



## Bela Havasreti

May 22, 1936 - August 26, 2021

Béla Havasréti  
August 26, 2021

Béla Havasréti of St. Petersburg, FL., passed away Thursday, August 26, 2021 to join his loving wife, Emerencia Havasréti in heaven. He is survived by his daughter Star Bócsi, his son Béla Paul Havasréti and their spouses Zsolt Bócsi and Joy Havasréti.

Béla was born in Baja, Hungary, the youngest of four children. At the age of 10 he saw a piano for the very first time. Totally intrigued, he sat down and began to play by ear the tune he had just heard. He loved playing the piano and dreamed of playing in an orchestra.

In trade school he learned engine fitting and drafting. The school also had a band, so Béla learned to play the trumpet and taught himself to play the piano and the accordion.

Being an independent 18-year-old man and, having nothing but negative experiences under communism, in 1954 Bela made this statement in public; " I will not serve in the communist army of Hungary." After that, he knew that he would have to defect. Béla and two of his buddies set out through the icy, December fields. They snuck past armed, guarded towers and mine fields. Béla was brave and crossed over the mine fields first, asking his buddies to follow exactly in his foot-steps, so they could make it safely. Thanks to Bela's bravery they all crossed over to Austria and did not fall into Russian hands. Bela was given the choice of going to Australia, England, Canada, or the United States. He chose the United States, but had to wait two years in a refugee camp, because that is how long it took to get his Visa. During those years Bela learned German, played music and soccer, and worked as much as possible to save money for his future in the U.S.

Bela managed to save \$2,000 dollars before he boarded the ship to the US. Unfortunately, the money was stolen. He told the captain that his money was taken from his wallet and he asked if there was any work that he could do on board. He didn't want to arrive in the US empty handed, but he almost did, earning only \$7.00 during the trip. In the U.S. he

was welcomed by a Hungarian couple into their New Jersey home, along with eight other members of the New York- Hungarian soccer team. Three days later, he found a job. With cleverness and determination, he eventually started a business of his own with 8-10 employees, remodeling homes. Béla also put a band together and was playing music around the area.

While living in New Jersey, he met the girl who would become his loving wife of 61 years, Emerencia ("Enci"). Enci was only interested in books, when she met Béla. Handsome and charismatic Bela asked her to go out on a double date with her sister. Enci instinctively dropped her book and accepted the date. Eight months later they were married and within a year they welcomed their first child, Star. Three years after Star's birth their son Béla Jr was born. Béla was a wonderful, devoted father and he loved both of his kids very much.

Bela was advised to give up the dusty construction work and decided to move to Seattle. He found good opportunities for work and a better environment to raise the children. Béla went alone at first to set up a place to live and get a job. Enci sold everything, except the car and drove across the country with the kids. They were 10 and 7 at the time and both helped Enci navigate during the long drive.

Béla was hired by Ederer Crane company. He worked for them 21 years as a drafter/designer. He even designed cranes for NASA. At the age of 57 he completed his training for auto-cad and was hired by The Robbins Company, who designed and manufactured large-scale, high-tech, tunnel-boring/drilling machines, similar to those used to drill the tunnel between England and France.

Béla also put together another band in Seattle and two of his band members from New Jersey joined him. The saxophonist stayed in Seattle and accompanied Bela at various venues. The drummer couldn't take the Seattle rain and he returned to New Jersey. On occasion, Béla also had his son and daughter join the band.

In 1988, Enci announced that she would like to open her own restaurant and move to Florida, where her mother and sister were already residing. Enci had followed him to Seattle, so this time Béla followed her to Florida saying, "I would go with her to the ends of the world." Enci's restaurant ("NC's") was opened in Pinellas Park, Florida. Enci and her daughter, Star got things running and then Béla joined them from Seattle. Bela Jr stayed in their Seattle home. For 2 years they ran a very popular and successful business. Unfortunately, Enci was injured and couldn't tolerate the long hours on her feet. They sold the restaurant and moved back to Seattle. There, Béla was rehired at Robins Company where he retired.

Bela and Enci moved back to Florida in 2018 to be close to their daughter, Star. Bela knew

his son would soon retire and also move to Florida with his wife, Joy.

Béla loved St. Pete and enjoyed spending time with his daughter and her husband Zsolt. Bela Jr and his wife, moved to Port Orange and visited often. Béla liked swimming, socializing and he loved playing his piano for others.

Enci was diagnosed with Dementia and was moved to a care home. Bela visited her daily and often entertained Enci and the other residents with his piano music. People would gather and listen to him play, smiling and praising his amazing ability to play so beautifully. Béla was a charismatic, natural leader in life. He was determined and resourceful and never shied away from hard work. As Hungarians say, "He could make a living on an iceberg." Béla loved and provided for his family, always finding time to spend with each of them.

Enci and Béla were happily married for 61 years and they were very much in love. They were extremely, loving and supportive parents to their two children.

Bela was predeceased by his parents, siblings Istvan, Pal and Margaret, and just 18 days prior to his passing, his loving wife Enci.

He was an exceptional husband, father, friend and human being. He was fun, engaging, and a talented musician. People were drawn to him, because of his fun-loving nature, always joking and kidding around. We will always remember his big smile when he played the piano and his ability to make everyone laugh.

He is already painfully missed, but will live on in our hearts and memories forever. Even though his physical absence hurts, we know he is in a better place, at peace now with his loving wife Enci. We will always love him dearly.

To send flowers or a memorial gift to the family of Béla Havasréti please visit our Sympathy Store.

If you'd like, in lieu of or in addition to flowers, please make a donation to the Alzheimer's Association:

To send a check:

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION  
NATIONAL PROCESSING CENTER  
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WASHINGTON DC 20090-6011

To donate by phone:

24/7 HELPLINE 800-272-3900

To donate online:

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# Cemetery

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# Events

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**Memorial Park Cemetery** **OCT**

5750 49th Street North

St. Petersburg, FL, 33709

**16**

**Visitation**

01:30PM - 02:00PM

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Memorial Park Funeral Home & Crematory

5750 49th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL, US, 33709

**OCT**

**Memorial Service**

02:00PM

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**16**

Memorial Park Funeral Home & Crematory

5750 49th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL, US, 33709