



Joseph Ray O'Donnell Jr.

October 13, 1951 - December 3, 2023

Joseph "Joe" R. O'Donnell, Jr., age 72, of Birmingham, passed away unexpectedly at his home on December 3, 2023. He is the beloved husband of 52 years to Jeanne (Erceg) O'Donnell, father to Joseph S. O'Donnell of Hoover, Janna (John) Weier of Huntsville, and Karly (Matthew) Warren of Hoover, and grandfather to Joseph "Joey" S. O'Donnell, Jr., Samuel Warren, John "Jet" Weier, Isabel "Izzie" Warren, and Emilia Weier.

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1951 to Joseph R. O'Donnell, Sr. and Louise O'Donnell, Joe was raised in Harmarville, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Springdale High School in Pittsburgh. After high school, Joe enlisted in the United States Army as a Combat Medic Specialist, and was immediately deployed as a member of the 101st Airborne Division to render aid to soldiers on the front lines of the Vietnam War.

Following his service in the war, Joe returned to the States, married the love of his life, Jeanne, and thereafter began work in the coal mines of Pennsylvania. After working as a miner and, later, as a mine foreman, Joe was recruited to become a Mine Safety and Health Inspector for the United States Department of Labor, Mine Safety and Health Administration "MSHA" in 1987. As an inspector and member of the MSHA National Response Team, Joe investigated or worked in the rescue efforts of every major mining disaster in the United States. In 2004, he moved to Alabama to be a Field Office

Supervisor for MSHA's Birmingham field office, and ultimately assumed the role of Assistant District Manager of the Southeast United States before his retirement in 2011.

After 24 years of service to MSHA, Joe retired to devote his attention to being a full-time husband and grandfather. Joe's driving passion in his final years was to be omnipresent in his grandchildren, children, and his wife's lives. Whether it was a school program, a sports game, or simply doughnuts on Sundays at Pappy's, Joe sought out opportunities to spend time with family with enthusiasm and pride.

Joe was a passionate golfer, and he loved playing weekly with his close friends, son, and grandson. While not on the course, Joe was a near-compulsive volunteer home improvement specialist and handyman for his family. In fact, Joe never met a project he could not teach himself how to complete and none of his children can recall a time when he did not have one or more projects in the works at his children's homes.

To those who knew him, he was an ever-present, vibrant soul who illuminated every room with his energy and zeal to entertain. Although he often showed his love through playful antagonism, his personality was one in which he could turn the sad into the happy, the doubtful into the confident, and the stranger into a friend. While he loved and brought joy to all those around him, he loved his wife above all else. Whether it was taking their regular trips to Las Vegas or sitting on their back porch having a cup of coffee, Joe savored spending time with his high school sweetheart and wife, Jeanne – doing something or nothing at all.

A Funeral Mass will be held at Prince of Peace Catholic Church, Hoover, Alabama, on Saturday, December 9, 2023 at 12:00 noon Central Time, followed by a reception at the Bradbury Clubhouse at Blackridge. In lieu of

flowers, please consider making a donation in Joe's honor to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital at <http://events.stjude.org/JoeODonnellJr> .

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

DEC 9. 12:00 PM (CT)

Prince of Peace Catholic Church
4650 Preserve Parkway
Hoover, AL 35226

Reception

DEC 9 (CT)

Clubhouse - Bradbury at Blackridge
1900 Blackridge Parkway
Hoover, AL 35244

Temporary gate code: #0606

Tribute Wall

JH

“ *I am thankful for Mr. O'Donnell's service to our nation in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. It is men like Mr. O'Donnell that served to safeguard our freedom. I offer my sincere condolences to his family, may he rest in peace.*

Jeff Hoefs - January 25, 2024 at 11:41 AM