

Joseph Sebastian Collentro, 85, formerly from Littleton and Acton, has finished his lifelong adventure. Joe passed away peacefully on Monday, January 18, 2021 at The Oasis at Dodge Park in Worcester. Joe woke each day as if it was his first. His family, friends and countless others will remember Joe's zest of life, his love for and devotion to his family, his tireless work ethic and his dedication and service to the community.

Joe was born on June 18, 1935 in Boston and raised in Newton. He graduated from Newton High School (1953) and Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA (1957) with a BS in Economics. Joe then graduated from the Naval Officer Candidate School (1957) with a commission as an ensign, US Navy. He served for four years.

Joe married the love of his life, Donna Lee Kennett in November, 1957. They recently celebrated their 63rd anniversary. Joe and Donna raised five children and are blessed with 11 grandchildren.

Joe had a successful career in the high tech industry. Joe worked primarily for Honeywell and Digital Equipment Corporation in various procurement management positions; traveling worldwide and receiving many accolades. He served as New England president of The Purchasing Management Association of Boston (PMAB). After "retiring" in 1992, Joe started his own consulting business.

Joe gave his time to many communities, parishes and organizations. Joe served as several offices of the Billerica Jaycees, belonged to Knights of Columbus in Billerica and Oklahoma City and served on Town Planning Boards in Billerica and Littleton. He also started a school PTA, was as an active member of F&M's alumni association and his high school reunion committee. Joe was an active member of his many parishes. Most recently, Joe belonged to the Society of St. Vincent De Paul St. Anne Conference. While living in Littleton, Joe was an instrumental member of the town committees overseeing the improvements to the schools, renovations of both the middle school and fire station and the construction of a new police headquarters.

Joe had a passion for sports. He played football, baseball and hockey in high school and hockey in college. He also enjoyed golf. He coached youth baseball teams and was a high school football referee. Joe was always passionate about his teams - Atlanta (Boston) Braves, NY Yankees, NE Patriots and Notre Dame Football. Joe loved reading good spy mysteries and listening to big band music. Joe shared a deep appreciation for fire, police and rescue departments - he often listened to the scanner and always knew what was happening.

Joe was the oldest son of the late Joseph V. and Lena (Neufell) Collentro. His youngest son, Brian and brother, James predeceased him. Joe leaves behind his beloved wife Donna, son J. Scott Collentro and his wife, Ann of Groton, MA; daughter Terri Collentro Morte and her husband, Stephen Morte of SC; daughter Lisa and her husband, Robert Curry of Littleton; son Jeff Collentro of RI; his predeceased son Brian's widow, Lisa E Collentro; and brother, William Collentro and his wife Caroline of North Falmouth, MA. Joe also leaves behind eleven grandchildren - John, Andy and Kate Collentro; Marston and Marissa Morte; Kyle and Courtney Curry; Brittany, Brooke, Jack and Jason Collentro. In addition, half-brothers Paul J and Bruce G predeceased Joe and he leaves behind half-brothers Robert J, Kevin L, Lance and Richard Collentro and half-sisters Nina Moore and Karen Weston.

Due to Covid-19 precautions, the family will have a private service and burial with military honors at Woodlawn Cemetery, Acton. In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Joseph can be made to either:

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul St. Anne Conference, 75 King Street, Littleton, MA 01460. Donations can also be made online (svdboston.org/donate) with special instructions noted for St. Anne Conference, Littleton. or:

Massachusetts General Hospital - Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease Research Center; Massachusetts General Hospital Development Office, 125 Nashua Street, Suite 540, Boston, MA 02114, Attention: Kylie Baruffi. Donations can also be made online (<https://giving.massgeneral.org/donate/>). Please be sure to indicate that the gift is a tribute gift in memory of Joseph.

Joe always loved a great party. Our family will honor his wishes with a celebration of his life at a later time. Notes can be mailed to Family of Joseph Collentro, P.O. Box 1333; Littleton, MA 01460.

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**Our Dad**

*Scott, Terri, Lisa and Jeff*

**"Morning Has Broken"**

*by Eleanor Farjeon*

*Morning has broken, like the first morning  
Blackbird has spoken, like the first bird  
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning  
Praise for them springing fresh from the Word*

*Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from Heaven  
Like the first dew fall, on the first grass  
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden  
Sprung in completeness where His feet pass*

*Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning  
Born of the One Light Eden saw play  
Praise with elation, praise every morning  
God's re-creation of the new day*

This song was one of our Dad's favorites. It reminds us, his children, of how he would light up whenever he heard it on the radio or at mass. More importantly, it reflects a lot about who our Dad was - how he would approach each day with boundless energy, his faith in God and his spirit for living, for life.

Dad's work ethic and energy was unrivaled. Dad was most happy juggling several projects, moving from one activity to the next, working all day, coming home and then rushing off to a town or parish council meeting. He started each day the same and his energy and spirit was

infectious. He loved managing projects and always gave it his all. For many, Dad was the go-to person. Dad, in his own, unique way, always got things done.

Dad has always been dedicated to his faith. Ever since we can remember, Dad has been an active volunteer at his parishes. He has been an usher, headed finance committees, organized social and fund raising events, spearheaded toy and food drives, raised funds for major church renovations. Most important, Dad has always supported those in need. Most recently, Our parents were deeply committed to the Society of St. Vincent De Paul St. Anne Conference.

Dad had strong convictions - he knew who he was and what he believed in. Our family often disagreed on many things. But, Dad listened and instilled in all of us that it is fine to disagree as long as we respect each other. We know our Dad as a fighter who never wanted to burden us or others with his struggles but was **Always** the **first** to reach out to help.

The most significant impact that Dad had on us was his love for and devotion to his family. To both Mom and Dad, family is and has always been everything. Our parents taught us about marriage. Our parents have been married for 63 years - an inspiring testament to their love and devotion to each other. Our Dad was so proud of our Mom, of us and of our children. He shined as he spoke about us and his grandchildren. He protected all of us and supported us unconditionally and for this we are forever grateful.

Growing up in the Collentro family was one long adventure ...

Dad would always be the first one up - The Collentro's never slept in. Dad loved being in charge on those weekends when our Mom worked the 3-11pm shift at the hospital. We would get to eat hot dogs and beans - often having the leftover hot dogs in our scrambled eggs the next morning. We would also see Dad's mischievous side like when he would throw fire crackers out the back window as we squealed in delight. Our vacations were pretty wild. We will never forget when the 7 of us traveled in a Winnebago to the Grand Canyon! We remember thinking that Dad really wanted to be a fire fighter. He would always listen to the scanner. We remember the time when he returned from a west coast business trip, dressed in his suit, and went directly to a house fire. The suit was so smoky that it was tossed! Dad loved sports - we all played and Dad coached. He took his role as a high school referee quite seriously - by the end of his first season, all of us knew every football rule and penalty. It was special when we (taking turns) watched the Oklahoma Sooners play, traveled to the Cotton Bowl or to South Bend, scored tickets to the Bruins. We have fond memories of our Dad and Brian seeing the Patriots play on Christmas Eve.

Family meals were the times when one really saw who our Dad was. He thrived - he would always tell stories and have everyone laughing and smiling. Our Dad lit up the room! Our friends loved coming over, especially for the holidays. Many called him, "Bluto" because Dad reminded them of (and he looked like) John Belushi. Of course, our Dad loved this! Anyone who visited our Parents' home would either have to eat something or bring food home - it was just the way it always was. Dad loved taking people out to eat, especially to his favorite Italian restaurants (and there were many!). He loved doughnuts. In fact, we all remember the after mass breakfast socials: Dad was often in charge and we got to eat as many doughnuts as we wanted. We are comforted by lasting memories as we remember Dad sitting at the head of our dinner table just being "Joe".

Thank you, Dad. We will miss you and always love you. We know you are watching over us, smiling and enjoying a doughnut!

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Fond Memory Of a Big Brother

William Collentro

In everyone's life there are several times when selecting a path forward from multiple options is required. Early in life, the decisions are often made for us. However, as we grow the options are selected based on examples we generally learn from parents. For me, my oldest brother, Joe, was always there to assist with my childhood decisions but also provided, by example, a guide for making decisions during my life. While there are endless examples of Joe's influence on my life, I thought that a quick account of a specific single day event would demonstrate this fact.

I struggled during my first couple of years of college. It was depressing. While home for a Christmas break, Joe called and asked (perhaps it was "told") me that he had two tickets for a Boston Patriots game against Buffalo. I can't recall, but I may have been staying at Joe & Donna's house for the Holiday since there was no other place to stay.

Sunday came and we looked outside to see a raging blizzard with about a foot of snow on the ground. However, Joe had tickets and we were going to the game and would not be late! I put on at least two layers of clothes and helped Joe shovel the driveway. When we got in the car, I noticed that Joe had a neatly wrapped gift that he was going to put in a "Toys for Tots" collection box at the game.

When we got to Fenway Park there were no parking spaces. That would not deter Joe. We drove out Commonwealth Avenue and parked at an armory about two miles from the Park. Joe, urging me to hurry and carrying the wrapped gift, flagged down a trolley headed to Kenmore Square. Not easy since it wasn't a scheduled stop and it was still snowing. Again, obstacles that Joe simply dealt with. We rushed from the trolley to the Park, arriving before the scheduled kickoff. The start of the game was delayed as they cleared the snow off the field. Fortunately, the snow was much lighter although it was windy. In our haste to get to our seats for kickoff, we missed the toy drop off.

We had a great time watching the game although the Patriots lost. We took an extremely crowded trolley back to the armory. Of course, Joe led the way and physically stood next to the driver to make sure he stopped at the armory. Joe's plan was for me to go to the middle door and step out once we stopped. At Joe's direction, the driver stopped at the armory. The middle doors didn't open leaving me on the wrong side from Joe! Not a problem. Joe was banging on the doors of the trolley telling the driver to open the middle door. Persistence was a great Joe quality that I developed. The door opened and we both struggled through the snow to the car. When we got in the car, I noted the toy in soggy wrapping on the seat next to Joe. He said that the collection boxes were closed but that he would make a trip the next day to make sure that a needy young person got the gift.

In life there are challenges. This story demonstrates that courage, persistence, leadership, and the desire to complete a task can overcome obstacles. That one-day experience shaped my thought process for the many challenges in my life. Everyone needs a big brother Joe.