

Geswaldo Verrone Obituary



Geswaldo "Joe" Verrone passed away peacefully at the age of 94 in his home on September 10, 2025. Joe was born on December 28, 1930 in Johnstown, PA. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Andree Verrone, parents Toribio and Perina Verrone as well as his sisters, Jean Patterson, Minnie Bermosk, Corie Sallesse and Casey Pfister. Joe is survived by his son Mark Verrone, and daughters Sona Davis (William), and Lisa Bonanno (Robert) and his brother Dr. Anthony Verrone. He was the best friend of his grandchildren, Kevin Davis, Ashley Dakkouni (Larbi), Alexis Davis, Jordan Bonanno and Danielle Bonanno. Joe was a loving Great Grandfather to Farrah Dakkouni and Zayn Dakkouni. He also was a loving uncle to Carol Anne Dzuricky and two nephews Timothy and Eric Pfister.

After achieving his Bachelor's degree from University of Pittsburgh, he was drafted in the United States Army at the end of the Korean War in 1953 where he served as a Preventative Medicine Technician, his introduction to the Public Health profession. His incredible career included him receiving a Bachelor's of Science in Zoology-Chemistry from the University of Pittsburgh and a master's degree in Public Health in Sanitary Science from the University of North Carolina school of Public Health in 1960. He went on to get his Doctorate in Public Health Administration from Tulane University school of Public Health in 1974. Upon Completion of his training and service in the U.S Army as a Preventative Medicine Technician Joe was selected as district sanitarian for the Anne Arundel County health department in Annapolis, Maryland.

He then was recruited into the World Health Organization where he received additional training in Holland and served as the Chief Sanitarian-medical entomologist in South India. He instituted the first environmental health malaria eradication program in this portion of India.

In 1960 Joe received another foreign assignment in Ethiopia, Africa with the United States Agency for International Development. He developed and published the first Malarial Mosquito classification key for the Ethiopian Empire. Joe was asked by the Minister of Health to design an Ethiopian postage stamp commemorating malaria eradication in the Empire. This stamp was accepted by the Ethiopian government and the World Health Organization in Switzerland and continues to be coveted by stamp collectors throughout the world.

In 1962, Joe returned to the U.S. and received a commission from the U.S Public Health Service and was called to active duty in the Indian Health Service. He developed and implemented a comprehensive environmental health service program for the Native American people living in the states of Oregon, Washington and Idaho. He was called upon

to carry out a special assignment for the IHS so he and his family moved to Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

In 1983 Joe was again called upon to take an extended assignment to help with improving and renovating the management structure of the IHS. Joe also served as chairman of the United States Public Health Sanitary Career Development Committee.

Joe received many awards for his excellence in performance and leadership throughout his extensive career. From the USPHS he received a Commendation Medal, a Meritorious Service Award, a commissioned Officer Award, and Outstanding Service Medal. He received a Calvin Wagner Award from the American Academy of Sanitarians. From the University of North Carolina School of public health, he received the Distinguished Service Award along with Most Honorable Alumni.

His outstanding career was filled with personal and professional commitment to service of others.

Joe's legacy will live on in the countless memories of his laughter, warmth, and wisdom. Whether he was sharing stories over a meal with family or offering advice that shaped the lives of those around him, Joe's sharp mind and generous spirit were ever-present. His love for his children, grandchildren, and friends was unwavering, and he never hesitated to give, whether it was through a home-cooked meal or a word of guidance. Joe leaves behind a wealth of cherished moments and a legacy of knowledge, kindness, and family that will continue to inspire those who were lucky enough to know him. He will be dearly missed but never forgotten.

Friends may call at St. Elizabeth Catholic Church, 917 Montrose Road, Rockville, MD 20852 on Thursday, September 18, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. with Mass of Christian Burial to begin at 10 a.m. Interment Gate of Heaven Cemetery, Silver Spring, MD. To plant trees in memory, please visit the Sympathy Store.

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