



Joseph G. "Zu Zu" Karam

September 26, 1936 - November 16, 2008

Mr. Joseph G. "Zu Zu" Karam, age 72, of New Hartford, passed away in the comfort of his home on Sunday, November 16, 2008.

Born in Utica on September 26, 1936, Joe was the son of the late Gabriel Joseph and Lila Mandour Karam. Raised and educated in Utica, he attended Roosevelt Elementary School and was a 1953 graduate of T. R. Proctor High School. A brilliant student, Joe entered Cornell University at the age of 16. He graduated with a degree in Economics and later attended Syracuse University where he earned his Masters Degree in Business Administration.

Joe had a long and distinguished career in government contract negotiation, public finance and public policy. Joe's early career involved international contracts and long periods overseas. Inevitably, Joe no longer could stay away from his beloved Utica. Once back home, Joe's career blossomed at RDC, Griffiss Air Force Base. Joe demonstrated his dedication to public service by serving as Chief of Staff for Mayor Dominick Assaro, as Secretary of the Board of Contract and Supply, as Chairman of the Utica Planning Board and as a director of the Municipal Housing Authority. Joe also was a member of the United Cerebral Palsy Board of Directors. Never complacent, Joe co-authored "What Utica Needs" - a visionary blueprint for local public policy. Joe's ideals propelled him to gain a position on Bobby Kennedy's Presidential campaign staff and, upon Bobby's assassination, Joe was invited to ride on the funeral train with the Kennedy family. Joe was employed at the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District for a number of years and ended his

career after 26 years of employment with Mohawk Valley EDGE and the Oneida County Industrial Development Agency.

A renaissance man, Joe was a singer, actor and director. Many remember Joe as Nicely Nicely in the Players' production of Guys & Dolls, singing "Sit Down, You're Rocking the Boat" and stealing the show. Joe served the Players of Utica in every

possible capacity from backstage to the Board of Directors. Joe also was a member of B Sharp and a 40 year member of the Historic St. John's Church choir. Joe was a founding member of the Mohawk Valley Chamber of Commerce Incubator advisory board. He also was a founder of the Proctor Boys Group and a member of the Cornell Alumni Association.

Joe is survived by a group of cousins and their children who comprise Joe's immediate family: Gayle and Paul Kolb, Dr. Tony and Carol Mandour, and J.K. and Hedy Hage; Jeffrey and Melissa Kolb, Lindsey Kolb, Lori and Andy Benedict, Kristy Mandour, Heather Hage, Gabriel Joseph Hage and Hannah Hage. Joe has a host of other beloved cousins and devoted friends, including Joe's guardian angels, Paul Mazloom and Joseph "Buddy" Gigliotti. Joe was predeceased by his cherished aunt, Marie "Mimi" Mandour, who was a second mother to Joe.

The family is grateful to the nurses and staff of the Dialysis Unit at the Faxton-St. Luke's Healthcare Center, Dr. Charles Eldredge, and Dr. Ira Tisch.

A Gathering and Celebration of Joe's life will be held on Friday from 4:00-8:00 at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc. 932 South St. corner of Hammond Ave. By family request, please omit floral offerings. For those wishing to do so, please consider memorial donations in Joe's honor to the Players Theatre of Utica; to the Gabriel, Joseph and Lila Mandour Karam Fund of the Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties, or to the Dialysis Unit of Faxton-St. Luke's Healthcare Center. Envelopes will be available at the funeral home. Relatives and friends respectfully are invited to attend Joe's funeral service which will commence on Saturday morning at 10:00 at St. Louis Gonzaga Church where the Divine Liturgy of the Faithful Departed will be celebrated by

Father Bassam Saade, Pastor. Entombment will follow in Calvary Mausoleum.

Previous Events

Service

NOV **22**. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Louis Gonzaga Church
520 Rutger Street
Utica, NY

Tribute Wall



“ Eannace Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Joseph G. "Zu Zu" Karam



Eannace Funeral Home, Inc. - November 16, 2008 at 12:00 AM



“ I am very saddened to hear of Joe's passing. I just saw him on Oct 19th when I sang at the B Sharp Scholarship Concert in memory of my brother Nicholas S. Priore, Esq. who passed on Dec 20, 2007. Joe was always a man that put action behind his words and kept family and community in the forefront of his existence. We will miss him. I send my deepest condolences to all that held him especially close.##imported-begin##Leonarda Priore##imported-end##

November 22, 2008 at 10:10 AM



“ Joe was part of my life for three generations. He was friends with my Dad Irving from the start of the Assaro Administration. He, in fact, attended my Bar Mitzvah. Later, I become friends with him during my tenure with the Pawlinga Administration....sharing a few cocktails regularly at the Sheraton with Joe, Tom Bach, Mike Housekenect, Tony Scalzo and many other exceptional civic leaders. Later in life, he was my father-in-law for a few years, and loving grandfather to my son's Joshua and Noah. I loved Joe and miss him dearly.##imported-begin##Jay L. Bloom##imported-end##

November 22, 2008 at 09:21 AM



“ I paid my respects this evening at the Eannance Funeral Home but I had to add my name to the Guest Book here to remind all that Joe Karama was a Manf or All Seasons. I remind you of the tremendous job as part of the acting troupe who performed at Grimaldi's Ristorante in the Ben DiOriol production of Ut ica in the late 1950's. What a night that was! What a great show. Joe, time to do your soft shoe as you exit right.##imported-begin##Louis Barile##imported-end##

November 21, 2008 at 09:55 PM



“ We had hoped to be able to come to pay our respects but circumstances prevented that from happening. Please know that we offer our condolences and will remember Joe fondly and the special bond and love he shared with our Grandmother Mary Abounader. May God bless Joe and keep him in his care always.##imported-begin##Joyce & Mike Duignan##imported-end##

November 21, 2008 at 07:27 PM



“ Joe ,I will miss the sound of you laughing,the smile on your face,and your quick witt at Karam's Bakery on Saturdays.I will also miss your kind words and compliments too. Denise Saunders###imported-begin###DeniseSaunders###imported-end##

November 21, 2008 at 04:14 PM



“ Many times growing up, I heard the name Joe Karam spoken by my father Joe and my Uncle Rudy, always mentioned with respect and great fondness. It wasn't however until last year when I met Joe, that I fully understood how absolutely delightful he was. His life was defined by so much more than his illness and I felt truly blessed to spend time in conversation with him. I will miss Joe and forever be so happy that we met. Some people enrich your life just by being who they are, so it was with Joe.###imported-begin###Patricia Scalise###imported-end##

November 20, 2008 at 11:45 AM



“ It is with great sadness that the National Kidney Foundation of CNY expresses our sympathay to the family, friends and the community Joe so loved.###imported-begin###Laura Squadrito###imported-end##

November 20, 2008 at 11:15 AM



“ We'll never forget our closest childhood buddy who always yelled out "Twins" from our driveway on Plymouth Place. He didn't call out our names but never mixed us up. We grew up as the 3 Musketeers and now the main Musketeer has moved on to higher heights. One day we'll join this forever friend forever! We love ya Joe, the Twins###imported-begin###Bob and Dick Chancia###imported-end##

November 20, 2008 at 11:05 AM



“ I am sad to learn about the loss of Joe. My thoughts and prayers are with his family. My favorite times with Joe include when I was a young girl he joined my family and me on day trips to New York City. We had fun and memorable times on the trips. My parents always enjoyed his company and were grateful for his kind friendship. Warmest, Tracy###imported-begin###Tracy Tolles Rueckert###imported-end##

November 20, 2008 at 08:49 AM



“ Rest in peace Joe, from your friend and neighbor.

Jean LaMunion
Wedgewood Apts.###imported-begin###Jean LaMunion###imported-end##

November 20, 2008 at 12:06 AM



“ Joe will always be remembered as family with fond memories and love,
Anna A. Cafarelli###imported-begin###Anna Abounader Cafarelli###imported-end##

November 19, 2008 at 08:29 PM



“ I first met Joe in 1964 when he came to a play rehearsal of the Upstagers. Joe was a devoted thesbian and loved the theatre. He attended every play the Upstagers did (about 40) in ten years. He was also very committed to the Players Theatre and served on the board when I did also. He was a wonderful man. When I think of Joe I remember the laughter that he brought to everyone. He truly had a gift! In these later years I would see Joe at Centrex getting his blood tested as did I. He was always upbeat and courteous when the situation there was a little tense as we waited for over an hour at times. Joe gave so much in life. He did this not only to his family but also to others. He was always willing to help out. Yes. I will miss Joe but I know that he is in a great place and probably organizing people to put on a show. No doubt, a musical. I believe he lived life to the fullest and enjoyed every moment of it. I feel sorry for his family as it is always painful to say goodbye to someone you love, but Joe's love is in your hearts, I'm sure. That will never be gone. My thoughts and prayers are with you all., Cathy Lochner

November 18, 2008 at 11:00 AM



“ Our true friend. Joe was the eternal optimist who lived life to its fullest untill the end. We'll miss you this winter in Florida.

November 17, 2008 at 09:24 AM



“ I am shocked and very saddened by Joe's untimely passing. He was one of a kind...a champion for Utica and tireless advocate for the area through the Oneida County IDA. We will miss him very, very much.

November 17, 2008 at 08:18 AM