



Joseph F Moliero, Jr.

April 19, 1945 - April 10, 2020

Joseph F. Moliero Jr., a combat veteran of the Blackhorse 11th Armored Cavalry and retired motorman of the Metropolitan Transit Authority, died Friday, April 10, 2020, at Staten Island University Hospital South. He was 74.

Born on April 19, 1945, in Ardmore, Oklahoma, his parents, Joseph and Kathryn Moliero, moved the family around often due to his father's U.S. Navy deployments. His sibling Judy said that even after all the moves, they always found their way back to Brooklyn - which is where, in 1959, the family settled into their infamous apartment on 88th St. and 4th Ave. in Bay Ridge where their parents would both spend the rest of their lives. Joe and Judy's mother had a hard to follow connection to her Native American origins - something that Joe's future wife Lena would go on to research and explore - but he loved to boast about his "Choctaw Blood." Both Judy and Joe would go on to graduate from Fort Hamilton High School in 1964.

The oldest of the two children, Joe would go on to become closer with his younger sister during their teen years. "He worked at the department store, Abraham & Straus. We hung around the same people, playing pool and what not. He would drive us around in his beloved GTO," recalled his sister, Judy.

Shortly thereafter, Joe would go on to be drafted for the Vietnam war where he served in the U.S. Army with the 11th Armored Cavalry Blackhorse

Regiment. He served for thirteen months from 1966 to 1967 and was honorably discharged as a Specialist with The Good Conduct Medal. While he came back forever changed from his time spent overseas, he made lasting friendships with many of the men he served with. He was the king of nicknames, giving everyone he met a memorable name like Jimmy Papers or Paymaster. That knack for association would lead to an arsenal of stories that were considered larger than all those of his pals' stories combined. He proved himself to be an amazing man in the fields of Vietnam, to which the members of his regiment are forever grateful.

Joe met his beloved wife of what would've been 50 years before her passing, Lena Masella, in 1967 on a blind date. He had just returned from Vietnam. Joe worked in a mailroom with Lena's cousin Vinny, who decided to try to set them up. His sister remembers him coming home from that date beaming, exclaiming "I just met the nicest girl. She had the most beautiful hair." Three years later they were married and honeymooning in Bermuda.

The young couple moved to Great Kills, Staten Island, in 1976. They raised their children Michael and Kathryn in a warm two-family home on Armstrong Avenue, and when the time came, Kathryn and her husband, Alex Duenas, elected to raise their family -- Joe's beloved grandchildren Jeremy and Michaela -- in the same place, upstairs.

The Moliero household was a home away from home for many over the years. "It was where I knew I was with family - a place that always felt right to me, and welcomed me as a Moliero before I ever was one", Joe's daughter-in-law Karen recalled. "The greeting that I got from mom in the kitchen calling my name every time I walked in, to seeing dad in his chair with a firm but loving "Hello"- it was always so homey and comfortable."

For decades that same home was the center of the annual family ritual of

jarring the tomato sauce. Dozens of family members and neighbors would gather over a late August weekend and form an assembly line in the backyard, where they'd rinse, boil, crush, and bottle more than 100 crates of fresh plum tomatoes so that all the participating families would leave with a year's supply. But it wasn't just about making superb sauce; it was about laughing, feasting, drinking and enjoying each other's company, one weekend every year, come what may.

Joe followed the plan of many New Yorkers. He found solace in a great city job, retired after 30 years with the Transit Authority to his growing family and kept himself busy working on cars, like his friend's 1965 Chevrolet Impala which won 1st prize at its first award show. The pair were known as The Cruise Brothers in the train yard. They worked their way up in the ranks and became Miscellaneous Motormen - motormen who could drive any of the work trains like garbage trains, flats and Joe's favorite, the money train. The two even went on to start their own landscaping business together - to which their wives took great care in helping manage the finances. In retirement Joe was able to spend more time with his cherished family, longer afternoons spent keeping every speck of dust off his precious Corvette in the driveway, more battles over food with the dog Bobby he "inherited" from his grandson and traveling the world with his Lena. They went to Italy almost a half dozen times, and visited parts of Europe, and the Caribbean, Hawaii and California.

Among the most special trips were the one's Joe and Lena, a retired sought-after legal secretary and project manager, took every year to meet his buddies from the Vietnam War. The veterans of the 11th Armored Cavalry would gather in a different city annually. After decades apart, Joe reconnected with many of his oldest friends from the war and began to attend these reunions regularly - their entire year's travel revolved around the September dates of the reunion. As Joe got to share his stories - and as his friends recalled, "Joey

had the best recollection of all the guys. He remembered names, battles and stories nobody else did." Lena joined the ever-important group of "Sweethearts" and began to form her own lifelong friendships through her husband's Blackhorse Regiment. They would go on cruises and trips to the islands together. They all wanted to eat Lena's famous, fresh tomato sauce. So one year, Lena shipped six jars of sauce ahead to St. John, where a few of the couples were renting a house. It was an expensive proposition, but Joe and his friends got to enjoy one of his wife's wonderful Sunday dinners, a memory they'll forever cherish.

Joe loved to give directions with shortcuts that were never short, share stories that sometimes blended together, and shoot the breeze with family and friends. He was an old soul with a deep love for his country, his cars and his larger than life family. He will be missed dearly.

Joe's beloved wife Lena Moliero passed on January 9, 2019. They would've celebrated 50 years of their beautiful marriage this year. He was the loving father of Michael Moliero and Kathryn Duenas; the fond father-in-law of Karen Moliero and Alex Duenas; the dear big brother of Judy Moliero; and the devoted grandfather of Sabrina & Liliana Pizzuto, Jeremy & Michaela Duenas and Anthony Luongo. Joe is also survived by many loving nieces, nephews, great-nieces and nephews, and many friends. He also leaves behind his granddogs that kept him young, Bobby and Rose.

The family will plan a memorial to receive friends and family to celebrate the life of Joseph F. Moliero Jr. with proper military honors at a later date. An intimate, family burial will happen April 13, 2020 at the Guardian Angel Memorial Park section of Forest Green Memorial Park Cemetery in Morganville, New Jersey.

Cemetery Details

Forest Green Cemetery

535 Texas Road
Morganville, NJ 07751

Tribute Wall



“ *Joseph F Moliero, Jr.*

October 04, 2023 at 06:13 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Boom Boom Barresi - May 06, 2020 at 08:13 AM



“ *Shock is the only word to describe my hearing about Joe's passing. While I only knew Joe for a short while, I came to know how generous and caring he was to his friends and family. We were both Vietnam veterans and got to share our stories at weekly gatherings with other veterans who had similar experiences. Joe liked to also talk about his vehicle restorations and kept us abreast of the latest military innovations and procurement of equipment. Sadly, it was just a short time ago that several of us went to the wake of Joe's beloved wife Lena. I only regret not getting to sample the family (superb) tomato sauce. Hoping Joe's family is able to get through this difficult period knowing that he was respected and admired by all who had the privilege to meet him. All the best.*

*Jerry O'Leary
Staten Island, NY
Vietnam Veteran (1968)*

Jeremiah O'Leary - April 27, 2020 at 04:48 PM

BK

“ Our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Joseph F. Moliero, a sincere and dedicated Blackhorse Trooper. We, the Troopers of the 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia salute a fallen brother. Joe served courageously with Headquarters Troop of the 3rd Squadron in 1966 and 1967, and it was our privilege to have him in the ranks of the Legendary Blackhorse Regiment. Our loss is that of another brother down and we will continue to honor his memory at our gatherings and reunions. His name will be listed on the scroll of our honored dead and in our newsletter, Thunder Run. But as our Burial Liturgy clearly states: "life has not ended, merely changed" and Joe's soul continues on a loving path to be united with Lena and his multitude of loyal friends. As we were together then (in Vietnam), we will be together again in the life hereafter, comfortably enfolded in the loving arms of our Merciful Father.

Chaplain Blandin W. Karabinos, 11th ACVVC (Vietnam 71-72)

Blandin Karabinos - April 20, 2020 at 03:09 PM

GE

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Gerard Esposito - April 19, 2020 at 07:34 PM

“ It is now almost 7pm on Sunday evening. I saw this posting from Jeremy and came to offer my thoughts on someone whom I considered very special and a brother that I never had. Joe, what can I say that could cover 43 years of a special friendship. Memories abound that's for sure. I first met Joe while working for the NYC Transit Authority back in the early 70s. Joe and I had back to back subway train runs and he was one ahead of me. I remember many times listening on my radio in the cab to Joe reporting track conditions and for me that was a plus since I knew that all was well ahead. We worked on work trains for many years after leaving passenger service and for us that was the icing on the cake. We loved the job and I can remember so many times in the crew room or in the engine talking about family, friends and events. Joe and I went thru winters, hot summers, storms and operating problems many times but he always had a positive way of thinking. As I said, we were almost as close to natural brothers as can be possible and we shared many family functions and events, dinners, parties, births and deaths. Lena and Patricia became just as close. Joe and I retired about a year or so apart and soon I got Joe involved in a landscaping venture. He thought I was nuts but laughing thru this idea, he picked up his personal lawn mower and the two of us decided to "just do a few lawns for friends". It turned into a 200 client business. So our traveling experiences became a reality and soon we were in Paris and London and Norway and on and on. Dinner in the Eiffel Tower was just one of the amazing things we did. I remember Joe taking a small bottle of cut grass and before going up to the restaurant, he took some of grass and through it into the air at the base of the tower and had a smile on his face that lit up the night. Joe and I also shared our military experiences, and thru him I met some of the guys he served with in Nam via reunions that he attended. I was the only Navy man among them and Joe loved to break my shoes about that but it was all in good fun. I use to get "Thanks for taking us to Nam" a lot. To this day, I salute Joe and his fellow vets for their service in a war zone. Joe and I also shared a love for cars. I have a 65 Impala Super Sport which I bought brand new in 65. I decided to fully restore it and once again,

Joe face lit up.....Oh boy lets do it he said. So for the next 17 months, I would pick up Joe in the morning and we would go to a shop where the car was and we would work on the car. It was a labor of love and Joe and I did love ever second of the task. The icing on the cake was when I took it to the first car show and got a first place trophy. The car look beautiful and I was telling everyone if they had any questions, speak to my "crew chief, Joe who was standing near the car most of the time. He was more prouder then I was that's for sure. Yes, memories and more memories. When I heard this terrible news about Joe, I was speechless. This is just not real. Like with Lena, this was unacceptable and impossible. Yet for reasons that my simple mind will never understand, GOD has taken them unto himself and home. I will grieve and shed tears for my friend and brother for many years to come. I will miss him and his antics and his very being. As I said, how do you fill 43 years of someones life. Only GOD knows that answer and right now GOD is holding him in HIS loving arms and in the light of HIS eternal presence. I am sure that Joe and Lena are once again holding each others hands. Beloved brother, rest in eternal peace.

Gerard Esposito - April 19, 2020 at 07:32 PM

LB

“ *Liz Bonilla lit a candle in memory of Joseph F Moliero, Jr.*



Liz Bonilla - April 19, 2020 at 10:11 AM

LF

“ You were one of the best men I know, Joe. So many fun memories of you and Lena to reflect back on while living next door to you. You were a gentle giant of a man who was always there for anyone who needed help. You had a heart as big as the world. Rest in peace, dear friend. You will never be forgotten. See you on the other side.
Love, Elba & Louie

Louis Fernandez - April 19, 2020 at 09:48 AM

LW

“ Lori Wood lit a candle in memory of Joseph F Moliero, Jr.



Lori wood - April 19, 2020 at 12:19 AM

JM

“ Let me first say I love and fondly remember my brother in law as a great conversational. Love to tell stories about people that I had no clue he they were but none the less would tell it anyway. Then of course he would be the one you'd ask who played in what movie, who sung that song, etc He had such a good memory for trivia. He will be missed by all and oh yeah how I remember how he would enjoy spending time talking with my children Rest In Peace , Joe, Lena is by your side, Love , Joyce

joyce masella - April 18, 2020 at 08:15 PM

JM

“ I’m going to miss him very much working with him trying to figure out where the best place to get hero sandwiches when we operated the work trains 🚂 how we went crabbing but joe loves to talk cars and to hell with crabbing 😂 but most of all I’ll miss his smile 😊 and laugh 😂 joe u and Lena who I also miss r now together forever love 💕 your co worker John and Nicki Montebianco

john montebianco - April 18, 2020 at 05:05 PM