

JOHN " JOHNNY" FUSILLI



John " Johnny" Fusilli, a beloved figure in the Monroeville and Wilmerding culinary scenes, of Pitcairn, formerly of Wilmerding, age 86, passed away on Monday, September 4, 2023. Born on August 14, 1937, in Trafford, Johnny was known for his warm personality. He was a loving son to his late parents, Dominzio Fusilli and Eva (Yanuzo) Fusilli, a devoted husband to his wife, Nina (Laird) Fusilli, and a cherished

brother to Darlene and Joseph Fusilli. He was also preceded in death by his first wife, Harriett (DeMann) Fusilli; his siblings, Donald, Rosemary, Katherine, Juliette, and Elizabeth "Lil"; and his dear friend Paul "Bones" Grubbs. Johnny also leaves behind countless nieces and nephews. Johnny was a proud veteran of the U.S. Army. After his service, he began his illustrious cooking career at the Phoenix Hotel in Monroeville. His journey started when the hotel's chef left, and Johnny, who had been taught to cook by his mother at a young age, was asked to fill in. This experience sparked a lifelong passion for cooking that would define Johnny's life and legacy.

After the Phoenix Hotel, Johnny worked for several establishments in Monroeville, including Monzo's, The Palace Inn, and the Wooden Nickel. His reputation for creating delicious and memorable dishes led to an opportunity to buy a building in his hometown of Wilmerding, where he started his own restaurant appropriately named, Johnny's. The restaurant quickly became a beloved fixture in the community, known for Johnny's famous dishes such as vinegar peppers with pork, Chicken a la Johnny, beans and greens, and of course Johnny's wedding soup. Johnny was a fierce and devoted cook, who was not afraid to cook in the dark during power outages and even cooking barefoot when his gout flared up. He sold his business in the late 1980s and entered semi-retirement.

Beyond his work achievements, Johnny was an avid runner and completed the 1984 Pittsburgh Marathon. He was a member of the Monroeville Racquet Club and LA Fitness, where he was known for his skills as a ping pong player, even challenging the World Ranking #2 player at one point. Johnny's love for cooking was not just about the food, but about making people happy. He believed that with each dish he served, he was paying homage to his mother, who first taught him the joy of cooking. His legacy will live on in the countless lives he touched, the meals he served, and the love he shared with those around him.

Friends are welcome Friday from 2-8 p.m. at **PATRICK T. LANIGAN FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY, INC., TURTLE CREEK / MONROEVILLE CHAPEL**, 1111 Monroeville Ave., Turtle Creek, 412-823-9350, where a Funeral Service will be held Saturday. Time to be determined. Johnny will be laid to rest with Military Honors in Good Shepherd Cemetery.

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