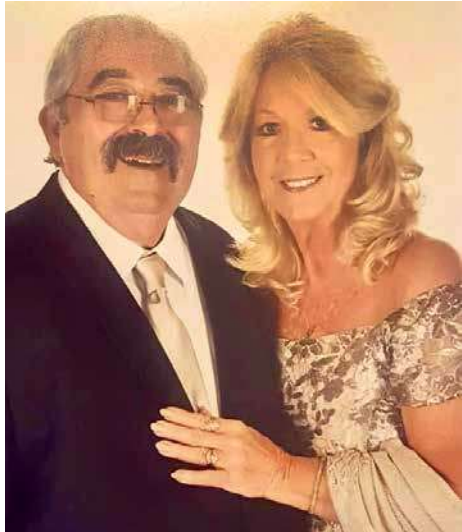


# IN MEMORIAM

## Joe Joseph

DECEMBER 30, 1947 - AUGUST 27, 2021



Joe and Donna Joseph 50th anniversary cruise, March 2019

Joe Louis Joseph of Arlington, 73 years old, passed away on August 27 at Ascension St. Vincent's Southside Hospital due to complications from recently diagnosed stage 4 lung cancer. His wife of 52 years, Donna Ferguson Joseph, was at his side.

Joseph was father to three. His eldest, Julie (Ronnie) Joseph Burke, predeceased him in 2004. His son, Louis (Leslie) Joseph, is owner of the Mudville Grille in St. Nicholas. His youngest, Laura (Michael) Joseph Meehan, wrote a heartfelt eulogy that was read at his funeral. Joseph was known as "Jiddo" to eight grandchildren—Kaylee, Ronnie Jr., Gavin, Julie, Hudson, Delana, Joe, and Lilah—and one great-grandson, Grayson.

Joseph, a Jacksonville native, was born at St. Vincent's Riverside on December 30, 1947 to Louis Joseph and Yulet Hanun. Of Syrian decent with Mexican roots, Joseph was the eldest of six, with three brothers and two sisters—George (Julia), Mary Louise, Elizabeth (Jorge) Balat, Louis Jr. (Rosie), and Schamoun. He grew up surrounded by several relatives on Belmont Terrace in San Marco. His siblings and his cousins were his first friends.

Joseph started school downtown at Immaculate Conception for first, second, and third grades. By fourth grade, Joseph had transferred to Assumption, where some of his grandchildren now attend.

When Joseph was a child, he spent a great deal of time at Central Park, Southside Park today, on Hendricks Avenue behind Southside

Branch Library. He'd play ball there every afternoon after school. At times, he was known to get into mischief. Now that it's too late for him to get into trouble for it, it can be told that he and his brother George were the ones who, circa 1959, added pink Cashmere Bouquet soap to the San Marco fountain one night. When the pump was turned on the following morning, it was as if it had snowed in Jacksonville; soap bubbles flooded the San Marco streets. The local newspaper reported on it, but the culprits remained a mystery until now.

Joseph was a student at Bishop Kenny High School (BK), beginning a three-generation legacy of Crusaders. While there, he and his family moved to the Arlingwood neighborhood of Arlington. After high school graduation, Joseph spent a year at Jacksonville University as an engineering major.

One place where Joseph liked to socialize was at Bono's Pit Bar-B-Q on Beach Boulevard. It was there one night while with one of his best friends, Mike Hadad, that Joseph met a beautiful 17-year-old Kentucky girl and declared to Hadad, "That's the girl I'm gonna marry."

Their first date was on February 20, 1967. They ate dinner at The Embers and saw Hawaii at 5 Points Theatre before heading back to Bono's. On March 16, 1969, they were married at the Basilica of The Immaculate Conception on the campus of Joseph's alma mater. For 54 years, on their dating anniversary of February 20, Joseph took his love to that Bono's on Beach for dinner to celebrate.



Joe and Donna Ferguson Joseph honeymoon cruise, March 1969

"I knew him inside and out. He was so full of goodness. Not only was he the best husband and father, but he was truly the best human being that has walked this earth during my lifetime. I know that I am the luckiest woman to have spent 52 years as his wife," said Donna.



Joe Joseph, 1967

Joseph was a member of the United States Army Reserve and became a Green Beret in the 11th Special Forces Airborne Group. He would recount for his children many times his days spent jumping out of airplanes. His patriotism was enduring. In fact, Joseph would drive around town with a stack of American flags in his Suburban. Whenever he spotted a tattered flag hanging from a house, he'd leave a new one from his stash for the homeowner. Joseph never sought notoriety, and so few knew of this practice.

Jacksonville residents still refer to Joseph as a staple of the community. He was known widely. Prior to their settling in Arlington, he and his wife had resided at varying times in the neighborhoods of San Marco and St. Nicholas. In fact, he hardly ever missed a meeting of the St. Nicholas Area Preservation.

Joseph had a reputation for being a hard worker and a loving family man. Despite the long hours Joseph spent working at entrepreneurial pursuits, he found time to coach his son's baseball teams while his wife ran the concession stands. And he often shared with his children, and later his grandchildren, the simple, yet magical Jacksonville that he knew and loved as a boy—whether it was taking a ride on the ferry or drinking from the same natural water fountain in San Marco that he used to drink from. Joseph was always excited to share his "stomping grounds" with his family.

Joseph thoroughly enjoyed being with his grandchildren. Miniature golf, dinners out, and carousel rides in St. Augustine were top-list activities when they weren't at sporting events. Their days together would always end with ice cream. Butter pecan was Joseph's favorite.

Joseph liked to travel, near and far. Many spring breaks and summer vacations found Joseph with his children, and in later years

his grandchildren, at the Four Winds Condominiums on Crescent Beach near St. Augustine. He took pride in his role as Board president of the condo association and had befriended the entire Four Winds community. The only time he wasn't happy there was when one kid or another would leave open the sliding doors. "Are we air conditioning the outside?" he would ask with a tone that indicated his frustration, which the family chuckles at now.

December was his favorite time to visit Mexico, to bring his children to visit his tios, tias, and primos to celebrate Christmas and New Year's traditions. Family was so important to him that for their 50th wedding anniversary, he and his wife took all of their children and grandchildren with them on a Disney cruise to celebrate.

"Learning how to navigate through life without the man who taught us how to live seems like trying to navigate a ship without a captain. But I'm confident that as his crew, we will take what dad has passed down and learn to navigate these uncharted seas. We will make him proud and use the qualities he has instilled in us to cruise through life knowing that we will see his face again when we arrive at our final destination," wrote his daughter Laura.

Services were held at Christ the King Catholic Church where Joseph had been a parish member for 45 years; he was a man of faith who trusted in the plans of God. A reception followed at the Fraternal Order of Police thanks to the generosity and service of two of Joseph's many friends, Mike Purvis and Thomas Powell.

The Joseph family requests that memorial gifts be made to the Julie Joseph Burke Scholarship Fund at Bishop Kenny High School.



Joe Joseph and wife Donna with their family, 2019



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OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA FOR OUR 8TH ANNUAL  
RED SHIELD BALL.

THE UNFORGETTABLE EVENING WILL TAKE PLACE  
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FUNDS RAISED FROM THIS EVENT WILL HELP IMPROVE THE CARPENTER  
FAMILY MARKETPLACE WHERE THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN WHO ARE  
LIVING IN THE NONPROFITS RED SHIELD LODGE AS WELL AS LOCAL  
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