

Obituary of Joseph T. Colarusso

In memory of Joe Colarusso, a man whose zest for life echoed the vibrant hum of his cherished radio waves, we mourn his tragic passing on December 2, 2023. Born in New Jersey in 1940, his life's journey spanned continents and decades, forever marked by his dedication to family, country, and embracing life to the fullest.

Joe's passion for ham radio took root early, transforming into a skill that he proudly wielded during his military tenure in Germany. An ardent Amateur Radio Operator, he assumed the role of a Specialist Radio Operator in Wildflecken, Germany, from 1961 to 1964, and continued his service in the Army Reserves from 1964 to 1967. Operating a Mars Radio Station in Germany, Joe facilitated crucial communication, patching soldiers through radio waves to their loved ones in the United States. He transcended the role of a mere technician; he was a lifeline, connecting soldiers with their families across the ocean.

Upon completing his service in Germany, fate intervened closer to home when Joe and Barbara crossed paths at a North Bergen, New Jersey bowling alley. Joe, the charismatic bartender, and Barbara, the enamored young lady sipping water for four hours, set the stage for a serendipitous connection. Their journey as husband and wife began in 1969, coinciding with the historic day when men first walked on the moon. They embarked on a 54-year orbit characterized by laughter, loyalty, and the joy of raising a son and daughter named Joseph and Gina.

Texas became their new home in 1978, where Joe's brilliance found a stage at Lockheed Martin. As an engineer, he tackled complex challenges, from investigating the story behind a fallen plane told in a crash recorder, to designing equipment that left its mark on the world. After retirement, the engineer and genius in him continued to thrive, leading him to consult for companies and secure 13 patents, each a testament to his innovative mind.

But Joe's heart found solace beyond the realm of blueprints and circuits. He was a pillar of Amvets Post 115, a familiar face who saw more than fellow veterans; he saw brothers and sisters in arms, offering a hand, a story, or just a quiet understanding. In his later years, time spent with friends and family was cherished in sort of a quiet and supportive energy. He never had a bad word to say about anyone and would often remind his children that "we're all different."

He leaves behind a legacy of love – a wife, Barbara, with whom he shared a lifetime of laughter; a son, Joseph, and his wife Xochitl, with granddaughters Xoey and Lila; and a daughter, Gina, and her husband Ran, with grandchildren Ben, Ety, Oz and Sophie. He also leaves a sister, Rosemary Colarusso, along with countless nieces, nephews, extended family, and friends, scattered across the country, each touched by his warmth and wisdom.

While his voice may no longer resonate through the airwaves, Joe's spirit endures, reverberating in the laughter and gratitude of his family and community, as well as in the echoes of a life well lived. His memory will be cherished, and his love remembered eternally.