



David Alan Fay

August 16, 1938 - August 30, 2025

David Alan Fay passed away in Tallahassee, Florida, on Saturday morning, August 30, 2025.

Born in Troy Mills, Iowa on August 16, 1938, to Irish, German, and English heritage parents,

Ethel Schaffer and David S. Fay, David – like his father – was a mathematician, graduating from

the University of Iowa with a degree in the subject. However, his passions spanned penning

poetry and short stories to painting and cartooning; and playing chess to solving puzzles, from

sudoku to complex computer conundrums. This last talent would become his primary work for about 50 years.

His prolific output of poems includes haikus, senryus, tankas, and free form, some of which he

shared under the username @dafay on “allpoetry.com”. He also leaves behind thousands of

drawings, including hundreds of his well-known suns, that captured his mood every Sunday as

he reflected on national and global events. He shared these colorful sun drawings primarily with

family and friends, as well as via social media. He was proud of a few published works, including several cartoons, poems, and a children's story he illustrated. Following in his father's footsteps, David initially taught high school math in Davenport, Iowa. Although he soon entered the fast-growing information technology field and made a full career out of this pivot, he returned twice more to the classroom, once as a guest speaker at Tallahassee's federal correction facility and again, after retirement, at a rural bilingual high school in Florida. Although his sharp mind and restlessness often did not fit well with the formal schooling of his childhood years, he took great joy in helping others reach "ah ha" moments in and out of the classroom, especially with complex math concepts. His many skills and interests survive through children and grandchildren, among whom count teachers, artists, writers, and computer scientists.

David's rapid rise in the digital mapping field in which he excelled—due in part to another passion, maps—involved numerous moves, beginning with one from Iowa to Colorado in late 1963. It was precipitated – he explained on many occasions – by disillusionment with his country after President Kennedy's assassination. Over the next decade, the family lived in Montana, Ohio, Maryland, Florida, Missouri, and Illinois. In 1974, his eagerness to travel in pursuit of new opportunities and live further afield, combined with a new job offer, led him to move with his family in 1975 to Caracas, Venezuela, where he would later live, off and on, for close to a decade.

In many respects, this move represented a turning point in his life. At home with the new culture and goaded on by the challenge of his new job, to digitally map the electrical grid system of the burgeoning country, he picked up Spanish quickly and felt at home with a new network of friends. Later, he remarried and started a new family. Even after his return to the U.S., eventually settling permanently in Tallahassee in the late 80s after a stint in Mississippi, he felt the strong pull of the Venezuelan culture, spoke Spanish at home, and often dreamed of returning to live there so that he could once again be surrounded by a culture he cherished.

David Alan Fay is survived by his wife, Virginia Moreno Fay, sons, David George Fay and Alan Antonio Fay, daughter, Sarah Fay Krom, as well as 16 grandchildren and 21 great grandchildren.

His daughters, Mary Clare Lewis and Susan Elizabeth Cunningham, as well as his grandchild, Rosie Lewis, his first wife, Mary Elizabeth Eichlin and his sister, Florence Cram preceded him in death.

His first published poem: "Seasonic Winds" is kept at the Iowa State University library

If I could but record the
Mystification of the Wind
Mingled with the promptings of
The disturbed heart,
Then I could truly say
I've written as poets write

Mid storm and calm –
Peace within their hearts.
There is within us that one desire
To drift when the coming of the Wind
Entices us to seek what each one fears,
Yet does not know.
Cold and bitter wind tempt not
For I am not to be tempted.
Strange I have felt life but once,
When up against the Wind
Which comes in March – wild and free,
Contemptuous of man and all that lives;
Nor will I ever know true life
Until I turn and walk
Abreast the wind – as vagrants do.
Kill not this desire within me
For it has murmured in my heart
Since birth, and shall remain
Till death, unless it is released
Is given life itself as I once was.
This is the Wind the poet knows
This is the wind, which embraces the Sea.
This is the Wind that continually grows
Tumultuous and hot inside of me.

Tribute Wall

TS

“ *It was my honor to have worked with David for 10 years in Tallahassee and benefit from his years of experience as well as his drive to find solutions to problems without let up. With deepest condolences to his wife and family,
Tony Schullo - T2C2 1996 to 2005*

Tony Schullo - January 31 at 12:09 PM