



F. Charles Duran

November 11, 1942 - February 28, 2005

F. Charles Duran, 62 died Monday, February 28, at his home in north Topeka, surrounded by family. He had struggled against cancer for over a year.

He was born November 11, 1942, in Topeka, the son of Florencio and Mabel Duran and the grandson of Pedro Lopez, a cofounder of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and founder of a popular Mexican food store. Charlie would eventually co-own and operate his grandfather's business for fourteen years.

A 1960 graduate of Topeka High School, he married his high school sweetheart, Julianne Murry, on February 10, 1961. They moved to rural Elmont, where they raised their three children and where he resided until his death. One of his favorite activities was coaching his two sons' baseball teams in the Shawnee County Amateur Baseball Association (SCABA). Charlie served as SCABA president for the 1977-1978 season.

He worked at Goodyear for eighteen years and was active in United Rubber Workers Local 307 (now United Steelworkers), serving as shift steward and photographer/managing editor of the local's newspaper. His extensive involvement in union –related community service programs, including his co-chairmanship of the Goodyear plant's United Way drive and chairmanship of the United Way Labor Participation Committee, led to his appointment in 1981

as AFL-CIO Community Services Liaison for the United Way of Greater Topeka. Charlie remained in his position until his death, this year celebrating his twenty-fifth anniversary with United Way. He served as United Way's interim CEO in 1984.

His memberships, honors, and achievements were many. In 1978 Governor Robert Bennett named him a Tradesperson of the Year. In 1980 Charlie received the Campaign Volunteer Award from United Way, and the Topper Award from the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce for his contributions to the enhancement of Topeka's image and quality of life. He helped found the Project Topeka Community food Drive and in 1989 was recognized for his outstanding leadership in providing food to the needy. In 1998 he applied for the AFL-CIO/United Way Model City Award, an extensive undertaking; his application was accepted, and Topeka was named a Model City. Charlie served as vice-president of the Topeka Federation of Labor and was honored by that organization in 2004 for his dedication to the union members and citizens of Topeka and the State of Kansas. That same year, the Kansas AFL-CIO established the F. Charles Duran AFL-CIO Community Services Award and named Charlie as its first recipient. Other awards include the 1986 Nathan Cave Community Services Award and the 1995 Bill McCormick Community Action Award. He had served on the board of the Rangel Brothers American GI Forum and was current board member of Go Topeka. He also worked on behalf of the annual national letter carriers' food drive and DAD's Day (Dads Against Diabetes). Many people know Charlie for his role in creating and organizing the annual Chicken Flying Contest, which for twenty-two years raised funds for Let's Help, Inc.

Two brothers, John Franklin and Augustine, and a sister, Angelita Aguilar, preceded him in death. He survived by his wife, Julie; his daughter, Theresa, and her husband Paul Miller, Fairfax, California; two sons, Chuck and his daughter Kaiti (Lebo) and Chuck's wife, Shirley, and her son, Cody,

Tonganoxie; and Rob and his daughters Rebeka and Calina, Topeka; his brother Richard, Prairie Village; his sister-in-law Rose Duran, Topeka, and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Charlie touched the lives of many through his warmth, generosity, and compassion. Topeka has truly lost one of its most dedicated community leaders.

Friends and family will gather for a visitation from 5-8 p.m. Thursday at Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, where a parish rosary will be prayed at 5:30 p.m. and a Knights of Columbus rosary at 7:00 p.m. Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 1 p.m. Friday at Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic Church. All are invited to attend a celebration of his life at 5:30 p.m. Friday at the Let's Help warehouses, 2nd and Quincy.

Memorial donations may be made to Let's Help or the United Way of Greater Topeka.

Tribute Wall



“ *F. Charles Duran*

January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM



“ *Dear Julie and family:*

I want to express my sympathy on the loss of Charlie. I know words can say very little at a time like this, but knowing people care and are thinking of you maybe helps. I hope so. What a wonderful man.

When I worked at United Way as a reception, in the early 90s, I got acquainted with Charlie, and Julie I remember you too. What a wonderful man, and how fortunate you were to have him. I know you all have many great memories of him.

God bless all of you.

Sincerely,

Jackie Campbell Petersen

Jackie Campbell Petersen - March 07, 2005 at 07:57 PM



“ *Dear Julie & Family, I met and worked with Charlie as a Labor Liaison from Springfield, MO. I wanted to send my sincere condolences and to say how much that Charlie will be missed. His good works will continue on and I will remember him with his big, friendly smile.*

Linda Bergant - March 07, 2005 at 01:15 PM

TL

“ As many others have said, I too will miss Charlie. I had the pleasure of getting to know him during the time that my Mom worked at the United Way. It was always a fun part of the office visit to go talk to Charlie and hear a new joke and share a smile with him. You are in my thoughts, Julie. :)

Todd Lee - March 04, 2005 at 12:57 AM

KH

“ Charlie was a great guy. He laughed, he knew folks, he was committed, he'd do anything he could to help figure out a solution for a person or a project. We are all richer for having known his and having him as part of our community. I knew Charlie professionally through his work at United Way and mine at Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc. for more years than I can count...as well as when we ran into each other on our own time out in the community. He will be missed. Thank you for sharing him with us!! I hope to be able to express my condolences personally tomorrow at the evening memorial get-together.

Karen Hiller - March 03, 2005 at 10:52 PM

CA

“ I was very saddened to read of the loss of my friend and class mate. I live in Las Vegas now and it has been many years since our Jr. High and High school days, but I still remember the good times. Please accept my deepest and sincere condolences and may God bless your family.

*Claude D. Allen
THS Class of 1959*

Claude Allen - March 03, 2005 at 09:45 PM

DB

“ Julie and family you are all in our thoughts and prayers. Charlie did so much good and will be deeply missed. Julie, you were the love of his life. Remember all the good times.

Dolly and Zane Brown - March 03, 2005 at 08:35 PM

CT

“ Hi! I am Cam Tomlinson and I met Charlie through the United Way/IBEW Local 304.

Just wanted to let you all know that Charlie will be missed greatly by all. I got the opportunity to meet Charlie working on the United Way Committee at Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation and IBEW Local 304 Unions United Way Kickoff. George Kearns and I were CO-Chairperson's representing the IBEW Local 304 workers at Wolf Creek on the United Way Committee at Wolf Creek. Charlie came out at Midnight here at Wolf Creek to help us cook hamburgers and hot dogs for the shift workers. Shift Manager in Control Room came and ate and then invited Charlie and the others to the Control Room. He was really impressed that they took the time to show all these volunteers around the plant. The shift workers all made comments about what a great guy willing to give up his time in the middle of the night to come out and help. Charlie always shared a laugh and willing to help in way possible. My prayers are with your family.

*Condolences
Cam Tomlinson*

Cam Tomlinson - March 03, 2005 at 05:58 PM

RO

“ Dear Julie & Family, it is with great sadness that I send you all my sincerest condolences. I had worked with Charlie at the United Way when I was in the loaned employee program representing Hallmark Cards. I always remembered his dedication to the agency and always putting people first. I remembered his radiant smile, Charlie could light up a room with his smile and put you at ease with it also. I remember , I had recorded a couple of cassettes for him (Comedy Tapes) and one was of Larry The Cable Guy- and whenever we would see each other he would say "Git Her Done". I remember at the Loaned Employee Recognition- he handed me a T-shirt and said "Git Her Done". I feel that God felt that Charlie had done all he could on earth and that God needed a little help in heaven and He called Charlie home. Charlie was an angel in training here on Earth -trying to get his wings- we do not have to hear any bells to know Charlie has his wings. May God Bless you all in this time of sadness and always remember Charlie is only a thought away.....

Ray Ortega - March 03, 2005 at 02:18 PM

JB

“ Julie & family,
It deeply saddens me to hear of your loss. You and Charlie have always been there for me and my family when ever we were in need. I will always remember the first time I had the chance to work with Charlie at Lets Help. He helped me realize how many lives I would be touching just by helping down there. You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. With loving regards,
Jennifer Bonjour

Jennifer Bonjour - March 03, 2005 at 01:00 PM

LL

“ Charlie will be missed by everyone who came to know him and love him for his dedication to the United Way. I was privileged to work with him for 17 years at the United Way....I will miss his sense of humor and his love of life.

*Julie, you and your entire family will be in my prayers and thoughts.
Love, Lila*

Lila Lee - March 03, 2005 at 12:57 PM

WA

“ Dear Julie & Family:
My heart aches for your loss. It's true that everyone loved Charlie. It's also true that it's hard to understand why people are taken from us, but I hope you'll find comfort in knowing you were a special part of such a well-lived life.

Wanda Arocho - March 03, 2005 at 11:35 AM

JC

“ Dear Julie and family,
I'm so sorry to hear about the loss of Charlie. I will miss him dearly, as will everyone who knew him. I have often said - everyone loves Charlie, even if they didnt' know him.
Topeka will never be the same.
You are in my thoughts and prayers and I hope to see you soon.

Jennifer Cannon - March 03, 2005 at 11:17 AM

JG

“ We were so saddened when we read of your loss. It has been years but think of you all when we are in Elmont. Please accept our deepest and sincere condolences. You and all your family will be in out prayers and thoughts.

John and Betty Grubb - March 02, 2005 at 08:20 PM

JS

“ Dear Julie and family,
Please know how sorry I am that Charlie is no longer with the family he so loved. Julie, I have known you since Topeka High and Charlie since Junior High days and it seems like yesterday. So many of our friends are now with the angels and I know there will be many open arms that care and will welcome Charlie in heaven. He has worked hard and been a blessing to so many. Special memories and love to you, Joanne Smelser

Joanne Smelser - March 02, 2005 at 12:14 PM

RH

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you in your loss. Aside from our personal loss, Topeka has lost a leader in community volunteerism, as well as an outstanding representative of both Topeka and the Topeka labor community.
Ron & Velma House

Ron & Velma House - March 02, 2005 at 11:22 AM

BF

“ I have worked for several years with the United Way and our corporate campaigns at Westar Energy. I am saddened to hear of Charlie's passing, but am sure that the good Lord has another plan for Charlie. Charlie was supportive when my mother in law was called to heaven and now we know that God only wants the best in Heaven. My deepest condolences to your family during this time. Just remember that Charlie didn't lose, but he has won the battle given to him. Heaven is his finish line.
Please take care.
Love - Beverly Figge, Westar Energy

Beverly Figge - March 02, 2005 at 10:45 AM

RD

“ I was very saddened when I heard the news from Kara George at the United Way yesterday about Charlie. Please accept my sincere condolences, and I look forward to seeing all the family at the viewing Thursday evening. You are all in my prayers.

Rick Douglas - March 02, 2005 at 08:47 AM