



Mr. Joseph E. Ritter

March 20, 1940 - March 7, 2023

Joseph E, Ritter, 82, passed away Tuesday, March 7, 2023.

Joseph was born the youngest of 5 children to Kuni and Albert Ritter in the suburbs of Chicago on March 20, 1940. His father died when he was 4 and his family grew up very poor where they struggled make ends meet. Working hard was a lesson Joseph learned early on and took with him his entire life. Looking for direction and having nowhere else to go, Joseph joined the army straight out of De La Salle High School in 1960. In the army he was a field medic where he learned to lean into his strengths, self-reliance, and understanding how to interact with many diverse people during his travels between the United States and Germany. He discovered his first taste of what would be his lifelong talent; selling. He created his own unsanctioned enterprise where he would make money by selling highly sought after creature comforts that were not readily available to other enlisted men. This would end up being Joseph's prototype for success.

When Joseph left the military in 1962, he began working a low paying job as an office worker at The Chicago Steel Company where he met the love of his life, Karyl Lee Ronberg. He firmly warned her that he had no plans to get married and if that was what she wanted, she better look elsewhere as settling down and having a family was not for him. They were soon married and have been happily for 55 years.

Wanting more from life for himself and his family, Joseph partnered up with his older brother Bill Ritter and they opened a car dealership that sold several brands - namely Toyota, Austin Healy, Triumph, MGB and Jaguar. They then signed an exclusivity agreement with Jaguar and became the only Jaguar dealer on the south side in Worth. Being able to provide for his family was Joseph's top priority. He worked tirelessly to give everything to his family that he never had himself. This was a goal in his life. He had even written in his high school yearbook that his goal was to have \$1,000,000. Against all odds, he did accomplish this goal.

As the years wore on, Joseph and Bill Ritter went their separate ways and Joseph owned the dealership exclusively. He was an accomplished sales professional, constantly balancing the needs of his business against those of his family. Joseph continued to successfully run his dealership for another 20 years until he retired from selling cars and sold the dealership.

Then began his second career: selling jewelry and loans. Joseph always liked to hustle and did all his networking the old way, by word of mouth and social interaction. He had many friends and continued doing this for the next 25 years and was still selling jewelry and collecting loans from the hospital days before he passed away.

His family was his greatest pride and joy. He loved his wife, children and grandchildren. He was so dedicated to his family that he always found time for them whether it be dinners, vacations, or one on one conversations. His family wanted for nothing, and he always provided sage and streetwise advice on any matter, when necessary, but without being overbearing. He loved as much as he was loved and will be terribly missed.

He was preceded in death by his mother Kuni, his father Albert, his brothers Bill, Robert, Joseph, and his sister Isabel.

Joseph is survived by his wife, Karyl Lee Ritter; his children Laura (LeRoy) Ritter-Martiniak, Christine (Mark) Ritter-Garritson, and Joseph Jr (Jessica) Ritter; and his grandchildren Krystal (Lucas) Wyss, Kayla Garritson and Kyle Martiniak.

Private interment In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital (www.stjude.org)

For further information please call Van Henkelum Funeral Home 708 448-3530

Cemetery Details

Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery

20953 W. Hoff Road
Elwood, IL 60421

Tribute Wall



“ *He was such a wonderful father. When I was little I remember wishing he was my dad!
The way he loved & took care of his family amazed me.
He was a gentle man & always carried himself with such grace.
My condolences to his family.
Wendy*

Wendy Hostler (Miz.) - May 08, 2023 at 09:39 PM