



Mr. Alexander W. "Al" Joseph

September 24, 1923 - September 25, 2018

UTICA - Mr. Alexander W. "Al" Joseph, a legendary area educator, age 95, passed away on Tuesday, September 25, 2018 at the Abraham House with his loving and devoted family by his side.

Born in Utica on September 24, 1923, Al passed the day after turning 95 years of age. He was the son of the late Louis and Elizabeth (Romanus) Joseph. He graduated from Utica Free Academy/Class of 1940. He then accepted a position at Griffiss Air Force Base, and upon the closing of his department, he decided to remain in Utica to be with his family. On June 4, 1949 he married Josephine Coria with whom he shared 61 years prior to her passing on March 3, 2011. They loved one another deeply and wholeheartedly; they were the best of friends and blessed with many happy years.

A self-starter, Al made the decision to return to school. He graduated from Utica College of Syracuse University where he received a Bachelor's degree, continued his post-graduate studies and earned a Master's degree, and was working toward a Doctorate degree. In 1964 he began his career in the Utica City School District as a 6th grade teacher at Kernan Elementary School, a tenure that traversed 30 years at the same location. He was a legend to generations of beloved students. Al's mentor and friend, the late Anthony Schepsis, pointed out the path for Al to follow for success in the field of education. Al acted on this advice and over the years of his career, his children and family heard accolades of their dad's teaching tactics, and they

were so proud of him. He was a passionate educator and was his students' greatest advocate. He retired from the classroom in 1994. Al served as Past-President of the Utica Teachers' Association (UTA), and along with other strong-willed teachers, especially the late Larry Custodero, he was instrumental in the creation of the Association.

Al was the go-to person in his family. The journey of his life began with his wonderful parents, 6 siblings, and a home setting that was a wholesome example that he followed the rest of his life. As the years rolled by, it was the love of his wife, Josephine, and the respect of his sons, Richard and Mark, that honored him, stood by his side, and inspired hope in his heart. He was an awesome 'Papa Al' to his granddaughters, and they credit him with stressing the importance of education, education, education! They were the loves of his life and they idolized him. They will never forget him, ... he will be an inspiration for them as they begin making their own lives and families.

Al was a talented tennis player and watched all the major tennis matches. He also enjoyed the game of racketball and could be seen on the courts at the Knights of Columbus and the YMCA. He was physically fit and never suffered a major illness. He lived a wonderful life, graced with longevity. In 1966, Al and Josephine, along with the boys, began their yearly summer ventures with Tony Schepsis and his family; they had many wonderful excursions across this country and memories that they hold close to their hearts. In 1987 they chose to purchase a camp in Lingerlong Pond in the town of Watson, and until most recent years they have truly enjoyed the serenity and peace that their beloved camp provided them. He was a member of the Masonic Fraternity/Mason Status and Past-President of Retired Utica Teachers' Association (RUTA). A parishioner of St. Louis Gonzaga Church, he proudly participated in the events of the parish, especially the Hafla's. He also served as an usher for many years.

Al had a witty humor delivered with a straight face, and he never understood why he generated so much laughter from people. He was a memorable character! He was "old-school", but as he aged he was more heartfelt in his

friendships, intense in his hospitality, and honored to be remembered. He was an avid reader of biographies and murder mysteries, and he kept current on politics as a strong Republican supporter. He was so proud of writing and publishing a book entitled Behaviors of Children which still stands proudly on the shelves of the Utica College and Syracuse University Libraries. His intelligence did not diminish as the years drew to a close, and he remained humble about his accomplishments and his grandchildren's achievements. He was a paragon of a patriarch and the epitome of a professional,... what he imparted will live on to posterity. His loved ones were aware of the three greatest passions in his life... his family, his Lebanese heritage, and his ability to be an educator.

Al is survived by his sons and their loved ones, Richard A. Joseph and Cordellia Urbanik, and Mark F. and Kristen Joseph; his grandchildren, Gianna Marie Joseph and her boyfriend Bryan Nichols, and Rachael Elizabeth Joseph. He shared a special closeness with his nieces and nephews, especially Betty Ann and Nazih Karrat, Sheila Simon, Sam and Lucille Simon Sr., Frank and Sue Russo, and Marybeth Russo; and his beloved sister-in-law, Congetta Russo. He was the "right-hand man" to the late Anthony Schepsis, the late Carmen Russo, the late Stan Struz, the late Jim Martin, and the late Al Candido; and three that remain, John Russo, Tony Poccia, and Lou Natale. He was predeceased by his siblings and their spouses, Ida and Abe Simon, Timothy J. and Josephine Williams, Rose M. and Dinty Millson, Joseph and Ruth Joseph, Nancy and Fred Capels, and William J. Williams; his brother-in-law, Carmen A. Russo Jr; and daughter-in-law, Carolyn Zyla.

The family extends their sincere thanks to Al's compassionate medical professionals, Dr. Jonathan Widgerson, the outstanding 2E staff at St. Elizabeth Medical Center for their wonderful care; longtime physician Dr. William Ryan; Social Worker Jennifer Lojewski who gave personal attention to the family's needs; Acacia Village personnel, with special mention of his dear friends and staff members, Amy, and the 2 Donnas; the Masonic Care

Community staff of the Troy Household where Al received loving care from Sheryl and Crystal; and the Abraham House for the hospitality and outstanding care provided by Gina and her staff.

Visitation will be held Friday from 4:00-7:00 at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave. The Prayer of Incense will be offered on Friday evening at the funeral home. Al's funeral service and Celebration of Life will commence on Saturday morning at 9:00 from the funeral home and at 10:00 at St. Louis Gonzaga Church where the Divine Liturgy of the Faithful Departed will be celebrated. Interment will take place in Calvary Cemetery at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, those wishing to express an act of kindness in Al's memory may make a donation to the Abraham House at www.theabrahamhouse.org for the care and dignity they provided Al during his final journey; envelopes will be available at the funeral home.

Cemetery Details

Calvary Cemetery

2407 Oneida Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 735-2727

Tribute Wall

 Brenda
Moore

“ *Brenda Moore lit a candle in memory of Mr. Alexander W. "Al" Joseph*



Brenda Moore - September 28, 2018 at 11:38 PM

 Brenda
Moore

“ *To the family of Mr. Joseph, I have fond memories of Mr. Joseph , he was my 6th grade teacher at Kernan school (1976). May he rest in eternal peace.*

Brenda Moore - September 28, 2018 at 11:36 PM

SA

“ *My Dear Mark, Richard & family
Me Joseph was always so wonderful to me. No matter where I saw him , he'd do out of his way to talk to me. He'll be dearly missed. A one of a kind man! He & his wife had two wonderful gentleman as sons.
Our sincerly sympathies & love,
Sylvia Pietrogiacono Amoroso
Maria Elena Pietrogiacono Heck*

sylvia amoroso - September 28, 2018 at 08:42 PM

JG

“ Dear Joseph Family,
I knew Al as a retired Utica teacher, and it was clear to me early on how dedicated he was to our craft and all of us in RUTA and all former students. May you know some peace during this difficult time. Janet Kakaty George

Jan George - September 28, 2018 at 07:54 AM

SB

“ to mark and family, so sorry for your loss may he rest in peace my thoughts and prayers are with you at this difficult time.

sal barbero - September 28, 2018 at 01:14 AM

LZ

“ Mark & Family,
So very sorry to hear of your dad's passing. He was always very kind to me and I remember him fondly. He was always a funny guy and I know Joe thought the world of him. I will be away this weekend and wanted you to know I am thinking of you during this difficult time
Linda Conde Zayas

Linda Zayas - September 27, 2018 at 04:56 PM

DS

“ Wonderful memories of our camping trips. I am sure our fathers are planting a garden of some sort. I will miss your dad and Papa. We always laughed and had a good time. A wonderful and loyal friend.
Debbie Schepsis

Debbie Schepsis - September 27, 2018 at 12:39 PM

BL

“ To the Joseph Family,
Al Joseph was one of the kindest and funniest men I have ever met. I've known him all my life and he was such a wonderful man. He will be missed. I have many memories of him and his wife in my parent's house over the years. God bless you all.

Barbara Carchedi Laible - September 27, 2018 at 08:18 AM

KS

“ Mark, Kristen, Gianna, and Rachel - Thinking of you at this very difficult time. My thoughts and prayers are with Grandpa, and all of your family. Love you. Mother Kay. Xoxoxo 🥰❤️🙏

Kathie Scalise - September 26, 2018 at 07:01 PM