



## Jerome C. "Jerry" Sullivan

November 20, 1926 - June 9, 2025

Jerome C. "Jerry" Sullivan, beloved brother, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and founder of Black Diamond Garden Centers, passed away peacefully on June 9, 2025, at the age of 98.

Born November 20, 1926, to Bernard and Helen Sullivan, Jerry was raised in Toledo alongside his siblings Dan, Elaine, and Tim. He was a proud graduate of Blessed Sacrament School and Central Catholic High School. After graduating in June 1944, Jerry enlisted in the U.S. Army and entered active duty upon turning 18 that November. He trained at Ohio University before shipping out to the Pacific, where he was at sea when World War II ended in August 1945. He was then diverted to Korea, where he served for two years as a typist in the occupation army.

Following his service, Jerry attended the University of Detroit and returned to Toledo, where he met the love of his life, Mary Barbara Riblet, in a local floral shop. They married in June 1950 and built a beautiful life together, raising five children and cherishing family trips - especially to New York City where he enjoyed Broadway shows and baseball games, a tradition he joyfully continued with his grandchildren.

In 1953, Jerry, along with his father, Bernard and brother, Dan, transformed the family's business from Black Diamond Coal Company into Black Diamond

Garden Center. Over the decades, the company blossomed under his leadership and vision, growing to three retail locations and two lawn service operations, celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2023.

Jerry had a lifelong passion for the game of golf and was a proud member of Sylvania Country Club for 66 years - a course where he first worked as a teenage caddie. His friendships, stories, and laughter enriched every round.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Barbara; his sons, Dan and Mark; his brother, Dan; sister, Elaine; and son-in-law, Mike Lyden.

Jerry is survived by his brother, Tim; loving daughters, Kate (Bob), Julie (Dave), and Emily (Edward); his niece, Jayne (Scott); his nephews, Mike, John, and Matt; his cherished 13 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren who brought him endless joy and pride. The Sullivans would also like to especially mention Shirley DeVictor and her family for their love and devotion to Jerry.

Jerry's legacy lives on in his family, in the business he built, and in the community he served with generosity, wisdom, and grace. He will be deeply missed.

The Sullivan family would like to express their gratitude to the staff at Oak Leaf Village for Jerry's excellent care during the last years of his life. They would also like to thank "Jerry's Crew" (they know who they are) for their visits and lunch outings with Jerry and to give a heartfelt shoutout to Linda Sullivan for her loving care to both Jerry and Barbara in their times of need.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations be made to First Tee Lake Erie (<https://firstteelakeerie.org/>).

All services will be private per Jerry's request. "A+ on a life well lived, Jerry."

# Tribute Wall

JS

“ I grew up going to Black Diamond on Tremainsville Road. When we purchased our first home in the Blessed Sacrament neighborhood we continued to visit Black Diamond as my children grew up. Mr. Sullivan was always there, solid, knowledgeable and helpful, his strong character evident in his bearing. Having been blessed with a wonderful father also, I extend my deepest sympathies to all of the Sullivans and dear friends .

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**Janet Campbell Spevak** - June 18, 2025 at 08:41 AM

DF

“ My father and jerry caddied together at SCC, many times hitch-hiking to get there from sylvania and bellevue.

*I followed my father's advice and caddied there as well for many years. "Jamra + Sullivan" was the most coveted double a caddy could have. Four hours of great golf, great stories , and great fun.*

*I'll miss you sir, hit 'em straight.*

*Dan Flahiff*

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**Dan Flahiff** - June 15, 2025 at 11:22 AM

DM

“ Kate, Julie, Emily and extended Sullivan family.....my deepest condolences to you all. It was always nice to see Jerry when I would pop in at Black Diamond ...Mr and Mrs Sullivan were friends with my parents.....The "Blessed Sacrament family " lol. So many of the neighborhood kids worked at BD over the years. Thinking of you all.  
*Diane Mason-Dooley*

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**Diane Mason-Dooley** - June 13, 2025 at 08:28 PM

J(

*Katie, Julie and Emily I'm so sorry about your Dad's passing. I'm also sorry to hear about your brother Dan passing too.*

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**Josie Nowicki (Guzzo)** - June 17, 2025 at 06:54 PM