



Joseph Margiotti Pugliese

August 19, 1936 - October 20, 2024

Joseph M. Pugliese (1936-2024)

Joseph Margiotti Pugliese - "Joe" to everyone privileged enough to have met him - died on Sunday, October 20, 2024 in Bloomington, Minn. He was 88 years old.

Born to Sebastian C. and Grace (Margiotti) Pugliese in the Mount Lebanon section of Pittsburgh on August 19, 1936, he grew up in a household that emphasized education, service, faith, and hard work.

Joe attended Mt. Lebanon High School, where he excelled in math and science. His weekend activities included (out) racing his friends in his parents' eight-cylinder Chrysler New Yorker and taking in the BeBop bands in the jazz clubs of Pittsburgh's Hill District (dutifully supplied by the bartenders with youth-friendly beverages). He spent his summers as a camp counselor, an avid swimmer, and an NRA-certified riflery instructor.

As the middle son of an Italian-American family, his parents naturally attempted to coax Joe into the priesthood, at one point even inviting their parish priest over for dinner. To the everlasting gratitude of Joe's future family, the priest left with nothing more than a full stomach.

Instead, Joe's dream was to become a geophysicist and study the mysteries of the rocks that lie beneath our feet. It was this goal that led him to Penn State University, which not only was both affordable and convenient, but also home to a large department in his area of interest. When he graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in 1955, armed with a rigorous education, strong grades, and compelling faculty recommendations, he was able to coast past other candidates with advanced degrees to the most prestigious employer of all: the United States government.

Joe moved to the Washington, D.C. area and went to work as a researcher for the U.S. Bureau of Mines. For Joe, working in public service was the highest calling there was, and he was proud to also lend his technical expertise to the military during his service in the Navy reserves.

Living near the nation's capital during the height of the Civil Rights movement also helped further cement his commitment to social justice. He boycotted the segregated Maryland restaurants near his office and even joined the famous 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, where he listened as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his legendary "I have a dream" speech.

In 1965, when the U.S. Bureau of Mines offered him the opportunity to expand his work by moving to their Minnesota field office, he discovered a new home. Eventually, apart from a few lingering remnants of his old Pittsburghese, Joe would even come to sound as Minnesotan as a Norwegian bachelor farmer.

Several years into his new life in Minnesota, by way of a Catholic singles group he met Ann Marie Johnson, a physical therapist and graduate of the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. Their first date on July 4, 1968 began in the afternoon aboard his wooden, folding Klepper kayak on Cedar Lake and soon became an evening spent watching the twinkling fireworks over the city's skyline. Six weeks later, when Ann went off to Hawaii on vacation, Joe

experienced what was perhaps the most anxious week of his life. When she returned not having run off with any handsome surfers, Joe wasted no time in seating her on a park bench overlooking the lake and proposing. The two would visit that bench every year and - in Joe's one known act of law-breaking - every ten years they would carve their initials and the year into the wood. They returned to that same bench for five decades.

In 1971, the couple was blessed with a daughter, Marie Christina. "Papa" and Marie would remain mutually smitten for the next half-century.

Joe took pride in his work at "The Bureau," traveling as far south as Georgia and as far north as Labrador, Canada to conduct research and assist with safe and effective mining and engineering work. Over the years, he published numerous articles in trade journals and presented to his colleagues at conferences around the country, all in the advancement of safe, efficient, and environmentally protective mining.

A creature of habit, Joe was known to enjoy lunch at the same restaurant every business day at the same time, year after year. In fact, he often would walk through the door just as a "Joeburger" was coming off the grill. (Over time, he learned to alert the staff whenever he was going on vacation, just so they wouldn't cook one by mistake.)

On weekends, he could be found puttering with a paint brush or a screwdriver, "yarding," swimming at Lake Hiawatha, boogieing to jazz/funk music, and stoking the grill or fireplace, depending on the season. His commitment to service never flagged, and he was a regular volunteer at Little Brothers of the Poor and Loaves & Fishes, an American Sign Language choir member at Pax Christi Catholic Church, and a meticulous judge at elementary school science fairs.

Unfortunately, certain forces in the increasingly divisive political climate in Washington disagreed with Joe's profound commitment to the public sector as a resource for the public good. When Congress voted to close down the U.S. Bureau of Mines, Joe found himself forced into early retirement after 37 years of service.

But for Joe, early retirement didn't mean being retired. He worked and volunteered at the American Indian OIC and other local learning centers, where he taught a combination of classroom math and practical work-life skills to adult learners, helping numerous students earn their GEDs along the way.

Eventually, Joe finally decided it was time to turn in his snow shovel and ladder, so Ann and he moved out of their home near Lake Nokomis and into the Presbyterian Homes of Bloomington. There he became a regular fixture of the community, attending church services and social events and serving as a familiar, outgoing, and welcoming friend to residents and staff alike. He remained such all the way up through this past Sunday afternoon.

Joe Pugliese is survived by his wife of 55 years, Ann Marie (Johnson) Pugliese, his daughter, Marie (Pugliese) Schick, son-in-law Joe Schick, and grandchildren Katherine and Adrian (of Watertown, Mass.), as well as a beloved extended family of relatives, friends, colleagues, and neighbors.

Please join Joe's fellow loved ones in honoring his memory and legacy on Monday, October 28: Visitation at 10:00 am, a funeral service at 11:00 am, and luncheon will take place at Pax Christi Catholic Community in Eden Prairie. At 3:00 pm the same day, the mourners will convene for the burial at Lakewood Cemetery in Minneapolis, the city that Joe Pugliese called home for a half-century, and so it shall be forever.

Memorials may be sent to People for Parks or a youth education or recreation organization of your choice.

Live Stream of the service will start at approximately 10:50am Central time. <https://www.paxchristi.com/livestream.aspx?subheadertext=Live+Stream>

If there is trouble with the link, please visit the Pax Christi website here: <https://www.paxchristi.com/index.aspx>

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 28. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Pax Christi Catholic Church
12100 Pioneer Trail
Eden Prairie, MN 55347

Funeral Service

OCT 28. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Pax Christi Catholic Church
12100 Pioneer Trail
Eden Prairie, MN 55347

Graveside Service

OCT 28. 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (CT)

Lakewood Cemetery (Minneapolis)
3600 Hennepin Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Tribute Wall



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Joseph Margiotti Pugliese.

October 25, 2024 at 11:05 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Joseph Margiotti Pugliese.



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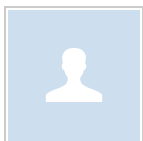
October 25, 2024 at 01:29 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Joseph Margiotti Pugliese.



October 25, 2024 at 01:29 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Joseph Margiotti Pugliese.

October 24, 2024 at 03:02 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Joseph Margiotti Pugliese.



October 24, 2024 at 03:02 PM