



Mr. Donald Joseph Grabowski

June 3, 1929 - November 26, 2018

NEW JERSEY - Mr. Donald Joseph Grabowski, age 89, passed away on Monday, November 26, 2018 at the Jersey Shore University Medical Center. Born in Utica, he was the son of the late Joseph and Stella (Lesniak) Grabowski. He had one sister who passed before the age of one year. He grew up a city boy with a love of dairy farming. He had stories of clinging to the bare back of a horse breaking for the barn and distracting a raging bull from attacking an uncle trapped in a corral. He attended TR Proctor High School where he developed several close friendships that lasted a lifetime. In his senior year he was class president.

His college career at Colgate was interrupted by 2 years of service in the army in the late 1940s. He was stationed in the occupation forces in Japan where he developed a deep appreciation for the Japanese people and their culture. While there, he felt he was treated with the utmost respect and developed a taste for sukiyaki. His grandchildren often asked him questions about his time in Japan and he was interviewed more than once for various school and college projects.

He returned home in 1950 to marry Lucille N. Cerminaro, who survives him. Though he may have had a taste for sukiyaki, he was treated to delicious Polish, Italian, and American gourmet cuisine by his expert chef wife Lucille. As far as he was concerned the only reason to go to a restaurant was to give Lucille a break from the kitchen. He graduated from Colgate University with a degree in economics. He spent most of his career stationed in Utica, working

for the New York State Department of Commerce. He was an active member of the Kiwanis Club, serving one year as president. The diverse networking membership of the Kiwanis Club strengthened the social fabric of Utica providing free activities to the city's youth including baseball and ski lessons. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus.

Outgoing and friendly, he easily connected with people. To say that he was kind is an understatement. He saw the good in people and focused on how he could impact those around him positively. Spending time with him was good for the soul; one always left his presence feeling lighter and more cheery. He was kind, calm, quick-witted, good-humored, intelligent, well-read, and approached life with a smile and a can-do attitude. He instilled the thought that all people, all genders were equal and should be treated with dignity. He was the father to two children Sandra and Wayne. He lovingly and gently participated in their childhood sharing his love of knowledge and sports participation. Upon retiring he and Lucille moved to Clearwater where they enjoyed the warm winters and the outdoors, often hosting their kids and grandkids during holidays and spring breaks. He was an avid softball player and published the softball league's newspaper as if he were writing for the majors. He also loved attending his grandchildren's sporting events... he was their biggest fan.

As Dad aged and slowed down, he remained interested in current affairs and events. He was always more interested in your opinion than convincing you of his. He was interested in his grandson, Tim, and three granddaughters, Ann, Lindsay, and Carly, preferring to talk about them and their lives rather than dwelling on his aches and pains. He is survived by his wife Lucille, two children, Sandra and Wayne M. Grabowski and his wife, Tracey Grabowski Moreno. He also leaves his four grandchildren, Tim Fisher and wife Rebecca, Anne Grabowski Moore and husband David Moore, Lindsay Grabowski Hyde and husband Arthur Hyde, and Carly Grabowski Roddy and husband Simon Roddy. He was the proud great-grand-father of three great-grandsons and five great-granddaughters. In addition, he leaves his in-laws, Russell Cerminaro,

and Frank and Janet Cerminaro. He was predeceased by his brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Caesar "Chet" and Kay Cerminaro, Michael Cerminaro, and Nancy Cerminaro.

Visitation will be held on Friday evening from 6:00-8:00 at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave. Memorial contributions in his honor may be considered to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital online at <https://www.stjude.org> or the Colgate University Fund online at <https://alumni.colgate.edu/makeagift>; envelopes will be available at the funeral home. Donald's funeral service and Celebration of Life will commence on Saturday morning at 10:00 at St. John the Evangelist Church where his Mass of Christian Burial will be offered by Rev. Kevin Bunger. Committal will take place at Resurrection Chapel Mausoleum at Holy Trinity Cemetery with Military Honors conferred.

Cemetery Details

Resurrection Chapel Mausoleum

Champlin Ave.
Utica, NY 13501

Previous Events

Funeral Service

DEC 1. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. John the Evangelist Church
60 Oxford Road
New Hartford, NY 13413
(315) 732-8521

Tribute Wall

PM

“ So sorry to hear of Don's passing. I worked with him when I worked for the "Commerce Department" as well. More importantly, he was a great guy who enjoyed life to the fullest. He and my Mom were classmates at TR Proctor High School and she passed away at Masonic Home November 11th. They are all in heaven celebrating old Proctor stories I would hope and dream. God bless his family
Peter Mannella
Rensselaer NY

Peter Mannella - November 30, 2018 at 11:57 AM



“ *Love's Journey* was purchased for the family of
Mr. Donald Joseph Grabowski.



November 29, 2018 at 05:12 PM

MN

“ Uncle Don.....A special person and loving Uncle...

Uncle Don truly was a special and loving Uncle/person in so many ways. His smiling, optimistic, calming and practical attitude, was always present and forth coming. He simply was a joy to be and converse with.

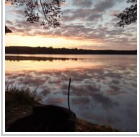
While my childhood and adult memories are just to numerous to mention here....and they are ALL wonderful memories of Uncle Don and Aunt Lucille....It's funny that the times that pop up in my mind first are the simple pleasures of going outside and playing catch, or throwing the football with Uncle Don and everyone, on a small street called Smith Place.....Ah yes! The infamous Smith Place!

While I tried to follow in the footsteps of my Uncles whom were all outstanding athletes, Uncle Don knew that I loved to pitch when I was in Little League and High School, and would always show and share with me his tips on throwing a curve ball or putting a little "extra" on the ball.

You rest in peace Uncle Don....And say hello to all our loved ones.

"Big" Mike

Michael "Big Mike" Cerminaro, nephew - November 29, 2018 at 06:20 AM



“ *To the Grabowski Family -*

I was sorry to hear of Don's passing and would be there in person to express my condolences if I wasn't in Louisiana. I worked with Don at the Department of Commerce for many years - he in Utica and I in Albany. He was always a positive, responsive person who did his best not only for us but for the people of the Mohawk Valley.

These transitions are always difficult, but I know the happy memories of Don will fill the void.

Bill Graper

Bill Graper - November 28, 2018 at 10:12 PM

AM

“ *3 files added to the album Memories Album*



Anne Moore - November 28, 2018 at 09:27 AM

AM

“ 8 files added to the album Memories Album



Anne Moore - November 28, 2018 at 08:50 AM