

This Is What Foxwood Village Is All About (continued)

One evening I asked whether he wanted to go out for Chinese food. He was a little surprised because we were in the middle of a blizzard. But after a pause, he agreed. As we drove to the restaurant, wind blowing snow against the windshield, we came upon a stuck car. My husband got out to push. A second later, George, 90 years old, also jumped out to help. If I didn't have a heart attack then, I never will. I could only imagine explaining this scene to his children at his funeral. Luckily, all ended well.

Because of his trouble seeing, George often called me to reset his microwave when he hit a wrong button. That happened a lot, but it was no trouble. We'd also adjust his clocks twice a year. For some reason, he had four in his bedroom. Being his friend was never dull.

When George began to develop dementia, his family wanted him to move out of his house. He refused. The family hired a young Russian man to care for George at home. We would often see Al, the caregiver, rushing down the street looking for George, who took every chance to escape.

Eventually, in failing health, George entered a rehabilitation center in Southampton. We visited him. He died in 2009.

George loved St. Patrick's Day, his birthday. Each year, I'd bring him gifts of candy or a framed photo, and he'd take the shiny wrapping ribbon covered in shamrocks and hang it in his kitchen. This year, he would have turned 99. I miss him so.

This op-ed article was published
in the Sunday, March 15th
issue of *NEWSDAY*.

Written by Lyn Tyler, # 29.



Lyn Tyler & George Mellina