



John Simonetti

November 24, 1920 - April 19, 2008

Mr. John Simonetti, age 87, formerly of 1124 Tilden Ave., Utica, went to his eternal home on Saturday, April 19, 2008, just in time for spring planting in Heaven. John was currently residing in the Heritage Healthcare Center since October 2007.

Born in the town of Cortale, province of Catanzaro in the Calabria region of Italy on November 24, 1920, John was the son of the late Antonio and Margherita (Falbo) Simonetta. He was raised and educated in Italy, immigrating to the United States when he was 16 years old. On June 23, 1945 at St. Mary of Mt. Carmel Church he married the former Nellie "Nettie" M. Sansone with whom he shared 41 years in a loving union until her passing on November 6, 1986.

John departed from Italy and arrived at Ellis Island in New York City in 1937, where he met his father for the first time. He settled in Utica on Thursday, and being a hard-working and ambitious man, he started work the next Monday. After working there for a short time, John suffered a tragic accident that severed his right hand and deeply cut his left arm, compromising that as well. Being independent and self-sufficient was paramount to him, and as a result of his physical challenge, he invented many gadgets to help him with his everyday life skills. In recent years, as his eyesight deteriorated due to macular degeneration, he again tapped into his creativity to make more gadgets and tools to make his life easier. Many of those gadgets are still used today; a little more refined, they're now known as adaptive technology.

During his working life, John was employed by the Foster Paper Company of Utica for 27 years. He also held a position in the maintenance department of the Oneida National Bank, retiring in 1986. He was self-taught in all areas of home maintenance and repair. His only area of weakness was painting. He would try to stretch the paint as far as he could! John could paint the Empire State Building with one gallon of paint and probably have some left over. Among his other interests, he was an avid gardener and took pride in his flowers and vegetable harvest. In the late summer he would supply the neighborhood with garlic, tomatoes, cucumbers, pole beans, Swiss chard, and zucchini. Good-natured and full of life, John valued his memberships in the Sons of Italy Lodge, the Moose Lodge, and the East Utica Senior Center, where he and Nettie enjoyed socializing and dancing with their friends. John returned to his birthplace in Italy once in 27 years. He was a parishioner of St. Anthony of Padua Church.

John is survived by his daughter, Marguerite Kershaw, a teacher at the Midstate Correctional Facility, and son-in-law Chuck Kershaw, a retired Rome City School District guidance counselor. Survivors also include his sister-in-law, Theresa Sansone; and his brother-in-law, Paul Raymond, both of Utica; several nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins, godchildren, and his dear friends, Tony and Esther Marchetta. After emigrating from Italy, most of John's family settled in Buffalo, NY and still reside there today; survivors include cousins Santina Briatico, and Angela Falbo and their families. John leaves a special friend, Stella Penree, and her family, with special mention of Joan Lalliar (who he thought of as a daughter), Joseph Penree and family, and "Punky" Penree and family. Although never blessed with grandchildren, John is survived by his grand-dog Buster, and grand-bird, Freckles. He was predeceased by his older sister, Bettina, and his twin sister, Giulia, both of Italy. John was the younger of the twins because, as he would always say, "I was a gentleman – I let her go first". He was also preceded in death by his aunt, Santa Falbo; his cousins, Joseph Falbo and Bettina Ferraina; and his grand-dog, Sandy.

The family wishes to thank Dr. Samuel Rubino and his office staff for their kindness during the past years, and most recently to Dr. Raouf Kodsy for his care and compassion.

Visitation will be held Wednesday from 4:00-7:00 at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave. For those wishing to do so, please consider memorial donations in Mr. Simonetti's honor to the Central Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired or the Rescue Mission of Utica; envelopes will be available at the funeral home. John's funeral service will commence on Thursday morning at 8:00 from the funeral home and at 9:00 at St. Anthony of Padua Church where his Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated. Interment will take place at Calvary Cemetery.

Tribute Wall



“ *"Papa John" will be truly missed. His loss of limb and sight didn't keep him from living life to the fullest. It was always fun to watch the twinkle in his eyes as he would play with the kids during the holidays and special occasions. He was like a great-grandfather to them and we were all blessed in having him in our lives.##imported-begin##Chad, Lou-Ellen, Sydney and Madison Lallier##imported-end##*

April 24, 2008 at 11:58 AM



“ *Your dad and Mom lived next door to us on Tilden Ave. for years. I will always remember him as a very gentle and kind man.##imported-begin##Susan (Mattia)Dembowski##imported-end##*

April 23, 2008 at 08:08 AM



“ *Marguerite and Chuck,
Please accept our deepest sympathy. When I think of your dad, I only think of all the times he sat with us in the kitchen for coffee and we reminisced and laughed.....What a blessing it was to have your dad in our lives....He would notice our car and knew we were visiting my mom and always made sure he came to see us. We will miss him - I can remember the times he would sit out back in the summer with my dad....they would discuss their tomato plants and the "Old Days" I hope they are together now and will pray for us.
Love,
Joe, Michele and Joey##imported-begin##Michele and Joe McDermott##imported-end##*

April 21, 2008 at 02:51 PM