

CELEBRATING  
THE LIFE OF

*David Kukulski*



NOVEMBER 16, 1951 - JUNE 13, 2023

# Order of Service

## Opening Music

"The Breath You Take" by George Strait

Song Dedication by Shelbi Kukulski

"Fire and Rain" by James Taylor

Song Dedication by Carli Kukulski

"Carried Me With You" by Brandi Carlile

## Words of Welcome

Ken Collins, Chaplain, Hospice of the Valley

## Tributes

Memorial Video by Andrew Kukulski

Linda Kukulski Miller, Dave's Sister

Song Dedication by Lindsey Kukulski

"The Richest Man" by John Berry

Matthew Kukulski, Dave's Son

Daniel Kukulski, Dave's Brother

# Order of Service

## Tributes (continued)

Song Dedication by Matthew Kukulski  
"Even Though I'm Leaving" by Luke Combs

Andrew Kukulski, Dave's Son

Lindsey Kukulski, Dave's Daughter

Song Dedication by Pamela Kukulski  
"Jealous of the Angels" by Katherine Jenkins

## Open Mic

Please Share a Brief Memory of Dave

## Closing Remarks

Ken Collins

Reception with light refreshments will follow

# Obituary

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved husband, father, and grandfather, David Robert Kukulski. David passed away peacefully on June 13th, 2023 after a brave journey with cancer.

David was born on November 16th, 1951 in Ganado, Arizona to Albert and Patricia Kukulski. His parents were educators, and their family lived in several places throughout the Southwest over the course of his childhood and adolescence. David was an incredibly bright student and athlete, who began his high school career at Moon Valley High School in Phoenix before transferring to Globe High School where he graduated at the top of his class in 1969.

David went on to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Communications from Arizona State University in 1974. He also married his high school sweetheart, Pamela (Deal) Kukulski on June 5th, 1971, and they had three children together.

David's true passion for sports and his interest in writing led him to a career in sports publishing that spanned over more than four decades. He was a successful entrepreneur who founded multiple companies such as Kukulski & Associates, and Saguaro Sports Publications, which he ran with his longtime business partner, Barry Sollenberger. For the last 23 years, David has served as the president of a custom sports souvenir company called Kukulski Brothers, which he owned alongside his younger brothers, Lawrence and Daniel, his wife, Pamela, and his sister-in-law, Debra.

# Obituary

In addition to his love of sports, David enjoyed listening to many genres of music, traveling to all 50 states, and spending quality time with his family. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Pamela Kukulski; his three children, Matthew Kukulski, Andrew (Sara) Kukulski, and Lindsey (Elliot) Kukulski; his four grandchildren, Kyleigh, Avery, Carli and Shelbi Kukulski; as well as his sister, Linda Kukulski Miller, and his brother, Daniel Kukulski. He was preceded in death by his parents, Albert and Patricia Kukulski, and his brother, Lawrence Kukulski.

David was a truly special husband, father, grandfather, brother, son, boss and friend who brought so much love, kindness and laughter to everyone around him. He will be greatly missed by his family as well as countless business associates and friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held for David Kukulski on Saturday, July 15th, 2023 at 2:00pm in the Banyan Room at Scottsdale Stadium. All are welcome to attend.

# *Tributes from those who could not attend*

## Preston English, Friend and Business Associate

I would like to send my sincerest condolences to the Kukulski family. I first got to know Dave when I was a student at ASU working in the media relations office, and got to work with him in producing the baseball media guide when I became the baseball SID. He was always so supportive and understanding to a young man learning the ropes and was always a joy to be around out at Packard Stadium. We lost touch after I moved out of state, but the support and knowledge he gave me in those early years of my career are foundational pieces I still use to this day. My heart broke when I learned of his passing and I am sad I will not be able to attend his celebration of life ceremony. Dave was a wonderful person and I am blessed to have had him play a role in my life and career.

## Donnie Nelson, Friend and Business Associate

Dave will always live in our hearts, minds and souls. Everyone who ever worked in the NIAA office considered Dave a member of our staff & family. He connected all of us - the NIAA and the Kukulski families - with compassion, humility and humor. I've never met someone so genuine and caring for the greater good of an organization. Dave traveled Nevada. He understood our differing cultures, attitudes and personalities. He did everything with the objective of making sure every person, school and event was treated equally well. Dave earned respect within our membership. Dave had a special place with me... whatever it was, however it developed or whenever it started, I always felt Dave was special by how he contributed so positively to my life since we first met some 25 years ago. Dave, we'll miss you but always love you.

# *Tributes from those who could not attend*

## Susan (Hilton) Ashcraft, Family Friend

Dave lived with my family his senior year of high school. His family was transferred out of state, and he wanted to finish at Globe High, so I had the honor of having one more brother that year. His first night at our house, my Nana said, "Well, you must be someone special, because we're eating in the dining room." We ate there because there weren't enough chairs in the kitchen, but Dave was indeed someone special for our family.

My brother, Randy, had quite a sense of humor, and he referred to Dave as our Polish exchange student. Randy had a repertoire of what he called "Polack jokes" (I know...offensive!) that he loved to tell at dinner. It didn't take Dave very long to catch on to rallying the jabs right back, so we had some very lively meals that year.

Dave also regaled us at dinner with statistics of ASU athletes like Joe Spagnola and Larry Gura. We marveled at his memory of individual players' percentages of completed passes, strike-outs and pretty much every detail of athletic achievement. Little did we know that he was just warming up for a long career involving all things sports-related.

Rumor has it that my dad let Dave borrow the family car (shock!) for dates with Pam. Thank goodness he did, so their relationship could grow that year. Otherwise, the Pam and Dave Story might have been a short story instead of the epic tale that it became.

Many thanks to Pam for reconnecting Dave and me after many years. Love you, Dave.

# *Tributes from those who could not attend*

## Chuck Fisher, Friend and Former Classmate

Dave and I became very good friends our freshman year of college. "Mr. K" frequently schooled me on the basketball court. He would put on that game smile, and HORSE was over. Switch to half court one-on-one and his Charles Barkley hip action would prevail. I will never forget his kindness when he reached out to me when I started cancer treatment last year. I am so sorry for the family's loss, and my deepest condolences for each and every family member and friend who knew and loved Dave. God Bless All.

## Dennis Ackerman, Friend and Business Associate

I am so sorry to hear of the passing of Dave. I have so many fond memories when Dave and his brother came over to the CIF-SDS in the early 2000's to make their pitch to do our souvenir sales. It was a match that has continued on for 20+ years. I know myself, Bill, Carlton, and Jeanette all loved working with the family over the years. They always provided outstanding products, and were so reliable in their service to the public. It was a pleasure to work with Dave and his family. We had a great relationship, and I always knew he could provide a great shirt, hat etc. at all events. My condolences to the family. We lost a great person! He will be missed.

## Mike McNeil, Friend and Business Associate

My deepest condolences to the entire Kukulski Family, Friends and Employees for their loss. I will forever be thankful for Dave and the Kukulski family. He was a great man. Any time we spoke about business he always would ask about my family and spoke so proudly about his. Rest in peace Dave. You and your family will remain in our thoughts.



# *Tributes from those who could not attend*

## Tyler Dunkel, Friend and Business Associate

Dave Kukulski is one of the kindest people I have ever had the pleasure of working with. We always had a good laugh when I saw him, and he always made you feel like you were the most important person in the moment. Dave's passion for his work, his family, and the people he served is unmatched. He truly blessed my life, not only professionally but as a true friend. Thank you, Dave, you will be greatly missed.

## Tiffany Ybarra Martin, Niece

I will never forget all the fun times spent with Uncle Dave. Including driving to Disneyland, all of us packed in the Kukulski station wagon riding in the cargo area, not once but twice!!! Selling programs at the Pac Ten tournaments and other various events. Eating at the Mexican restaurant by the old Arcadia house every time we visited. Teasing one another and laughing until our sides hurt! I know you are smiling down from Heaven, and I sure hope you are giving Charles Boyer, 2 - 8 - 0 (with an accent) a hard time. I will miss you dearly, thank you for all the fond memories.

## David Jackson, Friend and Business Associate

I want you and your family to know that Dave was very special to us at the Oklahoma Association office, both as a business partner and a friend. From a business perspective, he would always go out of his way to ensure we were well taken care of. But more importantly, Dave became a great friend to me and so many others on our staff. I always enjoyed our conversations and learning about his family and his business. Thank you all for sharing such a great man with us!

# *Tributes from those who could not attend*

## Kimberly Ybarra Oddonetto, Niece

I have so many fond childhood memories of time spent with the Kukulski family. Uncle Dave and Aunt Pam always included me in so much. Whether it was going to Las Vegas and eating so much food at the buffet, visiting Nashville and “acquiring” a souvenir at Dollywood, selling programs at the Tostitos Bowl, or just spending time with them at home. I was always just one of their kids. Uncle Dave was always there putting a smile on my face, telling jokes, and his quick wit. I will forever cherish these memories.

## Dan Metcalf, Friend and Former Roommate

I was one of Dave’s roommates in the early 1970’s. We sure had some great times both in high school and college. ASU had a great team in 1970, and Dave was of course one of their biggest fans. They were going to play Wyoming, and Dave made a bet with me as to how badly the Devils were going to beat the Cowboys. He was so very sure that he “spotted” me 48 points. That was an unbelievable number, and I couldn’t pass it up. Come Saturday night, the final score was ASU 52 and Wyoming 3, or with the 48 points Dave spotted me, ASU 52 And Wyoming 51. Dave was elated, and could not wait to rub it in a little, as he liked to do. Pam and family, know that your husband, dad, and grandpa was a special person, and we will miss him and remember him with a smile before the tears.

# *Tributes from those who could not attend*

## Sherrill Lee, Employee and Adoptive Daughter

I got to know Dave when I started working for Kukulski Brothers in 2015. Through our countless work road trips (especially to Oklahoma City where we were spring season residents), I have heard countless stories about his time on the reservation, his travels across the United States including cruises, war stories of the early days of KB, not to mention all the dad jokes. Dave was a natural storyteller, even when he told them time after time after time again (whew!) I always enjoyed them just the same.

Dave was like a father figure to me. I was the unofficial adopted daughter. He always looked out for my kids and I, and I am forever grateful for everything this kind and generous soul did for me. Thank you Lindsey, Andy, and Matt for sharing "Dad" with me.

It has been a year for the books! To say heartbreaking is putting it mildly. The loss of Larry was sudden and shocking, and three months later we've lost another Kukulski Brother. My condolences to the immediate KB family which includes employees, and friends near and far. I am sad I am not there physically to say my final goodbye. I had planned on wearing a bright yellow ASU t-shirt in honor of Dave.

I have much to say, but so little time. What a precious commodity time is. Tell your loved ones every chance you get that you love them and hug them tight. I hope as time passes, your hearts ache a little less and memories don't make you tear up. Cajun Dave forever!

# *Tributes from those who could not attend*

## Sarah Stock Laird, Niece

When I think of my Uncle Dave, the only thing I can do is smile. He had a larger-than-life personality, and most importantly, a heart of the same caliber to match. If someone asked me if I could summarize him, I would say bold-colored vehicles, two dollar bills, big hair, programs and t-shirts, corgis, an inspector of ears (especially my moms), sports lover, inadequate identification for cruise and airline travel, Las Vegas, forgetting footwear on long drives, ASU Sun Devils, and last but not least, his kind and generous heart.

We could argue that his life was cut short and we were robbed of time. Truth of the matter is, there would never be enough Uncle Dave time. We need to hold in our hearts how lucky we were to have over seven decades with him. His love, generosity, and big heart will live on with me and my family forever. We will continue his legacy by sharing the same qualities to others around us.

This isn't goodbye Uncle Dave, it's see you soon.



