

When A Hero Comes Along...Remembering the Life & Death of Danny Nash

Written by Debbie Gregory
Tuesday, March 12, 2013



We all know that we are part of one human family, to which our hearts should never be closed, and on Sunday night, March 3, neighbor Danny Nash entered the burning home of Mr. & Mrs. Robert and Barbara Solomon, and Alice Crockarell, on Cave Hollow Road, in an attempt to rescue the family from the progressing flames. Sadly, all four of them died inside the residence, and I am on a mission to ensure the heroic story of this courageous man is heard.

The funeral home was packed with tearful eyes last week as a procession of mournful men and women came to say their farewells to the folks who lived in the home at 2380 and the selfless man who tried to save them.

Danny Nash and his wife, Sheila, live across the street from the Solomon family and according to Mrs. Nash her husband was the kind of man whose simplicity, spirituality and devotion drew others toward him.

“Danny always worried about other folks,” Sheila said, “and he would always reach out a helping hand to those in need. We had been to our daughter’s home, Amy and Terry Chandler, on that fateful Sunday night, and when we turned in a little after 7 p.m., we noticed Robert and Barbara’s house on fire.”

Shelia remembers Danny pulling their vehicle in the edge of Barbara’s driveway and telling her he was going in to get the family.

“I begged Danny to wait for the Lafayette Fire Department,” Sheila recalls, “but he said he had to get them out.”

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According to Sheila, undaunted, Danny went to the front door which was locked and then he went to the side carport door, kicked it open and went in. "I was standing in front of the Solomon's house screaming at the neighbors for help, when Tom Dawes and Jason Bartley came running outside. They both told their wives, Charlotte and Heather, to call 911," said Sheila. "I told them Danny had gone inside the burning house and I didn't know where he was at."

Mrs. Nash says that she found her cell phone about 10 minutes after 7 p.m. and called their daughter. "At 7:15 I called Danny's cell and it went straight to voice mail," Sheila said. "I remembering saying please pick up Danny, please, where are you, I can't find you. Where are you Danny, I love you."

"While I was standing in front of the burning home, I saw Danny through the big picture window and I saw the fire behind him," Sheila continued. "My husband appeared to have someone with him and then he turned left and went toward Alice's bedroom. That's the last time I saw Danny alive." The Lafayette Fire Department recovered all four victims from inside the residence.

"Danny was my soul mate," Sheila said smiling. "We actually met on a blind date in 1974 when I was 15-years-old. It was definitely love at first sight and we pledged our eternal commitment in matrimony when we exchanged vows on March 26, 1977."

"My life has changed forever, Debbie," Sheila told me. "We've never had a lot of money, but we would always try to help other people. Danny's selfless deeds were done from his heart and he will know eternal love, that I am sure of. His smile could brighten up a room."

The couple was blessed with one daughter, Amy Chandler, and on March 22, 2003, Danny Nash welcomed his only granddaughter, Kyra Chandler, into the world. "She was Danny's pride and joy," Sheila said as a single tear trickled down her cheek. "Not only did they share a special bond, they also shared the same birthday. Danny always had a story to tell about Kyra."

Amy said, "Daddy had such a big loving heart and if he took one step, Kyra would take ten to keep up with him. Her Pa hung the moon."

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Danny Nash, who was born on March 22, 1957, was a member of the Hilltop Missionary Baptist Church, where he was ordained as a deacon on June 23, 2006. He was a member of the Lafayette Masonic Lodge #543 of Free & Accepted Masons for over 25 years. He was the Master for two years and this year he was the Marshal of the lodge. Mr. Nash was a Shriner, serving as a Shriner Clown and he was the Road Captain of the Solomon Travelers.

"Danny loved motorcycles, horses, and his long hair," Sheila grinned. "He enjoyed going camping on the weekends with the family and he always had a smile on his face, along with a kind word to say."

Neighbor Charlotte Dawes says that Danny Nash was a wonderful man, as well as a good neighbor, husband, father and grandfather. "He was a family man, who adored his wife," Charlotte said, "and they were more like sweethearts than an old married couple."

"We were touched by love in so many ways," said Sheila, "and in the depths of my despair, I know the Lord will comfort and sustain me. He has never forsaken me and I know He will help me to carry on without my beloved husband. Although my heart is broken, I am proud of Danny and the sacrifice he made. I thank God for the years of happiness I shared with Danny and I pray there will be brighter days ahead for me."

The Lafayette Fire Department and Chief Keith Scruggs would like to pay tribute to Mr. Danny Nash, for his heroic efforts when he entered the burning home of the Solomon family. "It was a valiant effort on his part," said Chief Scruggs.

John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.