



Joseph Borchanian

February 16, 1926 - February 27, 2023

Borchanian, Joseph February 27, 2023, age 97 of Northville. Beloved husband of the late Mary. Devoted and loving father of Michelle (Mark) Zyskowski. Proud grandfather of Joseph. Dear brother of the late: John (Joan) Borchanian. Dear uncle of Renee (Bill) Walter, Greg (Lisa) Borchanian, Linda (Ed) Shaw, and Lisa (Paul) Secrest. Visitation Sunday March 5th 2 – 8 PM at Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home, 46401 Ann Arbor Road, West (between Sheldon and Beck) Plymouth. Rosary at 7 PM. In state Monday, March 6th 10 AM until the 10:30 AM Funeral Mass at Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church, 47650 N. Territorial Road (at Beck), Plymouth. Interment Glen Eden Memorial Park. Memorial contributions may be made to The Salvation Army Eastern Michigan Division, (Website only: 16130 Northland Drive, Southfield, MI 48075 or online at: centralusa.salvationarmy.org/greatlakes/ways-to-give) To share a memory, please use the share a memory tab on this webpage.

Family Obituary:

Joseph Borchanian was born on February 16, 1926 in Southwest Detroit to immigrant Armenian parents who sought religious freedom and a better way of life. The second of two sons, Joseph loved the vibrance of growing up in a multi-cultural neighborhood and learned how to speak a few words of greeting and friendship in a multitude of languages. His neighborhood was a true melting pot of immigrant families coming to the Detroit-area to find work and this established Joseph's love of language, culture and good ethnic food.

Joseph's childhood during the Great Depression was difficult but also happy. He shared stories of jumping trains to kick off coal to warm his home, using the rim of a barrel as a basketball hoop and not being able to afford the twenty-five cents fee to join Cub Scouts at school. As the Depression lifted, Joseph entered Southwestern High School where he excelled in sports. Earning letters in football as a half-back nick-named "Captain Midnight", basketball (forward) and track (hurdles), Joseph's athleticism continued throughout his life as he later took up bowling and his beloved golf to stay fit and active.

Joseph enlisted in the US Navy on June 5th 1944 at age 18 and served until the end of the War. The years Joseph spent in the Navy were his proudest and most adventurous. He was assigned to the Engine Room of a destroyer called the USS Dyson serving as a Machinist's Mate, Second Class. Part of the infamous "Little Beaver Squadron," Joseph's ship provided patrol and escort duty to the troops in the Philippines and Okinawa. While aboard the Dyson Joseph earned several medals and ribbons including a Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon, a Philippine Liberation Ribbon and a Bronze Star. A wonderful story-teller, Joseph regaled all who knew him with tales of his time in the Navy including the powerful typhoon that sunk three nearby vessels, Kamazi fighters that fired on his squadron, being entered in the "Mr. Navy" contest, surviving a direct hit to the engine room by a dud torpedo, swimming off the deck of the ship in shark infested waters, and visiting countries and islands a boy from "Del Ray" could only dream about in his wildest dreams. Joseph proudly wore his US Navy Veteran hats and clothing during his lifetime, honored to have served the people of the United States of America, "the greatest country in the world" (his words). Joseph's time in the military shaped his love of the water and of travel, his deep patriotism, and his strong work ethic.

Upon his return to the States, Joseph spent a few semesters at Michigan Normal (Eastern Michigan University) where he trained as a draftsman. Having a difficult time settling into serious studies following his adventures on

the open seas, Joseph left college to pursue a string of jobs including billboard sign painting and owning and operating a local pool hall. Eventually his love and talent of mechanical drawing earned him an entry level drafting position at Ford Motor Company where he would spend nearly 35 years of his life.

Joseph ultimately found his home in the Scientific Research Lab in Dearborn where he worked with some of the brightest minds in the Company on futurist models. Joseph was very proud to work for Ford Motor Company and was a faithful Company man.

A bachelor until he turned 40, Joseph spent these years traveling around the country and throughout Europe. He loved to dance, drink whisky and smoke cigars. He loved to bowl with the gang at the Satellite Room and golf with his Ford buddies on Fridays at Warren Valley. A man full of life and laughter, he loved being “Uncle Joe” to his brother’s four children, and a pseudo “uncle” to the seven children of his friend Johnny U., his best friend of over 80 years! Joseph did not expect to meet the love of his life, Mary, while standing up in the wedding of his longtime friend, Eddie. In fact, Eddie and his bride had plans to pair Joseph with another bridesmaid. However, when the minister changed around the wedding party match-up and paired Joseph and Mary to walk down the aisle together, love blossomed between the 40 year-old “Man of the World” and the 26 year-old Baptist School Teacher from Highland Park. Joseph taught Mary how to dance and Mary saved his life. The couple wed in 1966 and spent 54 happy years together, laughing and sharing a beautiful life together first on Cecile Street with their wonderful friends and neighbors and later in Northville. Mary would always say how “handsome” her husband was and tell everyone she knew how in their 54 years of marriage he never said an unkind word to her. Joseph was devoted to Mary, protecting her and providing for her throughout their entire life together. Joseph was heartbroken when Mary died in 2020 and missed her tremendously. In his final weeks, he was often heard calling for her in his dreams, smiling, and saying “Mary, I’m here! I’m coming!” We have no doubt that Joseph is finally with his beloved Mary

once again.

Mary gave birth to Joseph's only child, daughter Michelle, in 1969. Joseph embraced fatherhood whole heartedly, changing diapers, teaching her how to dance, introducing her to movies (Jaws at age 5!), taking Michelle shopping for clothes and even taking her to her first concert (Rick Springfield)! Daddy's little girl learned how to fix a toilet, change a tire, check her oil, use tools properly, ice skate, ride a bike, swim and throw a football while at his side. Joseph encouraged Michelle to work hard in school and was so proud of her academic accomplishments. He taught her the value of hard work and coached her to give every hard circumstance "two weeks" before quitting ("you can do anything for two weeks!). Beyond practical things, Joseph was generous with his time, his resources and his wisdom about life in general. Their conversations throughout his lifetime meant the world to them both. Joseph was a good, good father, who not only grounded Michelle, but gave her everything she needed to make her own way in life.

Joseph's retirement years were spent taking over the kitchen and cooking from Mary, grilling shish kebob on the patio, golfing three times a week with his beloved golf buddies, bowling, reading James Mitchner novels, traveling with Mary to his Navy reunions and abroad, fixing up his cottage (Michelle's first home), working in his yard and garden, volunteering for his condo association, and savoring the good life. When his first and only grandchild, Joseph, was born in 2009, Joseph was ecstatic! Joey and "Dado" had many adventures on the back deck where Joey learned how to water plants, use a leaf blower and perfect bubble blowing! Joseph cheered his grandson on at soccer games, Christmas concerts and Kindergarten graduation. He loved to throw paper airplanes, read Joey the funnies and make him laugh!

Joseph had a great humor, wisdom and contentment about him. He was quick to smile, and make others laugh with a quip, joke or funny story. He was healthy for almost his entire life, only slowing down when he reached his early 90s. Even with his body giving out and his independence starting to fade, Joseph embraced it all with grace and dignity and never complained about his

pain or circumstances. His caregivers adored him and lovingly cared for him in his final years. Joseph viewed life as sweet, found pleasure in the small things like watching the birds and chipmunks on his deck and feeling the sunshine on his face. He lived a beautiful life and enjoyed a peaceful death surrounded by those who loved him most. Fair winds and following seas, Joseph Borchanian. May you rest in eternal peace.

Joseph is survived by his daughter Michelle (Mark) Zyskowski, grandson Joseph, his niece Renee (Bill) Walter, nephew Greg (Lisa) Borchanian, niece Linda (Ed) Shaw, niece Lisa (Paul) Secrest, sister-in-law Rev. Dr. Lydia M. Sarandan and brother-in-law Louis (Nick) Sarandan along with great-nieces and great-nephews. He is preceded in death by his beloved wife Mary, his brother John (Joan) and his parents.

Cemetery Details

Glen Eden Memorial Park

35667 Eight Mile Road
Livonia, MI 48152

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 5. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home Plymouth
46401 Ann Arbor Road West
Plymouth, MI 48170
(734) 459-2250
plymouth@vermeulenfh.com

Rosary

MAR 5. 7:00 PM - 7:30 PM (ET)

Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home Plymouth
46401 Ann Arbor Road West
Plymouth, MI 48170
(734) 459-2250
plymouth@vermeulenfh.com

Tribute Wall



“ *Joseph Borchanian*

December 07, 2023 at 05:11 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Joseph Borchanian.*



March 02, 2023 at 05:26 PM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Joseph Borchanian.*



March 02, 2023 at 09:24 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Joseph Borchanian.*



March 02, 2023 at 08:26 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Joseph Borchanian.* ”



March 01, 2023 at 09:34 AM