

DR. JOSEPH A. MARASCO, JR.



Joseph August Marasco, Jr., 92, of Amelia Island, FL (formerly Pittsburgh, PA) died peacefully with his family nearby on July 15, 2024. A man of strong faith, devoted to family, loving and kind towards friends, business associates, and acquaintances, Joe lived a long and fulfilling life.

Born in the Squirrel Hill section of Pittsburgh, PA, on January 26, 1932, to Joseph and Evaline Marasco, Joe grew up surrounded by family and solid friendships. His family attended Asbury Methodist church, and at the age of fourteen, Joe was seriously considering becoming a minister; however, his mother's prolonged and difficult illness and his scientific bent redirected him towards medicine. A student leader, basketball player, and violinist, Joe graduated as Valedictorian from Taylor Allderdice High School in 1950.

Throughout his early teens and schooling, Joe worked for his father's landscaping business. With his father's help and influence, Joe created beautiful yards and gardens at all of his subsequent homes. As an only child, Joe's mother insisted that he attend the University of Pittsburgh and live at home despite a strong scholarship opportunity at Yale. At Pitt, Joe became a member of the Sigma Chi fraternity. He received the national Significant Sig award in 1986. He and a group of Sig brothers remained lifelong friends and met regularly.

At Pitt, Joe was a student leader and president of the Omicron Delta Kappa leadership fraternity, played intramural basketball, participated in several plays, and graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1953, the same year that he married the love of his life, Carrie Rorison. Buoyed by her support working as a secretary, Joe entered the University of Pittsburgh Medical School. He cherished the time spent there with wonderful teachers and classmates. He continued with extracurricular activities, including theater and violin. He was one of the student volunteers who received the Salk polio vaccine in its early stages. After graduating in 1957, he interned at St. Francis Hospital in Pittsburgh.

Joe joined the Navy and served at the Philadelphia Naval Base, moving he and Carrie to South Jersey. Having thought he would become an internist, Joe spent time learning radiology while in the Navy, and it led him to a new path. He completed his residency in Radiology at the VA Hospital in Philadelphia in 1963. Kay, Beth, and Kurt joined the family during this time, and Amy arrived in 1969 when Joe was in practice in Pittsburgh.

In 1963, Joe and his family returned to Pittsburgh, where he joined the staff of Allegheny General Hospital. A year later, Joe moved to St. Francis Hospital, where he would spend the bulk of his career. While at St. Francis, Joe became a Clinical Associate Professor of Radiology at his alma mater and went on to be the Director of Continuing Education, Medical Education, and the Program Director of Radiology Residency at St. Francis. In 1972, Joe formed ALMAR Radiology with partner Gil Alexander and became the president of the group in 1974. ALMAR added Ohio Valley and Forbes Health System to their practice and Joe became Chairman of Radiology at both hospitals.

As he built and maintained a thriving practice, helping to usher in new technology at a rapid pace, Joe took on the added responsibility of working towards the betterment of the field of Radiology. Over the years, he filled positions on the boards of The Pennsylvania Radiological Society, The Pittsburgh Roentgen Society, The American College of Radiology, and The International Society of Radiology (along with many other professional societies.) He served these groups for many years, becoming the President of each. In addition, he served as Chairman of the Board of Chancellors of the American College of Radiology from 1984 to 1986, preceding his term as President in 1987. In 1994, he was awarded the Gold Medal from the American College of Radiology, an honor shared by Marie Curie in 1931. In 1998, he was elected to Honorary membership in the Italian Society of Radiology, and in 2002, Joe was awarded the Beclere Medal of the International Society of Radiology.

While reaching the heights of a career in Radiology, Joe still managed to participate in numerous extra-curricular activities. He performed in several community theater shows, played his violin for various groups, became a gourmet cook hosting many a fundraising dinner, and took active roles in the leadership of Ingomar United Methodist church and Fox Chapel Methodist church, which later became Faith United Methodist church. He used his architectural skills to help build and renovate churches, radiology departments, and several private homes, including the family home in Fox Chapel, and created elaborate model railroad layouts. He also spent many a happy hour on the golf course.

Joe loved golf. He became the President of his local club, The Pittsburgh Field Club, and, much later, was a founding member of the River Rats golf group at The Amelia River Golf Club, serving as their commissioner and making more great friends.

In addition, Joe took an active role on the board of the Pittsburgh Opera, including the President of the Board from 1982 to 1985 and then as Executive Vice President until 1999. In the 2003 Hax McCullough book detailing the history of Pittsburgh Opera, General Director Mark Weinstein credited Joe with being the "glue" that held Pittsburgh Opera together over the years. Prophetic words, indeed! When Weinstein left abruptly in 2008, Joe took on the role of Interim Director for six months until a new General Director was in place.

When the Medical Director at Forbes Health System abruptly resigned in 1996, Joe was asked to take the position. He agreed to help and retired from Radiology. He retired as Medical Director in 1998 and decided that he would use his time to benefit the church and musical organizations. He and Carrie moved to Florida full-time in 2000. He became an active member of the Amelia Plantation Chapel, served on the board, and was its president in 2006. Joe wrote regularly for the Chapel newsletter, Footprints. He enjoyed many years with the local CBS (Community Bible Study) group, gaining much from the studies and the friendships that formed throughout the years.

In 2004 and 2005, Joe joined the boards of ARIAS, the Jacksonville Symphony, and the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival (AICMF). His seat on the AICMF board led to a new career for him in 2013 when he was asked to become the Executive Director. He held this position for seven years, helping to bring the AICMF to a new level of artistic excellence and financial stability. Open Heart surgery in 2020 and the long recovery afterward forced him to resign. As his health improved, he rejoined the team as Executive Director Emeritus.

Throughout his busy life, Joe took an active role in the lives of his family and friends. From the very beginning of his relationship with Carrie, he treated her family members to movies and other activities. Carrie and Joe hosted the Rorison family reunion for many years. Sigma Chi dinners became a day-after-Christmas tradition at the Marasco homes. Joe, an only child, was especially close to the Aloise family, his mother's side. Many an evening was spent under the stars with Joe playing old Italian tunes on his mandolin in harmony with the voices of his cousins or singing the many opera songs that the family knew by heart. Later, 'Cousins Luncheons' made up for the fewer picnics.

Joseph leaves behind his children, Kay (D'Arcy) Kennedy, Beth (William) Ivins, Kurt (Caroline Pittari) Marasco, and Amy Marasco; grandchildren, Christopher Ivins, Sarah Ivins, and Ashton Marasco; and great-granddaughter, Ophelia Marasco.

A true Renaissance man, Joe was a faithful Christian, brilliant scholar, excellent physician, talented administrator, fine musician, gourmet cook, decent golfer, inspiring writer, and skilled model railroader. Most of all, he was a wonderful son, husband, father, and grandfather; a dedicated cousin, brother-in-law, and uncle; and a loyal friend to many.

Joseph will be buried privately beside his beloved, Carrie, in Allegheny Cemetery, Pittsburgh, PA. A Memorial Service will follow at 11:00 am on July 27, 2024, at Faith United Methodist Church in Fox Chapel.

A Memorial Service will be held at the Amelia Plantation Chapel at 11:00 am on August 17, 2024, on Amelia Island, Florida.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the following organizations: Pittsburgh Opera, Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival, Faith United Methodist Church, and Amelia Plantation Chapel. Arrangements by **JOHN A. FREYVOGEL SONS, INC.** (freyvogelfuneralhome.com)

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