



Gary G. Zema

March 21, 1953 - June 26, 2019

Gary G. Zema, 66, of New York, NY, passed away on Wednesday, June 26, 2019. A son of the late Sam Zema and Erma Amicucci Zema, he was born in North Charleroi on March 21, 1953. Formerly of Belle Vernon, he had resided in New York City for the past 45 years. Gary made his living as a programmer and business analyst for BNY Mellon. He was a member of the musician's union, playing tuba and baritone horn in styles that included New Orleans jazz, traditional music of the Balkans, German polka and Italian feast-day music. He also was a member of many different choruses throughout his life. Gary was very interested in his family genealogy and spent countless hours with Tom Hewitt, the superintendent of Belle Vernon Cemetery, gathering information, learning and sharing local history. He was devoted to the outdoors, always in the mountains hiking and enjoyed protecting the natural world. One of his proud family accomplishments came two years ago when he, his wife Leslie, his daughter Lauren and his brother David obtained their dual citizenship with Italy. He is survived by his wife of 37 years, Leslie Zema; a daughter, Lauren Zema of Charlotte, NC; a sister and brother in-law, Beverly and Ken Shetterly of Donora; and two brothers, David Zema of New York, NY and Sam Zema of North Versailles. Friends will be received on Saturday, July 20, 2019 from 11 A.M. to 1 P.M. in the Ferguson Funeral Home and Crematory, Inc., (724-929-5300), 700 Broad Avenue, Belle Vernon. www.FergusonFuneralHomeAndCrematory.com. A memorial service will begin at 1 P.M. followed by inurnment in Belle Vernon Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations

may be made to The Nature Conservancy and VH1 Save the Music Foundation.

Cemetery Details

Belle Vernon Cemetery

1000 Broad Avenue
Belle Vernon, PA 15012

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 20. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Ferguson Funeral Home and Crematory, Inc.
700 Broad Avenue
Belle Vernon, PA 15012
(724) 929-5300

Memorial Service

JUL 20. 1:00 PM (ET)

Ferguson Funeral Home and Crematory, Inc.
700 Broad Avenue
Belle Vernon, PA 15012
(724) 929-5300

Tribute Wall

JS

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



jack stuckey - March 15, 2022 at 08:09 PM



“ Love's Journey was purchased for the family of Gary G. Zema.



July 19, 2019 at 02:04 PM



“ Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Gary G. Zema.



July 19, 2019 at 12:48 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Gary G. Zema.



July 14, 2019 at 08:49 AM



“ *Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Gary G. Zema.*



July 12, 2019 at 02:56 PM



“ *I'll forever be grateful to Gary. At a time when I was just starting to learn to play clarinet - and my playing was fairly intolerable - Gary believed in me and gave me an opportunity to grow as a musician that others weren't giving me. In May 1988, he offered me my first professional gig - with the On the Lam Street Band - the first of many over the next few years and continuing for two decades. Thank you, Gary!*

The photo was taken in Central Park in June 1985, almost three years before I met Gary. Some of you reading this will recognize yourselves and others - Ralph Denzer, Don Rogers, Ron Kelley, Paul Keim, Gary, and Jim Yurasek.

Sending peace and love to Leslie, Lauren and the Zema family. ❤️

Dan Levinson



Dan Levinson - July 04, 2019 at 03:19 PM

SF

“ I met Gary at a time when my own life felt pretty much impossible to live. One day we were in a green room in Chicago waiting for a gig to start and I didn't know him very well yet, but I had a feeling he could be trusted. He said quietly, 'So, how are things? I know it things were a little rocky there - ' just a gentle invitation. I had no words, I didn't want to start in, but I gave him a look that said, I'm sinking, barely staying afloat. He laughed a little - said, "uh-oh, that bad, eh? Oh Jeez." And a nod of sympathy. I felt so much better, like a big weight was lifted- I went on stage feeling light and present. Gary was my friend for the past 20 years, and he remained that guy who I knew would always make me feel that it was ok to have a hard time and I didn't have to explain, and who would always readily join me in celebrating the good moments in life (with a cannoli? Why not!!).

The last time I saw Gary he was in a lot of pain, I knew, from caring bridge posts and friends, and just from what I knew of his diagnosis, although he never said that to me in person. I asked him how he was feeling. He said he was doing pretty well, sometimes worse, sometimes better, but that generally he'd had lots of wonderful visitors, and that afternoons were often better. We both knew that I knew he was suffering, that I cared, and that I was there for him. He didn't need to talk about those things in words, and he had taught me so much of that tacit language - I can only hope I have gained enough fluency to be as easy and reliable a friend to others in this world as he has been to me.

I'll miss him, and I'll carry him with me.

sarah ferholt - July 04, 2019 at 01:09 AM

HD

“ My friend Gary has died and yet again death brings these reminders to me:

*If you have a voice - sing it.
If you have an instrument - play it.
If you have a heart - love with it.
If you have a song - hear it.
If you have a word - be kind with it.
If you have a leg - dance with it.
If you a love - honour it.
If you have a passion - pursue it.
If you have a resentment - release it.
If you have a hand - lend it.
If you have an anger - transform it.
If you have a dream - dare it.
If you have a fear - face it.
If you have a friend - prioritise it.
If you have a mission - lead with it.
If you have a difficulty - explore it.
If you have an intuition - use it.
If you have a Community - connect with it.
If you have a wealth - share it.
If you have a family - respect it.
If you have a difference - negotiate it.
If you have a sadness - feel it.
If you have a giggle - laugh it.
If you have an obligation - question it.
If you have a child - teach it.
If you have a mind - expand it.
If you have a body - move it.
If you have a world - see it.
If you have a life - live it.*

Death brings me all of this with its presence but also with my friend's absence as he was all of this and more. Rest In Peace, Gary.

Heather Dominick-Kosmicki - July 01, 2019 at 11:27 AM

“ My friend, Gary, has died and yet again death brings these reminders to me:

*If you have a voice - sing it.
If you have an instrument - play it.
If you have a heart - love with it.
If you have a song - hear it.
If you have a word - be kind with it.
If you have a leg - dance with it.
If you a love - honour it.
If you have a passion - pursue it.
If you have a resentment - release it.
If you have a hand - lend it.
If you have an anger - transform it.
If you have a dream - dare it.
If you have a fear - face it.
If you have a friend - prioritise it.
If you have a mission - lead with it.
If you have a difficulty - explore it.
If you have an intuition - use it.
If you have a Community - connect with it.
If you have a wealth - share it.
If you have a family - respect it.
If you have a difference - negotiate it.
If you have a sadness - feel it.
If you have a giggle - laugh it.
If you have an obligation - question it.
If you have a child - teach it.
If you have a mind - expand it.
If you have a body - move it.
If you have a world - see it.
If you have a life - live it.*

Death brings me all of this with its presence but also with my friend's absence as he was all of this and more. Rest In Peace, Gary.

Love, Heather

Heather M Dominick-Kosmicki - July 01, 2019 at 11:24 AM

HD

“ 1 file added to the album *Good Happenings*



Heather Dominick-Kosmicki - July 01, 2019 at 10:27 AM

HD

“ 1 file added to the album *Good Happenings*



Heather M Dominick-Kosmicki - July 01, 2019 at 10:25 AM



“ *Fairest of All* was purchased for the family of Gary G. Zema.



June 28, 2019 at 06:55 PM



“ *Pretty Please* was purchased for the family of Gary G. Zema.



June 28, 2019 at 05:03 PM



“ *5 files added to the album Zlatne Uste*



Matt Smith - June 28, 2019 at 03:23 PM