

JOSEPH JOHN PUHLICK, JR.



Joseph John Puhlick, Jr., 90, of Orange Park, passed away August 6, 2021. He was born November 23, 1930 in Boston, Massachusetts to Joseph and Margaret Puhlick.



Joseph proudly served his country in the Navy Reserves enlisting in 1949. He later joined the United States Coast Guard retiring in 1975 with the rank of Chief YNC E7 USCG. While in the Coast Guard, he was a Communication Specialist. He loved what he did. He was always full of life and stories. He shared when he was stationed in Miami he'd get off work and go home to his parents. Every afternoon he'd have a glass of brandy with his father who also retired from the USCG. The love for his mother was undeniable. They always wrote letters to each other and sent pictures to stay in touch. He visited Miami frequently to go see her and his siblings. Their favorite holiday was St. Patrick's Day. They loved their green beer and "Kiss Me I'm Irish"! That was their day to celebrate.

He was stationed in Juneau, Alaska right after he married. He always joked that he picked up two little boys, Tony and Tim, his sons. He later picked up his daughter Theresa, in Brownsville, Texas. Joseph was always cutting jokes, the birth of his children, to Sonja Puhlick was one of them. One of Joseph's favorite stories was when he fell off a bouy tender in the Coast Guard. When he got to shore, soaking wet his Chief asked him, "Puhlick what the hell happened?" His reponse, "Sorry Chief, I had a date with a mermaid!" He loved sharing that moment and his love for mermaids and red hair continued. For his 89th birthday he had a mermaid birthday cake. The excitement on his face was priceless.

Following retirement, he lived in Orange Park, where he always stuck to his strict routine: Read the paper with a cup of coffee, the cup that you just rinse out and never wash! If you're military you know. He'd do his laundry, write his grocery list and hit the road. He shopped at Publix every day, mainly so he could see his daughter Theresa at work. Then he would go to the Roadhouse. He was the oldest and longest patron of the Roadhouse he'd been going since 1976 when they first opened. He loved is friends and they loved him. He had so many they all knew him as Coasty Joe. He'd often take his granddaughter Jade, who at the age of 4 was loaded down with quarters to go play the games. Cherry Cokes with a lot of cherries while he enjoyed a beer with friends, she was also well known. He later started that tradition with his great-granddaughters Jacquelyn and Jillian. The Roadhouse was his happy place, every day he was there, except Sunday, that was God's day.

His laugh was contagious. He was a very modest man yet had his one-liners what would

make your mouth drop. He was loved by everyone that knew him and those that had never met him. Joseph was someone you wanted to know. He brought pure joy to those around him. Everywhere was like a race, he knew where he was going and he wasn't going to get there in a slow manner. Fast walker doesn't even explain it. He drove the same way! Joseph was a family man. He talked to his mother every Sunday. After she passed in 2001 at the age of 98, those calls continued to his nephew Daniel and sister Peggy. He talked to his children and grandchildren as often as he could. If he didn't see Theresa at Publix he made sure to call her. Joseph always wanted to know how his family was doing.

The last 4 years of his life were filled with love, joy, laughs and adventures. His granddaughter Jade stepped in as his fulltime caregiver. The bond they had from the time Jade was born was unlike any other. They were a team and kept each other on their toes. Jade introduced Papa to Snapchat and that's where his love for social media and funny videos began. They shared their adventures and laughs with so many and touched people's lives that they had never met. She was his advocate, protector, friend, the jokester that kept them going and most of all she loved her Papa. Her girls, Jacquelyn and Jillian also experienced that love. Joseph would watch them while they were babies while Jade was suffering from seizures. That's where their bond started and only grew. For almost 40 years they had an unbreakable bond. They were Papa and Jade, a team, best friends and Snapchatting fools who love to make each other laugh. He became everyone's Papa. Without a doubt, Jade helped make the last 4 years of his life so special and memorable. He was her rock and she was his. They will always be connected.

He was predeceased by his parents as well as his brother Peter Puhlick.

He is survived by his children Anthony Puhlick of Orange Park, Timothy (Cindy) Puhlick of Middleburg and Theresa (David) Moody of Hilliard; grandchildren Timothy (Jennifer) Puhlick, II, Jade Elizabeth Reed, Jodi (Roy) Robinson, John (Naomi) Moody and Michael Kelley; 10 great-grandchildren including Jacquelyn and Jillian Reed; soon to be great-great-grandson Braxton Joseph (due in December); sister Margaret 'Peggy' Santella; niece Lori (Joe) Werner and nephew Daniel Santella; great niece and nephew Amanda and Zachary Werner; and many friends.

His funeral service will be held Monday, August 16 at 11 a.m. in the chapel of Jacksonville Memory Gardens Funeral Home. Burial will follow in the Garden of Everlasting Life.

Jacksonville Memory Gardens handled arrangements.