



Michael Danisi

March 22, 1928 - May 7, 2022

Beloved Dad, Beloved Husband:

Michael Danisi was born on March 22, 1928, in Brooklyn, NY to immigrant parents, Frank and Marguerite Danisi. He was the last living sibling of seven children.

Mike was proud of his big Italian family and he loved spending time with brothers, Frank, Philly, and Alex and sisters, Clara, Cecilia, and Maggie. He always said family is everything.

Gathering and love of family and food were shared every Sunday with their traditional afternoon Italian meal of Macaroni with gravy, meatballs, sausage, pork, and wine, coffee and desert.

As a young boy, Mike helped his father deliver blocks of refrigerator ice in the Brooklyn neighborhood where he grew up. He always ended his stories of his father the Ice Man with this: "If the customer could not pay the ten cents for the ice, he would give it to them anyway." The generosity of his father has passed down through the generations of Danisi's, a lesson his children are proud to have learned along with honesty, kindness towards others and loyalty to family.

Mike was generous to his family, friends, and neighbors. If you needed to store something on his land, he was always willing to share space and even hold a horse or two in the old days. He invited strangers into the house if lost on the road or in a fender bender. If a neighbor's horse was sick or hurt, he was there to help.

Mike's career as a Licensed Professional Jockey at 18 years old began following a suggestion from one of the teenage tough guys hanging out on the streets of Brooklyn, NY. While pointing out his short stature, the guy said, "Hey, Mikey, why don't you become a Jockey?"

He went home, packed his bags and headed for New Jersey, where he learned to be a jockey. Mike was fearless, never walking away from the challenge, and became a successful, well-known and respected Licensed Professional Jockey. His peers were the likes of Eddie Arcaro and Willie Shoemaker.

One tough guy's suggestion changed his life and this proved to be his passion, livelihood and legacy. We are so proud of him.

Mike's first success and love he would prove even more rewarding when he was introduced to Cecilia by Jockey Con Errico at the famed Riley's Lake House during the 1949 Saratoga Springs, NY racing meet.

Cecilia was a professional dancer and was working at Riley Lake House on the evening of their introduction.

Mike and Ceil married July 29, 1950 and drove to Saratoga following the wedding reception to work the racing meet, "The August Place to Be".

Young, married and proud, Mike traveled the country with his loving wife Ceil and children Michael and Victoria, working hard and rising at 3:30 a.m. to exercise horses.

He was our fierce protector. Mike was always a force to be reckoned with. He would travel for work and arrive in a new state, tasked with finding immediate lodging for his wife and babies. His success was an achievement not easily gained.

Mike loved to talk and Ceil was known as a very sweet caring woman. Friends were made easily and loved throughout the years, notably the Saratoga Clarkes, John and Peggy and their five children. This friendship lasted for decades and still continues with the new generation.

In the 1960's, Mike and Ceil purchased their beloved 1889 Open Gate Farm, in Huntington, NY, a surprise find with a For Sale sign barely visible in the dirt.

Mike later learned the owner was chasing potential buyers away daily. Determined and unfazed by the eccentric owner's abrupt demeanor, Mike shouted out to him, "I got plenty of money, I rode races for 18 years."

"Come on in, Eddie Arcaro," said the excited owner.

The sale was made, a pony named Casey arrived, and all the brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews would pile into their cars on weekends to come to the farm and ride Casey. The pony proved to be tough, too. Casey would repeatedly escape between the rails of the corral, without disturbing a rail, and Mike would chase him down Round Swamp Road.

Uncle Mikey would give riding lessons to nieces and nephews and Casey was trained as best as a Jockey could train a stubborn pony nicknamed Houdini.

Our Dad was animated when he taught us how to ride and firmly said, "Wrap your hand in Casey's mane along with the western saddle, hold your knees in tight and never show your fear". I was 10 years old and my brother was 14 years old. A life lesson learned well from the tough guy named Mike, who was used to hanging out on the streets of Brooklyn.

Mike was so proud of his huge extended family and loved sharing his new lifestyle on the two-acre farm. All were welcome for pony rides and tractor rides and even a motor cycle ride.

Retirement was a challenge for the hard-working Mike, first as a retired Jockey and second as a retired Pari-Mutuel clerk for the New York Racing Association. He loved his time spent at the race tracks, never too far from the horses and lifelong friends.

However, the challenge was addressed and Mike began to study American Indian history, watched old movies, and traveled to Bari, Italy and Taos, New Mexico. These were memorable trips, meeting family members and riding in a rodeo.

He was a frequent visitor at the Melville Library on Sweet Hollow Road. Mike enjoyed chatting with the friendly librarians and staff and told wonderful stories about his life as a jockey and about his family. He borrowed movies weekly.

One of his favorite statements was the surrender speech of Chief Joseph. It was handwritten on a yellow legal pad. Excerpt:

"Tell General Howard I know what is in his heart. What he told me before, I have in my heart. I am tired of fighting...Hear me, my Chiefs! I am tired...From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever." Chief Joseph, Nez Percee Indian Chief.

A unique man, his challenges met, a man well loved...A life well lived.

Mike fittingly died on Kentucky Derby Day, May 7, 2022. We will remember you spectacularly on that day.

"Riders up!"

Forever in our hearts, Ceil, Michael and Victoria

Cemetery Details

St. Patrick's Cemetery

45 Huntington Road
Huntington, NY 11743

Previous Events

Mass of Christian Burial

MAY 11. 9:45 AM (ET)

St. Patrick R.C. Church
400 West Main Street
Huntington, NY 11743

Burial

MAY 11 (ET)

St. Patrick's Cemetery
45 Huntington Road
Huntington, NY 11743

Tribute Wall

MD

“ With heavy hearts we remember you today... much love and appreciation, Michael and Victoria

Michael Danisi - May 07 at 10:34 AM

VD

“ “Riders Up”

Victoria Danisi - May 02 at 09:27 PM

MD

“ Happy Easter Daddy...daffodils on the farm...picked every Easter for us...love, Michael and Victoria

Michael Danisi - April 05 at 12:14 PM

MD

“ Happy Birthday in heaven, love Michael and Victoria

Michael Danisi - March 22 at 12:53 PM

VD

“ Happy St. Patrick's Day 🍀 love, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - March 17 at 08:05 PM

MD

“ We remembered you today on Christmas with love, Michael and Victoria

Michael Danisi - December 25, 2025 at 08:58 PM

VD

“ We miss you today on Thanksgiving, and remember all the turkey dinners together, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - November 27, 2025 at 07:53 PM

VD

“ I have sweet memory of you at the last celebration...we missed you today, love, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - September 13, 2025 at 08:51 PM

VD

“ ...we remember you drove to Saratoga on this special day, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - July 29, 2025 at 07:24 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - June 07, 2025 at 04:36 PM

VD

Horses, carnations, two hot dogs, and a large coke...and a race to remember! We will never forget it all, much love, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - June 07, 2025 at 04:45 PM

MD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Michael Danisi - May 07, 2025 at 10:18 AM

MD

*I miss you Dad...and I remember, your loving son
Michael*

Michael Danisi - May 07, 2025 at 10:24 AM

VD

“ We will remember you today with love, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - May 07, 2025 at 09:43 AM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - May 03, 2025 at 09:13 AM

VD

*I heard you in a very spiritual way...I will never forget...we remember
you especially on Kentucky Derby Day with love, Michael and Victoria*

Victoria Danisi - May 03, 2025 at 09:40 AM

VD

“ We miss you on Easter Sunday and always... love, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - April 20, 2025 at 01:22 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - March 22, 2025 at 06:36 PM

VD

“ We miss celebrating your 97th Birthday with you today...in our hearts forever, with much love, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - March 22, 2025 at 03:52 PM

VD

“ ...another year has passed and we miss you so much on this New Year's Day, love is forever, Michael and Victoria.

Victoria Danisi - January 01, 2025 at 07:51 PM

MD

“ ...we remember you always especially on this Holy Day, love, Michael and Victoria

Michael Danisi - December 25, 2024 at 02:51 PM

MD

“ Happy Thanksgiving...we are thankful for all you gave us and we remember you today and always...family is everything, Michael and Victoria

Michael Danisi - November 28, 2024 at 01:31 PM

MD

“ Dad, I missed you on my special day...our celebrations together remembered with love and cake, your loving son and daughter...

Michael Danisi - September 13, 2024 at 10:40 PM

MD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Michael Danisi - August 16, 2024 at 09:09 PM

MD

I miss you so much! Your loving son, Michael

Michael Danisi - August 16, 2024 at 09:10 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall

Victoria Danisi - August 16, 2024 at 08:18 PM

VD

Happy Anniversary! Love, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - August 16, 2024 at 08:20 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - August 16, 2024 at 08:17 PM

CM

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Chris Mills - July 04, 2024 at 02:01 PM

MD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Michael Danisi - June 16, 2024 at 09:12 PM

MD

I will remember you always, your loving son, Michael

Michael Danisi - June 16, 2024 at 09:14 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - June 16, 2024 at 11:13 AM

VD

*We are so proud of you!
Happy Father's Day in Heaven, with love and gratitude for all you did
for us, Michael and Victoria*

Victoria Danisi - June 16, 2024 at 11:16 AM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - May 07, 2024 at 09:51 AM

MD

*We sat with you on a rainy morning and said our final goodbyes...today
and always you remain in our hearts, Michael and Victoria*

Michael Danisi - May 07, 2024 at 10:02 AM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - May 04, 2024 at 07:47 PM

MD

I remember you Daddy...your loving son, Michael

Michael Danisi - May 04, 2024 at 07:53 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - May 04, 2024 at 07:22 PM

VD

In our hearts forever, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - May 04, 2024 at 07:39 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - May 04, 2024 at 09:46 AM

VD

...the life you loved...a fitting day to say goodbye...we will smile and remember you on this Kentucky Derby Day 2024, love, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - May 04, 2024 at 09:56 AM

MD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Michael Danisi - March 22, 2024 at 05:48 PM

MD

We left flowers and balloons for you on your Birthday, remembering you today Dad, Love, Michael

Michael Danisi - March 22, 2024 at 05:56 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - March 22, 2024 at 12:08 PM

VD

We will miss celebrating your 96th Birthday with you today. This is one of your favorite pictures taken in Taos, New Mexico. We love you forever, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - March 22, 2024 at 12:12 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - January 01, 2024 at 12:02 AM

VD

Happy New Year, we will remember you always...hold you in our hearts forever...love, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - January 01, 2024 at 12:03 AM

VD

“ *...Christmas morning long ago and so very early...two happy children will never forget the gift of love from you...Merry Christmas, Michael and Victoria*

Victoria Danisi - December 25, 2023 at 09:02 AM

VD

“ *...a hand made stained glass angel was set at the table in memory of you...we missed you this Thanksgiving, Michael and Victoria*

Victoria Danisi - November 23, 2023 at 07:46 PM

VD

“ *A special day so long ago...we heard you two drove up to Saratoga...in our hearts today and always, Michael and Victoria*

Victoria Danisi - July 29, 2023 at 07:49 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - June 18, 2023 at 08:51 AM

VD

A day to remember in the life of Jockey Mike Danisi...

Victoria Danisi - June 18, 2023 at 08:57 AM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - June 18, 2023 at 08:39 AM

VD

We will honor your memory today and always...our fierce protector...Happy Fathers Day...we love you so much, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - June 18, 2023 at 08:45 AM

MD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Michael Danisi - June 10, 2023 at 01:31 PM

MD

*"Riders Up" Dad...a long time ago...I miss you...your loving son,
Michael*

Michael Danisi - June 10, 2023 at 01:38 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - June 10, 2023 at 01:16 PM

VD

...the 155th running of the Belmont Stakes...the 50th Anniversary of Secretariat's spectacular 1973 Triple Crown win...we worked that memorable day in horse racing history...a lifetime of memories Daddy, we miss you, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - June 10, 2023 at 01:24 PM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - May 07, 2023 at 10:06 AM

VD

We are so proud of you Dad, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - May 07, 2023 at 10:10 AM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - May 07, 2023 at 09:44 AM

VD

*We will remember you always with pride and love, your children,
Michael and Victoria*

Victoria Danisi - May 07, 2023 at 09:56 AM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - May 06, 2023 at 09:06 AM

VD

The Run for the Roses...the final goodbye...we will remember you today..."Riders Up" With love, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - May 06, 2023 at 09:09 AM

VD

“ We will set a place at the table for you on this Easter Sunday...in loving memory, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - April 09, 2023 at 09:21 AM

PM

“ Hi uncle mike I want to wish you a Happy Easter 🐰 Victoria has dinner with us so she isn't alone and I get to talk to Michael we miss and love you all

paula mastracchio - April 08, 2023 at 04:31 PM

VD

“ We will hold you in our hearts forever...especially today on Palm Sunday. Your loving children, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - April 02, 2023 at 10:45 AM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - March 22, 2023 at 08:47 AM

PM

HAPPY BIRTHDAY 🎂 UNCLE MIKE 🎉 LOVE PAULA

paula mastracchio - March 22, 2023 at 10:42 AM

PM

We miss you very much ❤️ happy birthday from Paula and Joann and Tony and Gerard and Linda and Pauline and RON

paula mastracchio - March 22, 2023 at 10:46 AM

VD

We will miss celebrating your 95th Birthday with you today. However, your legacy lives on... We see your proud father is with you here in 1949...far left in this photograph... "Riders Up" We love you Dad, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - March 22, 2023 at 01:38 PM

MF

A wonderful tribute to a wonderful person! My parents, grandparents, and family had such great times in Saratoga!

All our love,

The Fueston & Clarke Families

Matt Fueston - March 30, 2023 at 11:08 AM

VD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria Danisi - January 01, 2023 at 03:59 PM

VD

Happy New Year, we will remember you always...hold you in our hearts forever...a memory candle is lit for you and Mom, love, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - January 01, 2023 at 04:09 PM

VD

“ *Merry Christmas Dad, I love and miss you so much, Victoria*

Victoria Danisi - December 25, 2022 at 10:27 AM

MD

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Michael Danisi - December 25, 2022 at 10:21 AM

MD

Merry Christmas, I miss you so much Mom and Dad...love, Michael

Michael Danisi - December 25, 2022 at 10:26 AM



“ *Michael Danisi*

November 27, 2022 at 05:33 PM

MD

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Michael Danisi - November 23, 2022 at 02:26 PM

MD

Mom and Dad, I love you so much and Happy Thanksgiving, your loving son, Michael

Michael Danisi - November 24, 2022 at 09:24 AM

PM

Happy Thanksgiving giving to my favorite aunt and uncle you

Will be missed today and everyday love you both love Paula and Ron
💕💕

paula mastracchio - November 24, 2022 at 10:46 AM

VI

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria - September 21, 2022 at 06:42 PM

VD

Saratoga Springs, NY...the horses, your legacy and passion, we will always remember...peace, Michael and Victoria

Victoria Danisi - November 24, 2022 at 09:33 AM

VI

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria - September 21, 2022 at 06:41 PM

VI

Jockey Mike Danisi (right) and Jockey Eddie Arcaro (left)...This photograph was displayed proudly by Mike in his family living room at Open Gate Farm.

Victoria - September 24, 2022 at 03:01 PM

VI

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria - September 19, 2022 at 06:01 PM

VD

Mike in the Winner's Circle for the first time...A glorious victory!

Victoria Danisi - November 23, 2022 at 06:28 PM

VI

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Victoria - September 19, 2022 at 06:00 PM

VI

One of Mike's favorite photographs

Victoria - September 19, 2022 at 06:03 PM

VI

“ *Our parent's Wedding Day!*



Victoria - September 19, 2022 at 01:45 PM

TE

“ *Sending all my love to Aunt Celia, Michael and Victoria. I have so many wonderful memories of growing up together, putting on a play of the Sound of Music in your living room, riding Casey, getting tractor rides, being in awe of the tremendous manure mountain that Uncle Mike made! The Danisi family is all together now, and I know they greeted him with open arms and love. Love you all, Teresa*



Teresa - May 10, 2022 at 02:16 PM

PM

“ Dear Uncle Mike thank you for being my uncle and my god father
😊 you will be missed and I love you love you always your favorite
niece and Goddaughter paula

Paula mastracchio - May 08, 2022 at 06:47 PM