



## Michael James Lyons

September 3, 1936 - February 9, 2026

Michael James Lyons, formerly of Rowayton, Connecticut; and now from Bonita Springs, Florida and Darien, Connecticut, died on Monday, February 9, 2026, in NCH Naples, Florida. He died of Cardiopulmonary arrest due to congestive heart failure at 89 years old. Mike Lyons was born in Meriden, Connecticut on September 3, 1936, the cherished only child of the late Helen (née Schafrick) and Lester James Lyons. He spent his early summers at Hotchkiss Grove, Connecticut, where he discovered his lifelong love of sun, beach, and water. Like his father, he was an excellent all-around athlete and taught many people to swim. Mike coached youth baseball in Rowayton, Connecticut. He served on the board of The Bonita Springs Center for the Arts in the 1990s. After his parents sold their shore cottage, they purchased a farm in Yalesville, Connecticut and started a restaurant named Lyonhurst. Later, they leased this restaurant, which became The Yankee Silversmith. With few close neighbors for playmates, Mike started to draw and paint

there, taught by his mother. Throughout his school years, Mike was a noted artist who won many awards for his drawings and paintings. In Spanish class, he was notorious for sketching Ted Williams, rather than studying.

Mike attended Meriden High School for three years, where he played varsity football and

baseball. After his family moved to Wallingford, Connecticut, he was graduated from Lyman

Hall High School in 1954. Mike studied at The University of Connecticut, where he was

recruited for football but declined to play because of his stature. When he tried to register for art

classes, these places had already been filled by football players.

He then studied painting and commercial art at The Paier College of Art in Hamden,

Connecticut, and later Ringling College in Sarasota, Florida. After completing his education

there, he realized that he'd never accomplish anything enjoying the Sarasota beaches, where

Barnum & Bailey acrobats often spontaneously erected human pyramids.

Advertising drew him

to New York City, where he started his "serious education," according to him.

Mike served with the United States Air Force Reserves from 1959-1965: one of only six

Connecticut men who successfully passed the admission test for acceptance into this rigorous

program. He served six months on active duty and then continued to fly monthly to put in his

hours as an Aircrew member. He also served for two weeks each summer for six years, using all

available vacation time, prior to his honorable discharge.

Mike began his professional career as an Art Director with Doner Harrison, Inc (1962-1968),

New York City, where he handled numerous print fashion accounts. In his next position with L.

W. Frohlich (1968-1970), New York City, he started to specialize in the pharmaceutical industry,

which formed the backbone of his career. He left there to join Sudler & Hennessey as Senior

Vice President/Executive Art Director, New York City (1970-1979).

In 1979, he and John Dorritie founded Dorritie & Lyons Inc. in New York City, handling only

Pfizer initially and later added Roerig; Wyeth Ayerst; Pharmacia; Amgen, among other clients.

After John Dorritie's sudden death in 1991, Mike took over as Chairman/CEO, in addition to

retaining the position of Creative Director. He sold his agency to Omnicom Inc. in 1994. The

agency merged and became known Lyons Lavey Nickel Swift Inc LLNS, then rebranded as

Lyonheart in 2007.

From 1965-2001, Mike Lyons won numerous art and creativity awards, among them: Clio

Awards; Aesculapius Awards; Triangle Awards. He was inducted into the Medical Advertising

Hall of Fame in 2002.

Mike competed in baseball; basketball; football; swimming; tennis; paddle tennis; and golf. He

earned many trophies over the years, attesting to his love of sports and winning. After retirement,

Mike was able to devote more time to painting, both oils and watercolor, as well as tennis and golf.

Those left to honor Michael J. Lyons's memory include his wife of 42 years, Emily Crom Lyons.

His children live in New York City: Karyn A. Lyons and son-in-law, Roberto Henrici; Michael P.

Lyons and daughter-in-law, Chloe Heeyoung Lyons. He also leaves behind two precious granddaughters. His first marriage to the former Sharon A. Hogan, ended in divorce.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a contribution to The Michael and Emily Lyons Endowed

Scholarship, Ringling College, Department of Advancement, 2700 North Tamiami Trail,

Sarasota, FL 34234; The Jimmy Fund at the [Jimmy Fund.org](http://www.JimmyFund.org); St. Jude Children's Research

Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105; or the charity of your choice.

Arrangements will be private

To sign his guest book or leave online condolences, please visit [www.ShikanyFuneralHome.com](http://www.ShikanyFuneralHome.com)

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home, Family Owned and Operated Since 1978.

# Tribute Wall

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“ Emily - I just heard at the Darien Men's Association that Mike passed away. betsy and I send our condolences and prayers for Mike and family. Mike was a very unique person - great conversationalists and interesting person. I also have lots of memories playing racquet sports and golf with Mike. We hope to see you when your back in CT.

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**Bob McGroarty** - March 04 at 03:02 PM



“ May the love of God surround you and your family during this difficult time,  
May you come to know that the love of God is with you always,

May your memories of Michael James Lyons, give you peace,  
comfort and strength...

Rest now in the arms of our Lord your mission on earth is complete.  
I thank you for your service to our Country and my Freedom.

You will not be forgotten...

My thoughts  
and prayers to the family of ....

US Air Force Veteran, Michael James Lyons, is "A True American Hero" God Bless†

† Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life  
for his friends. John 15:13 †

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**Cheryl Skinner, Tri-state Military Museum** - March 04 at 05:19 AM