



## Lawrence Richard Ross

April 29, 1947 - August 6, 2020

Lawrence Richard Ross died August 6th, 2020 at the age of 73 surrounded by family.

Born in 1947 in Hays, Kansas, Larry grew up just an hour south in Great Bend after his parents, Pete and Mildred, and his sisters, Jeri and Janet, and brother Pat, relocated there from the family farm. Larry had a long-established work ethic, and by the tender age of 14 was driving heavy trucks for his father's oil pipe testing business. He was an all-state high school fullback and, unbeknownst to his children, answered to the name "Butch" throughout his childhood. Legend also has it that Larry's childhood bicycle was "made out of wood" and could navigate the uphill-both-ways demands of school attendance in any season, including the snow.

It was while studying journalism at Kansas University that he fell in love with Amanda Sue Moorhead. Larry met Sue while she was taking out the garbage at an apartment complex he managed. It was Halloween 1967 and Sue was dressed as a nun. Larry and Sue have long maintained that they were level-headed, upstanding mid-westerners, of the strongest moral compass and with only the healthiest of habits in college. Recently surfaced photographic evidence of their time together at KU has raised interest in further investigation.

Immediately following graduation in 1969, Larry did two things: he married the love of his life, and he enlisted in the U.S. Army. The newlyweds spent their first summer together in Fort Benning, GA, where Larry attended OCS School, finishing first in his class. He then served as 1st Lieutenant, Small Unit Command, in Vietnam from 1971-1972. Larry rarely spoke of his time in Vietnam, though his family was not surprised to learn (after his passing) that he was a recipient of the Bronze Medal for meritorious service in 1972.

Later that same year, Larry returned home from service and began a career in sales, first in St. Louis, MO, the birthplace of his eldest son, Jason, and a year later in Wilton, CT, where his two beloved children, Amanda and Michael, were born. Larry shared no greater joy than when attending his kids' sporting events, whether that meant white-knuckling the track fence or delivering booming encouragement from the nosebleed seats.

In 1983, Larry's position as Vice President with R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company relocated the family to Longwood, Florida, where Larry's unwavering passion for golf and Mexican food flourished throughout his adult life. A framed drawing of Printing Press #380 from the Donnelley Willard plant proudly hangs in his home office, a reminder of Larry's humble beginnings in the printing business, before his sustained success with the EL-HI group. Letters are piled in his desk from dear friends and colleagues, mentors and mentees, addressed to "The General," as he was affectionately known to those close to him during his 33-year tenure.

Larry and Sue cultivated lifelong friendships while living in Lawrence, KS; Wilton, CT; and Longwood, FL, that have not only endured but grown richer through the decades. Larry was especially fond of annual trips to Maggie Valley and, in more recent years, golfing adventures in Ireland. Also found in his desk was an enormous stack of nearly every scorecard from years of rounds. He was a man of few words, but his laughter often revealed his secret

joy—and once he started laughing it was difficult to get him to stop.

“DUKE” as Larry was known later in life, spent every other moment possible with his five grandchildren, Declan, Scout, Weatherly, Lily, and Frankie, whom he adored endlessly—a love perhaps only matched by their love and affection for him. He spent tireless hours traversing the east coast to visit them in Boston, Tampa, or Chapel Hill, and even more hours roughhousing on the floor, starting pattycake games, cooking the world’s best sunny-side-up eggs, inventing games in the pool, schooling everyone in blackjack and Kings Free, and teaching the next Ross generation to ‘put a little English on it’ when driving the 8 ball into the corner pocket or delivering a ping-pong win. He loved his daughters-in-law, Heather and Vanessa, and his son-in-law, Jay, as his own.

For those who knew Larry and were closest to him, his passing has only codified the incredible character that he was known for in life. Loyalty (above all), honesty (to a fault), accountability (family first) and, most of all, Love. A quiet, enduring, enriching, forgiving Love.

Larry was never afraid to do the right thing. When asked to advise a friend or family member faced with a difficult situation, he would look you straight on with his bright blue eyes and often simply offer that you KEEP GOING.

We can hear you rooting for us, Duke.

We’ll be good, Dad. We’ll be safe.

We love you.

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The Rosses would like to thank friends and family for the incredible outpouring of support during this difficult time. Due to current circumstances regarding COVID, we have chosen to postpone a celebration of life for Larry until we can hold a proper wake (his wish).

Throughout his life Larry admired the men and women of the United States Armed Forces who were called to service. Donations in Memoriam of Lawrence Richard Ross can be made to the The Army Emergency Relief fund, here:

<https://give.armyemergencyrelief.org/default.aspx?tsid=12756>

# Tribute Wall

“ *What a beautiful message on Larry's life and impact on so many of us. Thank you for sharing what we knew of him and the new things learned. The obituary flooded me with memories, as I worked for and worked with Larry for a number of years. As a 'sales pup', he was intimidating from afar, with his standard blue suit, blue shirt, and tie (those were the days when we wore suits 5 days a week). While working in TX, Larry was my direct manager and it was a great time for the company. Larry would fly in from FL and we'd make visits to Harcourt in Ft Worth and HRW in Austin, so we'd have time together in the car, talking life. This was back when we needed to stop at pay phones on I-35 to check messages!*

*A few areas that stand out -*

*David Calder already mentioned the money and Credit Cards wrapped in a rubber band. That was a Larry-ism.*

*Certainly all the times we got together as an El-Hi sales team, golf matches in Maitland followed by dinners where Larry did not enjoy me choosing the wines :). One related wine note: I started enjoying Caymus Cab's in the 90's when they were still affordable. Larry was not that into wine at the time, but tasted one and in his low key manner noted, 'that's pretty good'. Next I hear, he is buying it himself. So cheers to him today and always.*

*I'd be in the Maitland office and the phone would ring. I would know it was one of the 'kids' as his tone would soften and at some point in every conversation, he would ask 'what does your mom say about this?' As our girls grew up, I think I asked this one about a million times myself.*

*One other memory - Larry cared deeply about his team. I think he had more Sales Rep of the Year winners than any other manager. He took the time to improve others even when we did not want to hear it. I don't think I ever put together an agenda for a meeting that did not come back with his trademark handwriting scrawling*

*questions, making changes, adding new areas.*

*I moved on from the Book Group in the late 90's and from RRD in the mid 2000s. Our annual Christmas card exchanges showed the growing family and a smiling and proud Larry.*

*Larry was a huge influence on my career and I'm grateful and better off for knowing him in so many ways.*

*Peace and comfort to you all.*

*Rick*

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**rick hanaway** - September 03, 2020 at 01:23 PM

SM

“ *SUE, JASON, MANDY, MIKE & FAMILY,  
LARRY WAS LIKE PART OF OUR FAMILY, WE LOVED HIM &  
WILL MISS HIM. IN TIME  
WE WILL ALL LOOK BACK AT ALL THE GOOD TIME WE HAD  
TOGETHER. HE WAS A  
WONDERFUL HUSBAND, FATHER & FRIEND. NOT TO FORGET,  
WE WILL ALL BE  
WITH HIM AGAIN SOME DAY.*

*LOVE PAT & STEVE*



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**STEVE & PAT MILLER** - August 31, 2020 at 04:59 PM

GS

“ So sorry to hear about Mr. Ross, our family is praying for you guys. Such a great guy, I will always remember from the Seminole Soccer fields when Mike and I were young.

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**Grant Shellhammer** - August 17, 2020 at 04:29 PM

MA

“ We're terribly sorry to hear of Larry disappearance. we met him at Vanessa and Michael's wedding and we found a good person, a good person with whom we had a good time and pleasant discussions. All our thoughts are with your family in this terrible ordeal.

Severine & Mathieu

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**Mathieu Arnould** - August 16, 2020 at 01:54 PM

JD

“ Dear Sue,  
I don't know if you remember me but we met at Vanessa's and Michael's wedding, I already appreciate you and Duke. I am so sorry for his loss. I was heartbroken when I heard the sad news. Our hearts go out to you Sue, Michael and all your family. I want you to know that I am with you in thought and I am thinking of you in these difficult times hoping that you are well surrounded by friends and your children. I will never forget Duke's kindness and joy and all that we share with you both during this wedding. Hope my english is not too bad.

My deepest sympathies.

Dominique Jolivet ( Vanessa's aunt)

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**Jolivet Dominique** - August 16, 2020 at 05:03 AM

DS

“ I reported to Larry for a number of years at RR Donnelley - he was a straight shooter, which I always appreciated. He was one of the good ones. My sincere condolences to his family who he spoke of often. Denise Sandler

Denise Sandler - August 15, 2020 at 06:39 PM

DN

“ Sue,  
I am so sorry to hear that Larry had passed. I know it's been years since I lived in Longwood but I have such fond memories of you and Larry and all the gang!! He was such a great guy,! Please know you are in my prayers along with all your kids and grandkids!!! Love,  
Dee Nicholson

Dee Nicholson - August 15, 2020 at 09:11 AM

WR

Sue your kids and grandkids. The loss of a spouse is so very painful. I know especially when you had such a great relation With each other. The most healing moment I had was when I realized how lucky I was to have over 50 years with such a wonderful person. I know you know that feeling. The Obit was a great tribute to an even greater man. Bill Reading

william Reading - August 15, 2020 at 04:49 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Lawrence Richard Ross.



August 14, 2020 at 12:53 PM

CN

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



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**Carol Nelson** - August 14, 2020 at 08:23 AM

KS

“ Mike,

*I want to extend my sympathies to you and your family. I have fond memories of your father cooking burgers on the Egg grill. He was very kind to me and I know he thought extremely highly of you. It's a sad day but he'll never be forgotten.*

*Kenny*

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**KENNETH STEINBECK** - August 14, 2020 at 05:01 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Lawrence Richard Ross.*



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August 14, 2020 at 01:53 AM

SM

“ *The best memory I have of Larry is when I was alone at thanksgiving several years ago. He said to Sue, set a place for Susie at the table, she will not be alone. I will miss him soo much. I hope he and Don are together in Heaven*

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**susan mayer** - August 13, 2020 at 10:41 PM



“ *Joyful Memory was purchased for the family of Lawrence Richard Ross.*



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August 13, 2020 at 09:40 PM



“ *Mrs. Fields Nibblers® Sympathy Basket was purchased for the family of Lawrence Richard Ross.*



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August 13, 2020 at 09:30 PM

DC

“ *My sincerest condolences to Sue and the entire Ross family. I was fortunate enough to work under Larry for a significant period of time as he served as our V.P. of Sales back in the R.R.Donnelley days. Larry was an extremely fair and always supportive mentor and will truly be remembered fondly. Carrying his credit cards wrapped in a rubber band was quirky but was simply a Larryism and further evidence he was unique. Rest in Peace Larry.*

*Sincerely,  
David Calder*

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**David Calder** - August 13, 2020 at 07:19 PM

JS

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



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**Joseph M Steining** - August 13, 2020 at 07:15 PM

KB

“ *Sadly I have only had a short time that I have know Larry but with fond memories of his love for my favorite wine and our fabulous riverboat cruise watching him joyfully singing at a piano with his great friend Andy Hannigan. I will always remember his happy big smile from that evening! My sincere condolences to Sue and all their family. I know he will be deeply missed. ❤️ Karen Bateman*

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**Karen Bateman** - August 13, 2020 at 06:15 PM