big year for Dave, he married Karen on June 26, as well as purchased the Westland Station where he was working. They moved into the tiny house behind the station to start their married life. Their only child, daughter Diahn, was born in 1967. Dave was generous with helping people and extending credit when he owned the station. He would often say, "Well, it took me four years to go broke, but I finally made it!"

1969 offered a new job opportunity as a route man for Wildwood Beverages and a move to Plentywood. Dad's ability to read people, along with his social nature, allowed him to excel in this field. He loved working and had the absolute best work ethic of anyone I have ever known. 1971 saw a change in ownership to Blue Rock, where he continued to be the top route man for many years. In 1980, he was promoted to branch manager and worked another 2 years. Mom and Dad loved Plentywood and made life-long friends there.

1982 began his oilfield career as a pumper for Grace Petroleum. This job allowed him the freedom to do the things he loved and also take his dog, Rex, with him. Hunting arrowheads was one of his favorite pastimes. He and Ray Forster must have walked 10,000 miles each through the years!! He had a great 8 years with Grace, but alas, the boom ended, and his wells were closed. Lance Averett called him in 1990 and said, "I hear you could use a job!" Next was a move to Sidney to become the Area Marketing Manager for Blue Rock. He was a Pepsi man once more!

Prior to the move to Sidney, 1989 brought Perry Boyer into the family. Dad still called him his first son and cared for him deeply the rest of his life.

Along with shooting (he hadn't hunted for years) and looking for arrowheads, he loved to canoe and help friends with construction, electrical work, and plumbing. He was a World War II history buff, loved Native American culture, and wolves. He was also a great cook and made the best Chinese food!! Dad and several buddies got together and built garages for friends and co-workers. The gang of builders led to the classy name of Pin-Head Construction. Wonder why it never caught on?



Dad retired at the end of June 2006. He was ready for a new chapter and started working with metal. Over the years, this passion lead him to make gates, tables, wall décor, crosses, quilt holders, plant holders, and even a name plaque.

2010 brought Ray Skogen to the family as his second son. Dad loved Ray and asked me once, "If you don't want him, can I have him?" They got along great and had several of the same interests. Gun talk could go on for hours!

In 2013, Mom, Dad, and I were working on the vaulted ceiling in the 3-season room. Dad took a tumble off the scaffolding, landing on the cement. This resulted in a broken eye-socket, nose, femur, and 8 ribs in his back. It was a tough road, but he made it through with some lasting repercussions. His vertigo never went away and slowly the compression on his back did a number on his legs and walking. Thusly ending his metal work, as he was unable to stand for long periods of time.

In true Dave style, he always like a good joke and was the ultimate storyteller! He came by this rightfully, as his Dad, Tony, was also a great weaver of stories. Dad's delivery of jokes was always spot-on! He often said he should have written down the great jokes he heard on the route, there were at least 5 good ones a day.

Losing Mom in 2018 was a huge blow to our family. Dad stated almost daily since we lost Mom, how much he missed her. It was a big adjustment and we relied on family and friends to help get us through the tough times. The day after Dad's 82nd birthday he was flown to Billings where we received devastating news that he needed a quadruple bypass. My cousin Sherry and I were stunned when Dad stated there would be no surgery and "I've lived a good life, I'm tired, and I'm just going to ride this out." We honored Dad's wishes and continued to make memories.

Super Bowl Sunday 2023 was a great day. Dad had on his Chiefs shirt and was ready to cheer on his team. Ray and Mark were with us and we had a superb day with lots of fun, food, and laughter (plus the Chiefs won)!



God knows all and places us where we need to be. I was home sick the day Dad passed. When I went upstairs, Dad was cooking raw fried potatoes and onions. We had a great day visiting and watching a bit of TV. Later, Dad asked me if I was hungry and could he make me something to eat? I stated I was fine (still caring for me to the end)! Within a few minutes his breathing changed, causing me to check on him. Ever so gently, God picked him up and took him home in absolute peace. Jerry, Mark, and Ray arrived

shortly thereafter. So thankful they were all there for Dad. Mom waited 61 months (to the day) for Dad to join her. How great is it they were reunited on Valentine's Day!

Dad has joined the following loved ones: his wife of 52 years, Karen; parents Tony and Annie Ruffatto; parents-in-law Gilbert and Nellie Kirn; siblings and spouses, Pete (Betty) Ruffatto, Jim (Lorraine) Ruffatto, Marie (George) Wilson, Grace (Bud) Howe, and Rose Thumm; in-laws Albert (Betty) Kirn and Bob Kirn; nephews Terry Ruffatto, Sandy Ruffatto, Alan Wilson, Dave Howe, Mike Kirn, Dana Kirn, Gooch Kirn, Bernard Lambert, and Steve Schagunn.

Family missing him today: his daughter, Diahn Ruffatto (Ray Skogen); Marvin, Judy, and Russ Skogen; nieces and nephews Sherry Hanley, Jerry Hanley, Mary Howe, Jim Howe, Desi Lambert, Chris Kirn (Stan Hickerson), Curry (Lori) Kirn, Chad (Marcella) Kirn, Joleen Kirn, Brenda (Rory) Huff, and Susie Schagunn; plus numerous other family and friends with a special mention to Jerry Tinkess, Mark Hauge, Dale Barkie, and Lance Averett.

The statements and encouragement I have received in the last few days solidifies Dad's presence in so many people's lives. Among the comments have been that everyone loved his smile, sense of humor, warmth, kind words, and giving nature. There was even a statement that Heaven will never be the same!

How do you say goodbye to someone who was so important in your life? Dad was my first love, hero, provider, biggest fan, supporter (of everything!), and lastly, friend. I am blessed beyond measure to have had him as my Dad for over 55 years! Thank you, Lord, for him. I miss you, Dad! Hang tight with Mom, family, and friends, and pet Rex, Midnight, and Phantom for me. Until we meet again! Love you!