



## **Mr Ralph V. Circelli, Retired U.F.D.**

December 17, 1936 - January 6, 2011

Mr. Ralph V. "Ruffie" Circelli, Retired Utica Fire Department, age 74, of North Utica, went home to be with the Lord on Thursday, January 6, 2011 on the Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus. His passing occurred in the privacy and comfort of his home where he was surrounded by the devotion of his family.

Born in Utica on December 17, 1936, Ralph was the son of the late Philip and Mary (Sardelli) Circelli. He was raised and educated in Utica and attended T.R. Proctor High School. A veteran of the United States Army, Ruffie was proud to have served his country from 1957-1959 stationed in Germany. On August 24, 1961 he married the former Barbara A. McKenney with whom he shared 49 years that were filled with much devotion, respect, and regard for family life.

On October 1, 1966, Ruffie began his career with the Utica Fire Department where he served as a firefighter stationed at the firehouses at Albany and Blandina, Central, and North Utica, the location from which he retired in 1986. His outstanding service was noted as being dependable and a credit to the department in every way. He was a member of the International Association of Firefighters Local 32. Concurrently, he worked as a driver for Central Trucking and Teal Express. During his retirement years he held positions with United Auto as a driver, and Riverside Materials. With his passing, Ruffie's family has lost the comfort of his presence, but he remains in their hearts forever. His family loved him and never knew anyone more inspiring or full of life. He was

a hardworking family man and a “gentle man” in every sense of the word. To know him was to love him because he saw the goodness in everyone he met. A truly blessed and humble man, he led by example, lived simply, and treasured ‘good food and good family’. Ruffie’s talents and interests were far reaching. Throughout his life he was a sports enthusiast and a sportsman in his own right. He pursued bowling, ice skating, golfing, fishing, and baseball, a sport in which he personally excelled during his youth. As a good Papa, he shared special times with each and every one of his grandchildren. He could fix anything and loved to help his children with their domestic repairs, all for a cup of black coffee and a sweet. In their retirement years, Ruffie and Barbara would vacation annually at South Daytona Beach in Florida, sharing precious time with Dick and Josie Detore. Most importantly, he served his Lord, and held a great devotion to the Blessed Mother. He found it inspirational to read the Bible and he also drew strength from the book *Mystical City of God* by Venerable Mary of Agreda. At one time he was a member of St. Peter’s Church in N. Utica where he volunteered his time and talents teaching religious education classes, partaking in the parish festivals and spaghetti dinner fundraisers. He later was a communicant of St. Joseph & St. Patrick Church where he was an altar server, a member of the Perpetual Adoration Society and the Knights of St. John International, St. George Commandery #41 of Utica.

Ralph is survived by his wife, Barbara Ann; his daughters, Devina Marie Circelli of Barneveld and fiancé Tim Horan, and Deanna Lynn Circelli of Floyd; his son and daughter-in-law, Ralph Scott and Jackie Circelli of New Hartford; and his daughter Deanna’s friend, Joe Blaszczyk, who was a truly caring and devoted friend to Ralph and the entire family (and Ralph’s golfing buddy at Hidden Valley). His kindness will remain close to their hearts. He also leaves his grandchildren who affectionately knew him as “Papa Ruffie”, Joseph, and Stefanie Moore and their father, Joe Moore; Karissa, and Kaitlin Beerhalter and their father, Ronald Beerhalter; and Jacob, Andrew, and Paulie Circelli. Survivors also include his sister and brother-in-law, Phyllis and Chuck Hamlin

of TX; his brothers and sisters-in-law, Tom and Betty Circelli, and Phil and Diane Circelli, all of FL; many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins, aunts, uncles, and in-laws, Pattie McKenney, Tommy and Diane McKenney, Don and Phyllis McKenney, Helen and Bob White, and Joanne McKenney. He was also blessed with many wonderful and dear friends throughout his life who have been so valuable and uplifting. He was predeceased by his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Bernie and Helen McKenney; and his brother-in-law, Peter McKenney.

The family extends heartfelt appreciation to Dr. John Crawford and the Radiation Staff of the Regional Cancer Center and Dr. Kevin Mathews for their care and compassion; the nurses and staff of the St. Elizabeth Medical Center 3B, for the personal attentiveness and comforting presence. The family is grateful for the availability for Ralph to return home with the dignity of Hospice & Palliative Care, with special thanks to Navaz for her genuine nature and commitment; sincere thanks are offered to Fr. Felix Colosimo and Fr. Comeskey for their spiritual sacraments, blessings, and visits; as well as the prayers and rosaries offered by family and friends.

Ralph's family gathered privately at their home to honor his life and bid their farewells. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend his Memorial Service and Celebration of Life which will commence on Wednesday afternoon at 4:30 at Our Lady of the Rosary Church where his Mass of Christian Burial will be offered by Rev. Felix Colosimo with Military Honors. The family will receive visitors at the conclusion of Mass. Those wishing to express an act of kindness may make a donation to Hospice & Palliative Care, Inc.; envelopes will be available at the service.

Arrangements have been entrusted to the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave.

# Tribute Wall



“ Eannace Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr Ralph V. Circelli, Retired U.F.D.



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**Eannace Funeral Home, Inc.** - January 06, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ We are so sorry to hear of Ralph's passing. It is a great loss to us all! He spent time with our family in Florida. We always looked forward to seeing him. He was always full of love and joy. He was one on the kindest gentlemen I have ever met. He was always helpful to me always helping and always having a kind comment about everything and everyone. This is what I will remember of Ralph. We are deeply saddened by his loss. Our prayers are with his family at this time. Tammy Benali (Detore)

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**Tammy (Detore)** - January 13, 2011 at 03:02 PM



“ I worked with Ralph at UFD. He was a great fire fighter and friend. My deepest sympathy to his family. He'll be in my thoughts and prayers.

*Jim Mauthe*

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**Jim Mauthe** - January 11, 2011 at 08:52 AM

VG

“ *Barb and family,  
Mike and I are so sorry to hear of Ralphs  
passing he was such a nice man never a bad  
thing to say about anyone. May God Bless  
you Barb. Our thoughts and prayers are with  
you and your family.  
Ginny and Mike Granieri*



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**Virginia Mike Granieri** - January 10, 2011 at 08:34 PM

VM

“ *What a great guy fond memories at 5 Engine in the old  
days.....saddened to hear*

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**Vito Marrone** - January 10, 2011 at 10:48 AM

SA

“ *Sam Arcuri lit a candle in memory of Mr Ralph  
V. Circelli, Retired U.F.D.*



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**Sam Arcuri** - January 10, 2011 at 08:26 AM

PM

“ *Phyllis/Don McKenney - Memories will last forever and be passed from generation to generation. What wonderful memories Ruffie has provided for his family and those of us who were fortunate to spend time with him. It's been said before but he never had a bad word to say about anyone, ever. He looked for the good in others and seemed always able to find what he was looking for. He was a caring husband, father and grandfather to his family. Phyllis and I had the opportunity to go with Ruffie and Bobbie to the casino a few times. I'll always remember Ruffie telling me, Donny you have to have the hot dog and then we'll go to get free coffee behind the Bingo parlor. Nothing pretentious about Ralph, he was as genuine as they come. He was one of the few who truly knew the important things in life, the love of a wife, children, grandchildren. family and friends along with a hot dog and cup of coffee at the casino. I always admired Ruffie through this ordeal. I would tell Phyllis, you know he never complains, never, but rather talks about the positives in his life. No surprise though, that was the way Ruffie lived his life and created those wonderful memories that will last each of us a lifetime. To my sister Bobbie and Devina, Deanna and Ralph, Aunt Phyllis and I can't begin to feel your loss but want you to know you are in our thoughts and prayers each day.*

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**Phyllis Don McKenney** - January 09, 2011 at 06:54 PM

“ My mind is flooded with so many thoughts that it would be impossible to express them here. The memories of growing up together with Ruffie (Ralph) and our brothers, Tommie and Butch. The memories of family events shared with our parents and relatives. And later, the memories of times that Chuck and I spent with Ralph and Barbara and the kids.

I'm only two years older than Ralph so we grew-up together and were very close. He was not only my brother but my friend. I was always proud of him and I'm proud of the man he became. A committed loyal husband and a wonderful, loving father. Everyone who new him loved him. He was fun to be around. He was one of those people who could light-up a room just by walking into it. Although distance and illness have kept us apart in these later years we still managed to stay in touch. And I shall be forever grateful to Barbara, his wife, who called me from the hospital just a few days before his passing so that I could speak to him in what turned out to be our last conversation. I will carry those few moments forever in my heart.

As a believer I have confidence that I will see Ralph again in the presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. That same confidence assures me that Ralph has also been reunited with our Mom and Dad, Phil and Mary Circelli who departed this earth many years ago. How glorious it is and will be to live forever in the place God has prepared for us. (John 14:1-3, 1 Corinthians 2:9)

Barbara, you and your children and grandchildren are in our thoughts and prayers. We pray that you will sense God's presence, comfort and peace as you go through this difficult time. And please know that we will be with you in spirit during Ralph's Memorial Service and Celebration of Life that will be held on Wednesday. With all our love... Chuck and Phyllis Hamlin

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Phyllis Hamlin - January 09, 2011 at 01:06 PM

TC

“ *Ralph, how I will miss you. You were my older brother and although we lived miles apart , I always felt close to you. I looked forward to the time you spent here in Florida. It was good seeing you enjoy yourself with Barbara and your friends. If anyone deserved to enjoy themselves it was you and Barbara .*

*A man's life is measured by his effect on this earth . Your life has made a definite impact on everyone who knew you , your three beautiful children and seven beautiful grandchildren , a life of service to others , both in the service and then as a Utica fireman. How can one man accomplish more. I always admired you and tried to live to the standards you set as an older brother, I will truly miss you.*

*Devina , Deanna and Ralphie your dad was so proud of each of you and he loved you and his grandchildren with all his heart .*

*I am sorry I will not be there for your funeral mass but during your mass , Betty and I will be at the adoration chapel of our church , praying and remembering our time with you.*

*Tom and Betty Circelli*

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**Tom Circelli** - January 08, 2011 at 04:40 PM

PC

“ *"The sorrow of loss is but a measure of love that's stronger than death." Love, Your Brother, Phil (and Diane.)*

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**Phil Diane Circelli** - January 08, 2011 at 03:00 PM

DC

“ My heart is aching with the loss of my Uncle Ralph. He was always there for me encouraging me and always interested in hearing updates about myself. Just the sound of his voice when I called always made me feel special. He was such a gentle, kind soul always helping others in his profession and life and who dearly loved his family. My love goes out to my cousins and my Aunt Barbara. You have not only been my dear Aunt and Uncle, but the best godparents a girl could have. I love you. Debbie Circelli

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**Debbie Circelli** - January 08, 2011 at 11:26 AM

DI

“ We are extremely saddened by the passing of Ralph, he was one of our favorite people in the world and a good friend and a true gentleman. Ralph never had a bad word to say about anyone or anything and he was the most gracious person we ever knew. His constant smile made everyone feel good and the void in our lives with out him here to spread his own brand of cheerfulness will be impossible to fill. God bless you Ralph, we miss you terribly.

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**Dave Maria Ionta** - January 07, 2011 at 03:22 PM