



Mr. Nicholas J. "Nick" LaBella, Retired UPD Captain

January 23, 1937 - October 22, 2019

UTICA - Mr. Nicholas J. "Nick" LaBella, Retired UPD Captain, age 82, went home to heaven, after a courageous battle, on Tuesday, October 22, 2019 with his supportive and loving family by his side.

Born in Utica on January 23, 1937, Nicholas was the son of the late Joseph N. and Helen R. (Sroka) LaBella. He was a graduate of T.R. Proctor High School/Class of 1955 and was one of the "Proctor Boys". A proud veteran of the United States Army, Nick honorably served his country stateside followed by 6 years of service as a United States Army Reservist. On September 30, 1961 he married the former Terri R. Flihan with whom he celebrated 58 years in a marriage of their era; Nick adored her and she has been a respectful and committed wife. Their well-being as a couple was a priority for each of them. Nicholas began his career with the Utica Police Department on December 16, 1959, retiring as Captain and Acting Deputy Chief on November 14, 1992 after a 33-year career of which he was so proud. His determination and integrity set the bar in carrying out his responsibility in overseeing compliance with procedures and regulations, and maintaining a rapport with civic leaders and citizens to promote neighborhood safety and community programs. He was fair and honest as a mentor to his squads and divisions, and highly regarded the good in his co-workers. After his official retirement, being the man he was, Nick returned to the workforce at MVCC, then as Director of Security at Utica College of Syracuse University, and lastly at the Public Defender's Office. Throughout his career he was on the ground level of many

state policing initiatives, community programs involving area youth, and police liaison affairs on many levels. He received numerous awards and honors throughout his career for his innate ability to blend his professionalism and civic commitments.

A kindhearted, loving man, Nick was not a passive patriarch. He actively planned family vacations, a project that was paramount every year.

Destinations included Cape May, Lake George, and the Boston area. He searched for the best restaurants and the notable historical sites at each of their destinations. They laughed, learned, and longed to stay longer, but as soon as they returned home, Nick would begin thinking about next year's trip.

His children were respectful and loving to him, and he was so proud of their accomplishments, altruistic good works, and the fine adults they became.

He had a fancy for antique automobiles, frequently attending local car shows.

The Saratoga Race Track season was special to him since he was such a savvy handicapper. His treks to the Buffalo Bills training camp came with VIP treatment because he was accompanied by Father Joe Salerno and the respect for his clerical collar. Nick was fond of opera at the Glimmerglass Festival in Cooperstown, being a member of the Syracuse dinner club, and spending time with cousins on their annual winery tours. He also had a flair for holiday decorations, and their home was always decked to the hilt. He enjoyed creative projects that were treasured by those who received them. He was good at conversation, giving advice, and bestowing his love for the benefit of lifting other's lives in troubled times. He also held a humorous side of his heart that many enjoyed and will remember. He was a founding member of the "Car 100 Club", an organization whose mission is to support area community needs. As recent as this past Tuesday, Nick was authoring a book that is geared toward grammar school children, using "Car 100" as the animated protagonist bringing awareness of public safety to the readers. His family will perpetuate this dream and bring the book to fruition. He was a parishioner of St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish. Nick leaves his wife a ton of love, and to his children, the legacy of a life that a man should

leave,... do your best, and solve life's problems.

Nick is survived by his cherished wife, Terri; his daughter, Gina M. LaBella; his son and daughter-in-law, Joseph N. and Mary LaBella; and his grand-dog "Luigi", a small canine with a big attitude! Nick was blessed to have been a mentor and father figure to Joe Lisi, and Clay Stephens. He also leaves his nieces, nephews, especially acknowledging Nicholas A. LaBella, Albert and Sharon LaBella, Jackie Romano, and Timmy Flihan; great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins, in-laws, Michael and Teresa Flihan, and Madeline Flihan; and an entourage of friends in whom he found trust, with special mention of Mike Taurisano, Fred Bruzzese, Ronnie Fontaine, Paul Lange, Fred Cook, Peter Bereskin, Al Candido, Frank Noti, and Ed Abounader; and his wonderful neighbors, including Joe Fletcher. He was predeceased by his older sister, Rosemary LaBella. His life was made more complete when accompanied by his mother Helen, and his mother-in-law Mary, who went everywhere together. He is now reunited with them, and keeping up with them! He was also preceded by his in-laws, John and Norma Flihan, and Robert Flihan.

The family is grateful to Dr. Charles Eldredge, Dr. Jeffrey Sekula, and Dr. Fred Talarico for their medical expertise; the staff at the Grand in Ilion/2nd Floor Rehab Unit; Utica Fire Department EMTs, Dialysis Unit personnel at the Masonic Home, and the ER staff at MVHS at St. Luke's Healthcare, for all the care and compassion rendered to Nick. During his illness, he met so many wonderful caregivers. Appreciation is extended to Fr. James Cesta and Fr. Joe Salerno for their blessings and spiritual solace.

Visitation will be held Monday from 3:00-7:00 at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave. Nick's funeral service and Celebration of Life will commence on Tuesday morning at 11:00 at St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish where his Mass of Christian Burial will be offered. By family request please omit floral offerings. Expressions of sympathy in the form of donations may be directed to the Car 100 Club, P.O. Box 4001, Utica, NY 13504; envelopes will be available at the funeral home.

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **28**. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Eannace Funeral Home, Inc.
932 South Street
corner of Hammond Ave.
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 724-6714
eannacefh@roadrunner.com
<https://www.eannacefuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

OCT **29**. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish
648 Jay Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 735-1482
<https://www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com/>

Tribute Wall

FR

“ I have many fond memories of Nick who was a man of deep faith and integrity who respected the dignity of everyone. He was a man of compassion and kindness and made a wonderful contribution to making our world a more loving place.

Father John Rose, Syracuse

Father John Rose - November 29, 2019 at 10:17 AM

NB

“ My sincere condolences for Terri, Gina and Joe may you find peace knowing that he has his place in heaven

Nikki Branck - October 31, 2019 at 01:19 PM

VS

“ Dear Terri,
I am deeply saddened by the loss of your husband. I remember Nick as extremely kind and having so much integrity. I'm so blessed to have known him. I'm sure your loving memories of him will ease your pain during this difficult time.

*Fondly,
Victoria (Vicky) Yourno Schlee*

victoria schlee - October 29, 2019 at 01:39 PM

FS

“ Francine Spinelli lit a candle in memory of Mr. Nicholas J. "Nick" LaBella, Retired UPD Captain



francine spinelli - October 29, 2019 at 09:26 AM

LF

“ *Lynette Franco lit a candle in memory of Mr. Nicholas J. "Nick" LaBella, Retired UPD Captain*



Lynette Franco - October 28, 2019 at 11:27 PM

JM

“ *Terri, Gina, Joey and Mary, Sending deepest sympathy to all of you during this difficult time.*

Jeanna Marraffa - October 28, 2019 at 07:31 PM

MQ

“ *All my thoughts and prayers are with the LaBella Family.
Marty Quinn
Retired Asst. Chief
Village of Frankfort Police Department*

Martin Quinn - October 28, 2019 at 06:29 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Nicholas J. "Nick" LaBella, Retired UPD Captain.*



October 28, 2019 at 02:07 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Nicholas J. "Nick" LaBella, Retired UPD Captain.*



October 28, 2019 at 12:11 PM



“ *Stacy Dunn lit a candle in memory of Mr. Nicholas J. "Nick" LaBella, Retired UPD Captain*



Stacy Dunn - October 28, 2019 at 09:24 AM



“ *Terri, Gina, Joe and Mary, I am so sorry to hear of Nick's passing. My deepest condolences to all of you.*



Lisa (Druscovich) Gilberti - October 28, 2019 at 09:19 AM

JT

“ Sorry to read about this. He was a good man and I will never forget our encounters, especially with Benny Rotundo and Ed Hanna when I was with the OD.

My condolences to all of you, which comes with the hope that your pain will soon subside and you can revel in what must be fond memories.

*Joe Tierno
Melbourne Beach, Fl*

Joe Tierno - October 27, 2019 at 09:45 AM

FW

“ Terri, Gina and Joe and the entire La Bella family, God has brought home a wonderful man, respectful, loving and kind, yet dedicated to his work. He will be missed by many, but he has found that restful place with the Lord. May God give you all strength to go forward. Flo Wilson



FIORINDA B. WILSON - October 26, 2019 at 09:44 PM

SG

“ I am so sorry for the families lost, He was a great man! I remember one time that he found who hit my car & ran off. I remember family times with him & the family. May he R.I.P 🙏

Sue C Giruzzi - October 26, 2019 at 01:25 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Nicholas J. "Nick" LaBella, Retired UPD Captain.*



October 26, 2019 at 12:32 PM



“ *Our deepest sympathy to the Labella family, our thoughts and prayers are with you at this difficult time ... Janice and Fred Greer...*

janice greer - October 25, 2019 at 09:12 PM



“ *Terri, Gina and Joe, Your husband/father was a true gentleman, and a friendly neighbor. We do miss him, and keep him in our prayers. Sympathies and condolences. Butch Waszkiewicz*

Butch Waszkiewicz - October 25, 2019 at 08:05 PM

JJ

“ Dear LaBella Family our sincerest condolences.:

He was a big reason the National Foundation - March of Dimes was successful with the Utica Walk-a-Thon in the 1970s. I served as Executive Director during this time and relied on Captain for its' success.

My wife Janice and I will remember Captain in our rosaries and masses.

God Bless and keep the faith!

Janice and Samuel L. Russo, Jr.



Janice and Samuel L. Russo, Jr. - October 25, 2019 at 07:21 PM



“ Dear Terri, Joey and Gina,
It was with great sadness that I learned of the passing of Nick. He was such a wonderful man and always fun to be around. I have such great memories of our conversations and laughs at Utica College. He always resolved all and any issues that may have arisen with the utmost professionalism but also with empathy and compassion. He never raised his voice to a student and helped them the best he could. You could see that he loved being around the students. A true warrior, I know he fought hard to the end. The world has lost a wonderful person but heaven has gained an angel. You are all in my thoughts and prayers.
Love - Dina R.

Dina Russo - October 25, 2019 at 06:33 PM

DM

“ *My sincere condolences to the LaBella family...*



Don Marino - October 25, 2019 at 12:33 PM

RG

“ *My condolences to the family , Robert Giruzzi Sr.*

Robert Giruzzi - October 25, 2019 at 08:15 AM

MA

“ *Fair boss , always willing to listen and teach you before judging you . My boss in the early 90's*

Mark Ambrosi - A squad

Mark Ambrosi - October 24, 2019 at 06:12 PM

RP

“ *Our deepest sympathies and condolences to you all. Nick was the best Captain I ever had, a kind considerate compassionate and all around great guy. Rest in peace my friend. Ralph Paladino and family*



ralph paladino - October 24, 2019 at 05:27 PM

AB

“ *Joey and Mary*
Our deepest sympathy on your father's passing. May your memories comfort you at this difficult time.
With love, The Bick Family

Annette Bick - October 24, 2019 at 03:28 PM

AZ

“ *To the LaBella family,*
I'm very sorry for your loss. It's also a loss for the multitude of people he's touched in his life, me being one of them. I always keep him in my prayers.

Al Zito - October 24, 2019 at 03:17 PM

TD

“ *Labella Family,*

So sorry for your loss. You are all in our thoughts and prayers. May he rest in peace.

Tom and Flo DeSimone and family

Tom DeSimone - October 24, 2019 at 01:38 PM

FS

Terri & Gina & Family My deepest Sympathy to you all for your Loss of Nick. My Heart hurts for you How well I know. You were there for me at my Loss. Bless you All. Sincerely Francine & Mary Catherine Spinelli

francine spinelli - October 29, 2019 at 09:21 AM

FS

Dear Terri & Gina I am so sorry I could not attend services for your Dad due to my work schedule & not feeling well. I haven't forgotten you or your Mom. You were there for mee when I lost George, Please accept me not attending services, Your Dad was a great man & I know how much you did for him during his illness. My Deepest sympathy Francine spinelli.

francine spinelli - November 02, 2019 at 10:02 PM