

Joseph Novak

June 4, 1935 — January 23, 2018

At 5:55 a.m. on Tuesday, January 23, while in the presence of his beloved wife, Matilda, and daughters, Karen and Matilda, who sang to him of Heaven, Joseph Novak, 82, of Albany, slipped quietly from this life and entered Eternity.

He was born in Hungary, to Joseph and Barbara Novak on June 4, 1935. Three older brothers died before he was born, including one with whom he shared a birthday. Joseph became the eldest of six — with four brothers and one sister.

As a six year old, he came to faith in Christ and was widely known for his outspokenness with regard to his Christian convictions. In a Communist country, this made him a target.

Joseph's father worked in the coal mines, and, as a young man, he also worked there — in the power-house of the mine. During this time, he was a full-time student of electro-mechanical engineering at the University of Pecs. It was also during this time — on August 4, 1956 — that he married his love, Matilda Baumgartner.

When the anti-Communist uprising broke out among students in October 1956, Joseph and Matilda were involved. Not long after the revolt was quashed, Joseph learned that his name had been put on a list for jail — or worse. In early January 1957, with nothing but the clothes on their backs, and their wedding photo in a small suitcase, the two fled the country.

After 11 often harrowing months, in various Yugoslavian refugee camps, the Novaks were given permission to immigrate to the United States. Forever afterward, Joseph would tell the story of the exact moment he saw the Statue of Liberty from the window of the plane.

Joseph and Matilda settled in Southern California where their four children were born. He learned English while working in multiple jobs, and at the suggestion of a friend, submitted an application to NASA. Joseph was incredibly proud of being involved in the US space program as an engineer on the Apollo project from 1962 to 1969. Here, he met and became friends with fellow-Believer Werner Von Braun.

He worked on the LEM that landed on the moon. In a foreshadowing of things yet to come, co-workers bribed Joseph with moon rocks and bits of rocket ships, for pastries Matilda sent in his lunch.

In January 1970, Joseph moved his young family to Albany. He worked at Duraflake, Evans Products and Wah Chang before opening Novak's Hungarian Restaurant in 1984 — a move which many told him "put Albany on the map!"

His genuine love and care for people, made Joseph a restaurateur who fed people's souls, even as Matilda's wonderful food fed their bodies.

Joseph was a volunteer of volunteers, working with the North Albany Service District, the LBCC Board of Directors, the Veterans Association, Albany Ambassadors, Restaurant Association, and always involved in various capacities at church.

Never one to complain about things without taking action, Joseph willingly ran for public office on three separate occasions.

In 2010, he and Matilda were honored by the National Restaurant Association with their "Faces of Diversity, American Dream Award" and flown to Washington DC along with daughters Karen, Matilda and KayMarie.

In 2012, Joseph was honored to be chosen as the Grand Marshall of the Albany Veterans Day Parade. He had such a heart for the military he was also made "Chaplain for Life," where he lovingly ministered in various ways to those who serve.

Joseph Novak was a member of The First Assembly of God (Hope) church for decades before becoming a member of Oak Creek (Neighborhood) church.

Joseph is survived by his wife, Matilda; daughters Matilda, Karen and KayMarie; sons Ed (Rose), and Joe (Julia); five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his brother John; sister-in-law Elizabeth; and sister, Teresa.

In lieu of flowers, please send contributions to the Joseph Novak Memorial Scholarship c/o 6500 Pacific Blvd. SW Albany OR 97321



Celebrating

THE LIFE OF



JOSEPH NOVAK

June 4, 1935 - January 23, 2018



“And he shall be like a tree planted
by the rivers of water,
that bringeth forth his fruit in
his season;
his leaf also shall not wither;
and **whatsoever he doeth**
shall prosper.”

Psalm 1:3(KJV)

“I was *glad*
when they said unto me,
Let us go into the
house of the LORD.”

Psalm 122:1(KJV)

“The steps of a *good man*
are ordered by the LORD:
and he **delighteth**
in his way.”

Psalm 37:23(KJV)

In Loving Memory Of Joseph Novak

Age 82

Born

June 4, 1935 ~ Hungary

Entered into Rest

January 23, 2018
Albany, Oregon

Celebration of Life

Tuesday, January 30, 2018 at 1 p.m.
Hope Church
Albany, Oregon

Officiants

Pastor Brett Huff
Pastor Matt Novak
Pastor Kelly Dufour

Musicians

Pastors Tim & Cheryl Roos

Vocalists

Reta Thomas
Knebel Family

Special Songs

“It Is Well”
“It Will Be Worth It All”

Congregational Songs

“God Bless America”
“Blessed Assurance”
“When We All Get to Heaven”

Remembrance Video

Private Inurnment

Willamette Memorial Park
Albany, Oregon

*Everyone is invited to a reception
immediately following the service.*