



Mr. Denis A. Blais

November 18, 1921 - November 18, 2015

LEWISTON -Denis A. Blais, long time labor leader of the textile industry in Maine, passed away peacefully shortly after midnight on Wednesday, November 18th. It was his 94th birthday.

Denis was born the youngest of 12 children on November 18th, 1921 in a small town outside of Quebec, Canada. When he was 3, his father was ill and was advised to move to a milder climate, so the family relocated to Rhode Island. His father passed on a couple years later, and at 14 Denis quit school to work in the textile mill in order to support his infirm sister and non-English speaking mother.

From that point on, Denis led a life of compassion and generosity, always happiest when supporting or advocating for others. He served in 110th General Hospital Unit as a surgical technician in the US Army during World War II before enjoying a successful career with the Textile Workers of America. During his long career, he was state Manager and Director of the textile union, as well as Secretary for the CIO, and later Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO. He would later go on to become the New England Director and a Regional Vice President of the union.

Denis was also active in the Democratic Party in Maine, serving as an advisor to several well-known state politicians, including Frank Coffin and Ed Muskie, as well as being elected to the Executive Counsel to Gov. John Reed in 1965. Denis served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1952, '56, and '68. In 1968, he was also appointed the Political Action Director for the textile union and managed all union-related campaign activities for Muskie east of the Mississippi. In addition, his political service also included being appointed for a Governor's commission for postwar development while in Rhode Island, a committee on education beyond high school for Gov. Muskie, the Employment Security Commission, Advisory Counsel, and National Planning Association. Denis was an avid golfer and built and repaired golf clubs after retiring from the union. He put a pool in at his house, and delighted in the time that family and friends spent swimming there in the summer. From his work life to his personal life, Denis impacted many people with his kind and compassionate ways.

In his later years, Denis was fortunate and proud to be a great-grandfather of four, Julie and Sarah Mathieu, and Avery and Oliver Hamlin. He is also survived by a daughter,

Denise Mathieu of Lewiston, and two grandchildren, Ben Mathieu and his wife, Michelle, of Hooksett, NH, and Amy Hamlin and her husband, Patrick, of Wales, as well as the four great-grandchildren. His wife, Lorraine, passed away in 2001.

Online condolences and sharing of memories may be expressed at www.lynchbrothers.com

BLAIS died in Lewiston, November 18, 2015. Mr. Denis A. Blais age 94 years a resident of Lewiston.

An Open House to celebrate Denis's life will be held at 40 Shank St, in Lewiston, on Saturday, November 28th, from noon to 3 PM.

In lieu of flowers, please provide donations to St. Jude Children's Hospital in honor of Denis at www.stjude.org

The family was assisted by the PINETTE DILLINGHAM & LYNCH FUNERAL HOME of Lewiston.

Cemetery Details

Gracelawn Memorial Park

980 Turner Street
Auburn, ME 04210
jimlynch55@gmail.com

Previous Events

Open House

NOV 28. 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Decedent's Address
40 Shank Street
Lewiston, ME 04240

Tribute Wall

RM

“ *Denise & family, Sorry to hear of your dad passing away recently, my thoughts and prayers for you and your family.*
Bob McMahon



Robert McMahon - November 20, 2015 at 04:05 AM