



## Mr. Sebastian M. "Sal" "Buster" Convertino

May 8, 1935 - December 18, 2024

UTICA, NY/SHORELINE, WA – Mr. Sebastian M. “Sal” “Buster” Convertino, age 89, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, December 18, 2024, in Washington, where he had relocated to be closer to his loving daughter and family.

Born in Utica, NY, on May 8, 1935, Sal was the cherished son of the late John and Rosina "Rose" (Salamida) Convertino. He graduated from T.R. Proctor High School in 1953 and later earned a bachelor's degree in business from Utica College. An extremely patriotic man with a great love for his country, Sal was proud to have served with the U.S. Army.

At one time, Sal was married to the former Nancy Speck. From that union came the blessing of four children.

Sal began his career as a stockbroker for The Johnson Agency and then later as an insurance broker for the Brock Agency. He then ran for and was elected to the position of City of Utica Comptroller, which he held for two years. Gaining knowledge and support from his compatriots, Sal ran for Mayor of Utica in 1968 and 1974. He was later appointed as the Executive Secretary/Executive Director of the City of Utica Municipal Housing Authority, from which he retired. One of his greatest accomplishments there was piloting the “Music in the City” program, which provided musical resources, including

instruments and teachers to children in the housing projects who were not able to afford them. Simultaneously while serving as Executive Secretary, he was also actively involved with the AARP as a lobbyist.

Sal was the past President of the NYS Association of Renewal and Housing Officials, Inc. To mentor young minds, he was an active volunteer in the SCORE Organization. Sal was very civically minded. As a proud lifelong Democrat, he enjoyed writing editorials for the Utica Observer-Dispatch and was passionate about local events, politics, and the world we live in.

It goes without saying that Sal loved and was proud of Utica. He delighted in showing people the very best places his city had to offer. In return, his community loved and respected him. He took immense pride in the historical makeup of Utica. Some residents even affectionately referred to him as the local ambassador. Sal enjoyed gathering with his many friends at Steak Eggs & Greens and elsewhere for morning coffee, engaging each other often in spirited debates. He loved the time spent, the comradery, and the enlightening exchanges he was able to have there. He was fond of saying, "if it walks like a duck and talks like a duck, it's a duck." Sal also enjoyed tennis with his friend and campaign manager, Jim Murphy, often seeing how long they could volley the ball in good-natured competition.

Sal was an incredible grandfather and enjoyed the time that he was able to spend with each of his grandchildren. His whole being would light up whenever he was in their presence. Sal loved to take pictures and was always recording life's precious moments. He had a knack for being able to capture, not just the special event or milestone, but the feelings and energy of his family and friends as well.

When residing in Utica, Sal was a parishioner of St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish.

Sal is survived by his children and their spouses, Sebastian “Mike” II and Kimberly “Kim” Convertino, Suzanne “Sue” and Gregory “Greg” Harrison, John Forrest Convertino and Anna Maria Convertino; and grandchildren, Alexandra Convertino-Gerard and her husband, Adam; Gabrielle Harrison, Delaney Harrison, Gwyneth Harrison; and Luke Ferris Smith. He held close to his heart the memory of his siblings and their spouses who preceded him, Frank J. and Edith “Bette” Convertino, Nancy and John A. Potenza, Sr., Potenza and Eugene P. DelMonte, and Anna Maria “Ann” and Robert Leach. He leaves to cherish his memory his many nieces and nephews, especially acknowledging John and Gail Convertino, David Leach, Kathy Leach and Michael Cleveland, Patricia and Joseph Rizzo Jr., Robert “Bobby” Leach, Rosemary and Mitch Berkowitz, Dr. Vito and Ann Potenza, Dr. Mark S. and Theresa Potenza, and John, Jr. and Jean Potenza; great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins; and many special friends made throughout his lifetime. He was additionally predeceased by his nephew, Jeffrey Convertino.

The family would like to extend their special thanks to Sal’s nieces and nephews, who always included him in family gatherings and watched over him with love and devotion throughout the years, ensuring that he always felt surrounded by family and care. They would also like to thank his longtime friends for their unwavering support, particularly Jim Stanek, John Ryder, Jim Murphy, and all the friends who regularly joined him out for morning coffee. They extend heartfelt gratitude to Sal’s caregivers, Bridget McCarthy and Liz Kolano, for their compassionate care through the years.

Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend Sebastian’s Memorial Mass of Christian Burial and Celebration of Life, which will commence on Saturday, February 15, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish, 648 Jay St., Military honors will be conferred by the U.S.

Army. After the Mass, there will be an opportunity to greet the family. Memorial contributions in Sal's honor may be made to The Other Side of Utica online at <https://theothersideutica.org/donate>, or <https://www.givemv.org/organizations/the-other-side>; envelopes will also be available at the service. Inurnment will take place in Calvary Cemetery at the convenience of the family.

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

# Cemetery Details

## Calvary Cemetery

2407 Oneida Street  
Utica, NY 13501  
(315) 735-2727

# Previous Events

## Memorial Mass and Celebration of Life

FEB **15**. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary of Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament Parish  
648 Jay St  
Utica, NY 13501  
(315) 735-1482

# Tribute Wall

LF

“ Please accept my sincere condolences for the passing of Sal Convertino. He was my boss way back when I first started working at MHA; and I had the most utmost respect for him as our leader. May you Rest in Peace, Mr. “C”.

Lynette Franco - February 14, 2025 at 10:36 PM

AE

“ Ann Marie Vallese (former MHA employee) purchased the Forever Our Angel Bouquet for the family of Mr. Sebastian M. "Sal" "Buster" Convertino.



Ann Marie Vallese (former MHA employee) - February 08, 2025 at 10:03 AM

AV

“ My sincerest condolences to the Convertino Family. I was blessed to have served under Mr. Convertino for some 13 years at MHA. I am so saddened by the news of his passing. Mr. Convertino had true compassion for his tenants and their needs in his heart. He was a kind and generous man.

Ann Marie Vallese - February 08, 2025 at 09:56 AM

LF

“ Lynette Franco lit a candle in memory of Mr. Sebastian M. "Sal" "Buster" Convertino



Lynette Franco - January 21, 2025 at 04:22 PM

PZ

“ *I was very sorry to hear of the loss of my dear friend Sal. We had many a good time during our friendship..our condolences and prayers go out to his family..paul/Sharon zito*

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**Paul zito** - January 21, 2025 at 01:29 PM