



## Joe J. Santoro

April 14, 1947 - May 19, 2020

Joe J. Santoro, age 73, died Tuesday, May 19, 2020, at his home in Highland, Illinois.

Joe was born on Monday, April 14, 1947, in Birmingham, Alabama. He was the son of Dominick and Rosalie (nee Caravella) Santoro. His education included graduating from Ensley High School in Birmingham and The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, with a structural engineering degree.

Joe started his work life at a young age, with a paper route. This along with playing drums in a local band (called the SenSaShuns) helped put him through college. His engineering career started at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in West Palm Beach, Florida in 1970. After leaving Pratt & Wittney he spent a year in Birmingham, Alabama working for Hayes Aircraft Corporation. After leaving Hayes he started Santoro Associates Incorporated and worked as a contract engineer. This career path took him all over the country, fixing failures on airplanes and conducting nuclear analysis. He was well respected in his field.

Joe's favorite hobby was collecting and working on classic cars. Over his lifetime he owned over sixty vehicles, including motor homes, motorcycles, trucks, and cars. One of his favorite cars was a 1956 Ford Thunderbird that he owned for 50 years. This is the car that Joe and his wife, Dorothy, drove on

their wedding day and honeymoon.

On Saturday, October 16, 1971, Joe married Dorothy E. Smith in Birmingham, Alabama. During their life together they adopted two children, Frank and Jodi. Joe made his family his number one priority and was a loving son, brother, uncle, friend, husband, father, and grandfather. His four grandchildren called him Papa, and he adored them as much as they adored him. He was greatly loved and will be greatly missed.

Survivors include:

Wife - Dorothy S. Santoro, nee Smith, Highland, IL

Son - Frank J. (Susan) Santoro, Charlotte, NC

Daughter - Jodi L. Headrick, nee Santoro, (Christopher Koch) Highland, IL

Grandchild - Jalyn E. Headrick, Highland, IL

Grandchild - Delaney J. Santoro, Charlotte, NC

Grandchild - Connor J. Santoro, Charlotte, NC

Grandchild - Jameson J. Headrick, Highland, IL

Sister - Carolyn (James) Levio, Helena, AL

Brother - Mike (Catherine) Santoro, Panama City, FL

Brother - Nick (Sherry) Santoro, Birmingham, AL

Brother - Johnny (Patricia) Santoro, Birmingham, AL

He was preceded in death by:

Father - Dominick J. Santoro

Mother - Rosalie C. Santoro, nee Caravella

Private Funeral Arrangements are being handled by Spengel-Boulanger Funeral Home in Highland, Illinois.

Memorial contributions may be made to American Heart Association; American Cancer Society; American Diabetes Association; National

Hemophilia Foundation; or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

# Tribute Wall

CS

“ Connor Santoro sent a virtual gift in memory of Joe Santoro



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Connor Santoro - October 17, 2023 at 09:16 PM

CS

“ Mimi,  
I remember when we were living in Kyle, I went out to ride my bike when I was 6. You and Papa were helping me learn to ride my bike.



I also remember when we came up to Illinois and Papa, Jalyn, Delaney, Jameson and I all played hide and seek in the basement. I remember his fuzzy beard and how he always wore a hat. I am deeply sad and sorry that we all had to go through this.

Best Wishes  
Connor Santoro

Please view this link to learn about Papa/Joe J Santoro

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1d-EKTLr\\_RnJBcPw41X0nAwgfH3wppwjzuCNLOR1DqB0/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1d-EKTLr_RnJBcPw41X0nAwgfH3wppwjzuCNLOR1DqB0/edit?usp=sharing)

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Connor Santoro - October 17, 2023 at 09:15 PM

BL

“ *Dottie, Jodi, and Frank,*  
*We are so sorry to hear of Joe's passing. Doesn't seem that long ago that Joe and I were coaching our girls' softball and soccer teams at St. Monica. I remember the tee shirt with the imprinted tie that Joe wore to work only on "special" occasions! Always a laugh when around Joe. He will be dearly missed.*  
*Our deepest condolences,*  
*Bob and Amy Legal*

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**Bob Legal** - June 18, 2020 at 12:47 PM

JE

“ *Joe and I shared a lot of good times together in our youth. He was a good friend. We lost track after college. Reconnected a few years ago. We talked and recalled memories, and some mischievous times together. My prayers are with the family.*

*Jim English*

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**Jim English** - May 24, 2020 at 01:09 PM

JH

“ *Really sorry to hear of Joe's passing. We lived on the same block as teenagers. We were friends who lifted weights together in his basement when we were fifteen years old. We would occasionally catch a ride home from High School with his older brother Mike. Joe was a great guy and came from a loving family. My sympathy to his friends and family. I am sure a lot of lives were enriched by knowing Joe.*

*Jerry Hearn, Birmingham, Al.*

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**Jerry Hearn** - May 24, 2020 at 12:10 PM



“ One of my fondest early memories of meeting Joe & Dottie was in Tampa Florida where they had a beautiful home. They treated us to Cuban Subs, Chucky Cheese, some eating place for kids that was full of pipe organs, bubbles and much more. I had never experienced anything like this before, having come from rural N.H.

Joe was always so full of fun and oh..that laugh & smile! Entertaining, generous, knowledgeable and kind are a few of the words I would use to describe him. It was always a good time with Dottie & Joe. We have lots of wonderful memories to sustain us, the last being at Lake of the Ozarks where a lot of our family that had never met him got to see first hand the wonderful spirit of Joe.

My deepest condolences to his family & friends as you move through this very sad time in your lives and my prayers for your comfort. We are all better people for having known him and I'm sure we'll all see him again someday. We will miss you Joe, rest easy.

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**Mary Smith** - May 23, 2020 at 06:02 AM



“ My Uncle Joe had such a Loving heart.He was always smiling. He would tell jokes,and funny storie about his Childhood. It didn't matter what the weather was he always wore tee shirts! 🤔. I will never forget when he played the drums at my wedding. ❤️❤️. He will always be in our hearts!

Marie Jim, Sarah, and Matthew

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**Marie Shamray** - May 22, 2020 at 04:48 PM

KC

“ Any *TIME* the family's got together was Good!  
You Joe laughed.  
Always a deep down inside sound that showed US You Loved  
everyone 💕

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**Kelly Cilley** - May 22, 2020 at 01:51 PM

TF

“ My sympathy to Dotty and Jodi and Jalyn and Jameson and to the  
entire of family. Joe was one of the nicest people I ever met. So kind  
and so friendly. Again, my Sympathy.

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**Terry Frey** - May 22, 2020 at 11:30 AM