

Obituaries

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Virginia 'Gini' Kiebzak Patwardhan



Virginia "Gini" Kiebzak Patwardhan of Lewiston died peacefully May 23, 2023, after a stay in hospice care, at the age of 81.

Gini was born in Buffalo May 27, 1941, to Stephen and Stephanie Kiebzak. She attended Kenmore High School, and then graduated from Amherst High School in 1959. She graduated from Buffalo State College with her bachelor's degree in 1963, and then earned her master's degree there as well. She pursued her work in art education at Lewiston-Porter and Niagara Falls high schools. She spent time in Hamilton, Ontario, studying to become a master weaver.

When she was touring locally

as Lewiston-Porter Community Ambassador, she met her future husband Ashok, of Pune, India, four miles down the road from where they would eventually come to reside for several decades. They married in December 1967, within hours of the first ever human-to-human heart transplant.

She stayed home with their children when the family lived in North Tonawanda, and then returned to teaching at Stella Niagara Education Park, when they relocated to Lewiston in the mid-1980s. She pursued a second master's degree certificate in language arts education, and shared her love of words, cre-

ativity and journaling with her students, until her retirement in the early 2000s. It was very important to her to create a welcoming classroom environment where kids were heard and seen.

Gini is survived by her husband, Ashok Patwardhan; children, Nathan Patwardhan (Kimberly) and Shama Patwardhan (Andrew McBride); grandchildren Cullen and Auden McBride; brother, Stephen Kiebzak Jr. (Debra); nephew, Stephen Kiebzak III; niece, Cassandra Vieira (Kyle); grandniece (Brooke Vieira); as well as numerous members of the extended Kiebzak and Patwardhan families around the globe.

She was an active member of her local community. She served on the board of Rivershore Inc. She shared her time and talents with The Women's Respite Program. She enjoyed lifelong learning and meaningful friendships with the Study Club. She loved the theater, and would travel to the Stratford Festival annually with her fellow teachers. Family and friends were everything to her. She was intentional in her faith.

There will be a Celebration of Life locally in summer 2023. In lieu of flowers, we welcome you to consider a donation to The Women's Respite Program in her honor.

Michael Anthony Casero

Michael Anthony Casero, 43, of Niagara Falls, passed away unexpectedly on June 8, 2023.

Born in Lewiston, he was the son of MaryRose (DiMino) Casero and Gerald "Jerry" Casero.

Mike was a graduate of the former LaSalle Senior High School. He attended St. John Fisher University and obtained his associate degree from Buffalo State College.

Mike was a bowling pro shop specialist and a talented ball driller. He began his own business at a young age and went on to work at Bowl-a-Drome for several years. Most recently, he was employed by Instacart.

Mike was an avid fan of the New Orleans Saints and an ex-



cellent bowler. He cherished the time spent with his children, especially at the playground and the aquarium.

In addition to his parents, Michael is survived by his fiancé, Melissa Driscoll and their be-

loved children, Gwendolyn and Jocelyn Casero; his siblings: Gerald "Jerry" Casero Jr., Catherine (Jonathan) Hoerner and Nicole (fiancé Bryon Paynter) Casero; his nieces and nephew: Chase and Rosalie Hoerner, and Madison Paynter; his dog, Nola; as well as by many loving aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

Visitation will be from 3-6 p.m. Monday, June 12, at M.J. Colucci & Son Niagara Funeral Chapel, 2730 Military Road, Niagara Falls, where funeral services will follow at 6 p.m.

Memorial donations in Michael's name may be made to the Aquarium of Niagara at www.aquariumofniagara.org/donate/.

Joseph A. Petrozzi

Founder of Capitol Cleaners and Coats for Kids

Joseph A. Petrozzi, 95, of Niagara Falls, passed away peacefully on June 6, 2023. Born in Niagara Falls, he was the son of the late Russell Petrozzi and Frances (LaMantia) Petrozzi.

Joseph graduated from Niagara Falls High School before proudly serving his country in the U.S. Army from 1946 until his honorable discharge in 1947. On Oct. 28, 1950, he married Grace (Chiarenza) Petrozzi at St. Joseph Church. Mrs. Petrozzi predeceased him on March 10, 2015.

Joe began operating his businesses, Capitol Cleaners and Feldman Furs, in 1948, which he operated together with his wife and son. He founded Coats for Kids 54 years ago, which is now a nationwide charity accepting, cleaning and donating coats for children in need. Joe was involved with the Better Business Bureau, serving as a board member, and also had the distinction of being its longest-tenured member. He was a member of the National Cleaners Association, and the longest-standing board member of Health Association of Niagara County (HANCI).

Despite being so dedicated to



his businesses and community activities, the most important thing to Joe was family, and he adored spending time with his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Joseph is survived by his children: Russell (Susan) Petrozzi and Marcia (Robert) Britton; his grandchildren: Anne (Kevin) Burgess, Katherine (Wesley) Walker, Robert Britton Jr., Alexa Britton (Matt McCormick), Rachael (Craig) Goldenberg, and John (Lynda) Marino; great-grandchildren: Joseph, Tucker, Chase, Claire and Logan; his brother, Chuck Petrozzi; and his sisters-in-law: Mae (Late Anthony) Minicucci, Marie (late Vin-

cent) Chiarenza; and brother-in-law, David (late Carol) Donato; as well as nieces, nephews, cousins and many friends.

In addition to his wife of 64 years, he was predeceased by his siblings: John (late Joyce) Petrozzi, Marie Hackett, and Angie (late Grant) Herod; and siblings-in-law: Charles (late Mae) Chiarenza, Florence (late Anthony) Cheff, and Lawrence (late Jenny) Chiarenza.

Visitation will be held from 2-6 p.m. Sunday, June 11, at M.J. Colucci & Son Niagara Funeral Chapel, 2730 Military Road, Niagara Falls, where funeral services will begin at 9:45 a.m. Monday, June 12. Joseph's Mass of Christian Burial will follow, at 10:30 a.m., in St. Joseph's Church, 1413 Pine Ave., Niagara Falls.

Entombment with military honors in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Niagara Falls.

If desired, memorial offerings may be made to Niagara Hospice.

Visit www.mjcoluccifuneralchapel.com for online condolences.

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