



## Joseph Bernardi

March 7, 2007

Bernardi, Joseph age 84 of Northville, March 7, 2007.

Beloved husband of Helma. Dear father of Robert (Cheryl); Diana (John) Roberts; Kathryn (Raymond) Kwiecinski; Donald (Linda); David (Judith) ; ♦ and Carol (Neal) Carson. Loving grandfather of Joseph, Richard, Melissa, Christa, Nicholas, Amanda, Rachel, Joseph, Julie, David, Maggie, Michael, and Alexandra; and dear great-grandfather of Mia, Aria, Ava, Aidan, Lukas, Daisy, Jacob, Annabelle, Robert, and Joseph. ♦ Dear brother of Adelia Bassi.

Mr. Bernardi, Executive Chef at Ford Motor Company and Owner of Pepino's Restaurant in Walled Lake, was born in Switzerland. He was a World War II veteran, and a Ranger in Merrill's Marauders, serving in the China-Burma-India Campaign. Visitation Saturday 5-9 PM and Sunday 2-8 PM at Vermeulen Funeral Home, 46401 W Ann Arbor Rd (btwn Sheldon and Beck) Plymouth. Rosary Sunday 7:30 PM. In state Monday 10:00 AM until 10:30 AM funeral mass at St. James Catholic Church, 24491 Riverview Lane, Novi. Entombment Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Southfield.

Memorial contributions may be made to Angela Hospice, 14100 Newburgh Road, Livonia MI 48154; or Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute, 4100 John R, Detroit MI 48201.

To leave a message of condolence, click on the Online Condolences link on this page.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Joseph Bernardi*

December 07, 2023 at 05:11 AM



“ *How do you thank a man who was the center of your universe? Gramps was the one constant throughout out my life...he gave me his name and cared for me like a fourth son, starting back when I had no cousins. He guided me through the rocky road of adolescence and into adulthood. Always there, he taught me by example. His quiet expectations of excellence remain with me today. I hope to pass these lessons on to my unborn child. I will strive to be a fraction of the father that Gramps was to so many. I'm in awe of God and the circle of life that he has laid out before us. From Gramps and then to my own child, the love and strength of the Bernardi clan will endure.*

**Joey Roberts** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM



“ *One of the greatest gifts a physician can offer to his family is to be a part of their medical team. It is also one of the greatest challenges. It was my honor to accompany Grandpa along his journey. The hardest part was being the first to know the results of his initial tests. At times it felt awkward to know such overwhelming information. Sharing this information with those closest to him while trying to be positive was an emotional struggle...I could already see the path that was inevitable and it crushed me to know this was happening to such a great man. He will forever hold a special place in my heart as the patriarch of such a loving and emotional family. Thank you, Grandpa, for taking me into your family and treating me as one of your own.*

**Chris Hutchinson** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

MI

“ Grandpa, there are no words to describe the feeling I had today, having to watch so many people express their love for you with teary eyes. Now I understand what you meant when you told my mom that you had an aching heart, because that's how mine felt this morning. I can't thank you enough for what you have done for myself and the rest of the family? without you and grandma none of this would even exist. I would also like to thank you for all those great memories of us doing work around Pepino's together. Even though at the time, 9am on a Saturday, I probably didn't appreciate them as much, I miss them already. Over the last few days I have been hearing so many great stories about you and all of your accomplishments and it's truly amazing the mark you left. I can only hope that one day, the one I leave is even close.

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**Michael** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

ME

“ Grandpa...I took this photo of you at Aidan's birthday party, end of August 2006. It was a beautiful day, and there you were hanging out, eating salami or something, and unexpectedly, I just walked up to you and took your picture. You were completely unsuspecting. And what I didn't know was that this would be the last photo I would take of you, the last before just 2 weeks later, you were to begin your journey home. Again, so unsuspecting. I'm so sorry...I'm sorry that I passed you and snapped and kept moving. Because now I want to go back into that photo and freeze time for just a bit longer, OK, a lot longer. I want to go back to the time when you were outside in the sunshine eating your beloved salami and you didn't know you were dying. I want to hold your strong hand, and tell you yet again what a hero I thought you were. God had such a magnificent plan for you...one can only dream of touching as many lives as you did. Someone once said, "If you're going to die anyway, why not die with a story well-written?" My response to that is, "So, how'd you do it, Joe?" Thank you for walking me through your life while we were in Europe...I was a documentary junkie, forcing you to endure my photo shoots and video footage with the camera that you kept trying to bat out of your face, laughing and telling me "boo" and to knock it off. You gave me a gift. Thank you for giving me away at my wedding...I can't hear "Canon in D" without thinking of you holding my hand in the church lobby, waiting to walk, both of us flipping out inside. Thank you for hundreds of Pepino meals (both in the restaurant and out). Because of Pepino's, my children got their vegetables. How many people have I told about "My Grandpa?" I can't even count. And I won't stop until my time comes to sit with you again in the sunshine and tell you face to face how happy I am to see your beautiful face again.

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Melissa - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

RA

“Dad, I will miss all of our times working together, "making do's" at the restaurant. Things would be going along pretty good and then it would happen....we would disagree on how the "make a do" should work. You'd call me a "stubborn pollack" and I would call you a "stubborn dago". Somehow the job would get done (your way...the only way) and then we'd go out and get a coney. How many trips did we make, getting new chairs for Pepino's and then stop at Lafayette for a few coneys. We had to park the truck in front because we were afraid someone would steal the chairs out of the pickup truck. Sometimes we'd have to circle for a while to find a parking spot. I'll miss you and I love you.

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**Ray** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

MI

“Dear Poppy, I was really sad when I heard you were sick, and I hoped you would get better. My heart was warmed when I saw you at Christmas. I was thrilled when you blew out all your candles at once on your birthday this year. You brighten my soul whenever I have memories of you. I love you so much, til the end of the world.  
Love, Mia

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**Mia** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

AV

“dear poppy, i will miss you and when i come over i will miss your warm smiles. and for the rest of my life i will have your sweet memories in my heart. and i will miss your nice greetings when i come over.and i will treasure you forever. love, ava suzanne watson

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**ava** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

MA

“ Papa -- We've been asked to reflect upon the greatest gift you ever gave us during your life. Now, apart from a deep appreciation for Lafayette Coney Island, I think there could be no gift greater than family. Because of you and Gram, we will always be a part of this little club known as the "Bernardis." We're loud and numerous, sometimes cranky, but always dedicated. And we like to get together and eat -- usually something you cooked up. There's no getting out of it -- it is who we are and it is where we belong. We will miss you, and our big gatherings will seem a little too empty somehow. But know that we love you, and just as important, that we love each other. You gave us this great gift of family, and through us, you will be loved, remembered and always here.

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**Maggie** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

TS

“ To The Bernardi Family, You have my sincerest sympathies. You will be in my thoughts and prayers. Til then...

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**Thomas Schlarman** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

DR

“ Dear Helma and the entire Bernardi family I remember Joe as one of the most humble fine men I have had the opportunity to know and care for. Taking his medical history was like pulling teeth. Without you Helma I could not have known how he was feeling. He was clearly one of those characterized as the 'Greatest Generation', who believed hard work and good values would be rewarded. He certainly was rewarded by your mutual love and dedication and the family you both raised. Diane and my thoughts are with you. Mel Rubenfire

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**Diane and Mel Rubenfire** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

CA

“Dad, you tried so hard not to leave us - everyday, every night, every minute you tried. Thank you for trying so hard, and for giving me life, for fixing my broken tricycle, for backyard ice rinks, for growing tomatoes and planting a weeping willow tree, for Saturday nights - sitting in your chair waiting for me to run out after a bath to jump in your arms, thanks for church every Sunday, and growing up on Chippewa, for all our many pets, dance lessons and recitals, the best Christmas', my sisters and brothers, thank you for loving, protecting, and teaching me. Most of all I thank God for being your daughter. A couple of weeks ago you were grimacing. I asked where you were hurting and you pointed to your chest. I asked if you were having chest pain. You said no that you had an aching heart. I will try to fill my heart ache with all the memories you have given me -I love you Dad see you when its time.

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**Carol** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

RI

“Grandpa, I am so fortunate to have spent as many days with you as I did. To this day and probably the rest of my life I will be inspired by the simple lessons you taught me, starting with pulling weeds in your garden as a boy to watching you never retire and being dedicated to your work until your last days. Your influence will carry on by all the people you have touched. I love you and miss you forever.

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**Rick** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

CO

“To the Bernardi Family, Our thoughts are with you during this difficult time. We are so sorry for your loss.

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**Carl & Carol Ovren** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

AR

“ *Poppy - I love you and you are the best Poppy. I was sad and worried when you got sick, but now your life is better with God. I will miss that I can ever see you smile at me again, but you will always be in my heart. I love you, Aria*

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**Aria** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

IL

“ *To David, Judi and your entire family - our deepest sympathy on your loss. Your father was of deep character. May he have eternal happiness.*

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**Irv and Peppy Levy** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

DO

“ Dad, Remembering your life brings back a flood of memories that warm my heart and sustain me until we are together again. I still see you through a child's eye; sitting on the couch reading the paper, playing with the dog in the backyard, or cooking a Sunday dinner on the stove in the basement. I can picture you hovering over David and I with your hands pressed against a wall in Tiger Stadium, sheltering us from a standing room only crowd of 59,000 people. And after the game going for cones. As we got older, hunting trips with us boys. You always had a lunch fire to toast our sandwiches ready by 8:30, and then lunch at noon-- salami, Tuma cheese, crusty bread, and red wine. And then later at night, poker games in the camper. You always went easy on the bets when you knew you had us beat. I'll always remember when I was in the hospital with chest pains and worried about Linda and three small kids at home. You wrapped your arm around me and I was 5 years old again. Dad could fix it and the tears just poured out. You always showed us how to work hard and do the little things that make a difference. That is what made you so successful in life. You showed us by the way you lived how to love our families and raise our children.

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**Donnie** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

CP

“ Dave, Judi, & Family, Please know that we are thinking of you and send you our love and prayers. With deepest sympathy in your loss.

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**Charles & Carol Paavo** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM

KA

“ Dad, I miss you so much, my heart is broken. I want you to rest in the peace you deserve. I just wish I could have made it go away. Love you forever.

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**Kathy** - December 12, 2014 at 10:33 AM