



Joseph L. Spaar, M.D.

March 19, 1948 - June 22, 2019

Joseph L. Spaar, M.D., of Philadelphia, PA, after a very fulfilled life, filled with much love, support and caring of his family and patients, passed away on Saturday June 22, 2019 at 3:57 PM surrounded by his family and loved ones. Born in Pottstown, PA on March 19, 1948, he attended St. Aloysius Parish School and St. Pius X High School, where he graduated as the valedictorian of his class. He graduated from La Salle University and Temple University Medical School. He did his Internal Medicine Residency followed by a Gastroenterology Fellowship at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. He met his wife, Zoraida Fiol-Silva, M.D., on her first day of Internship at Jefferson on June 20, 1978. It was an amazing love story that magically started during their early medical career and which Joe loved to share with family and friends. Joe and Zoraida, whom Joe always lovingly called “Z”, got married in San Juan, Puerto Rico on August 6, 1983 and started an exceptional life together. Joe served as Lieutenant Commander of the US Public Health Service for a few years. After the service, he started his medical career and conscientiously cared for his patients for 39 years. He practiced in Southern New Jersey where he provided the progressive medical care to the community. Fittingly, Joe was always totally committed to the well-being of his patients. Just as dedicated as he was to his patients and his profession, he was always the quintessential thoughtful, gentle, concerned and attentive family man that anyone could ever wish to have as a spouse. Joe was very dedicated to all of his family while enjoying an all-embracing life. His love for family, reading,

flying, cars and travel, especially to Puerto Rico, were a source of great happiness. Making sure that his loved ones were happy and healthy was of ultimate importance to him. He was incredibly knowledgeable, inspiring and genuinely loved by all those who met him. In one word, Joe was just an exceptional human being that his wife treasured having been so fortunate to share her life with him. Joe is also survived by his sister, Kathi Cassidy.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in his memory to Jefferson Colorectal Research and Education Fund, 125 S. 9th St., Philadelphia Pa. 19107

Previous Events

The family will receive guests

JUN 27. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Old St. Joseph's Church
321 Willings Alley
Philadelphia, PA 19106
<https://oldstjoseph.org/>

The family will receive guests

JUN 28. 9:00 AM - 9:45 AM (ET)

Old St. Joseph's Church
321 Willings Alley
Philadelphia, PA 19106
<https://oldstjoseph.org/>

Funeral Mass

JUN 28. 10:00 AM (ET)

Old St. Joseph's Church
321 Willings Alley
Philadelphia, PA 19106
<https://oldstjoseph.org/>

Tribute Wall

BA

“ *Dr Spaar was my doctor for over twenty years. He was my husband's doctor for longer. We are saddened to know that he passed. Dr Spaar had a heart of gold. He had a rare combination of high emotional and intellectual intelligence. I am forever grateful that he showed such care and compassion towards me, especially after I received a difficult to treat diagnosis. Well done Dr. Spaar. Well done. Rest in peace.*

Brenda A. - April 30, 2023 at 04:20 PM

 Jim Laymon

“ *Although I knew Dr. Spaar was ill, I had no idea he had passed. I am so sorry and sad to learn this. He was my most trusted doctor for over 30 years. With every visit he would greet me with a big smile and friendly Hello.*

We would talk about aviation and often about his time flying and his USN life. I enjoyed our conversations as he was not only brilliant but he also was very inquisitive and a good listener. We shared more than a few laughs.

I can't imagine a more comforting doctor and kind person and I've missed him since his early retirement. My sincere (and regrettably-delayed) condolences to his wife and family.

Jim Laymon - December 31, 2019 at 01:28 PM

MD

“ *Maria D’angelo lit a candle in memory of Joseph L. Spaar, M.D.*



maria d’angelo - September 09, 2019 at 10:46 PM



“ *We just returned from being out of town and heard of Dr Spaar's passing. We are beyond heart broken! My husband Bill and I were patients of his for years. It was always comforting to know that he was there to help. He not only helped Bill but saved his life!! He was such a gentleman and the BEST doctor EVER! He is irreplaceable. Our prayers go out to his wife and family. May he rest in peace.*

Bill and Barb Fuller

Barbara Fuller - July 10, 2019 at 05:22 PM

DM

*I just learned today of Dr. Sparr’s passing during my visit with my optometrist, Dr. Smith. I’m so sad. Even though I only saw him every couple of years or so, he was so kind- always taking time to put me at ease before a procedure. I will truly miss him.
See Marshall*

Dee Marshall - July 18, 2019 at 02:21 PM



Although I knew Dr. Spaar was ill, I had no idea he had passed. I am so sorry and sad to learn this. He was my most trusted doctor for over 30 years. With every visit we would talk about aviation and often about his time flying and his USN life. I enjoyed our conversations as he was not only brilliant but he also was very inquisitive and a good listener. We shared more than a few laughs. I can't imagine a more comforting doctor and kind person and I've missed him since his early retirement. My sincere (and regrettably-delayed) condolences to his wife and family.

Jim Laymon - December 31, 2019 at 01:18 PM

ML

I have been with Joe since he was by himself in Northfield. Joe was a true gentlemen. Joe saved my life when i was diagnosed with Hep -C. He held my hand all through my treatment I was out of my mind with worries. Joe looked me in the eye and said do not worry i will get u throught this and u will b cured. Just his words made me confident he would do just as he said What a wonderful human being. RIP JOE. i am truly heartbroken. Love u Brother. Mark

Mark LaRocca - February 11, 2020 at 12:14 PM

PS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Petrin Fiol Silva - July 01, 2019 at 07:15 AM

SR

*Joe was a wonderful person. I've had the honor of knowing him for over 20years. He was kind , warm and a wonderful friend. He had a beautiful smile that never left his face. It was always a treat to run in to him at the hospital and dinners. He was an amazing doctor, loved by all . The world is a much sadder place without him , especially for me. My deepest condolences to his wife and family.
Miss ya Leo ,Sal Del Re*

s.Del Re - July 04, 2019 at 09:38 AM

HD

“ We moved to Atlantic City over a decade ago, and Dr. Spaar became our gastroenterologist. He was caring and compassionate, but beyond that supremely patient. He explained and listened; most important, he heard. This gentle, ultimate example of his calling leaves a permanent mark on our hearts. Our deepest condolences to his family as well as his colleagues.

Michael and Harriet Diamond

Harriet Diamond - June 30, 2019 at 09:52 AM

CB

Just learned of Dr. Spaar passing. I'm without words!! He has been my doctor for years . Gentle, caring. He listened and explained everything very well. His passing has really left an emptiness in my heart. I'm going to miss his smile and stories about Puerto Rico. My deepest condolences to his family.

Carmen Bermudez - August 15, 2019 at 03:37 PM

ZF

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Zoraida Fiol-Silva - June 30, 2019 at 09:02 AM



“ After driving to the funeral and talking to my kids and so many family member 2 things just brought back fun memories. The joy Uncle Joe expressed at Thanks giving the first time we grew to 2 turkey because Joe and Bobby had more turkey legs to share!!! Then the year he surprised us all with baby bunnies for Easter and had not kept them separated so it quickly grew from 5 bunnies(one for each family) to a plethora of bunnies to share with the neighborhood. Zori filled in all the missing pieces of the story for the kids which added more love to the story for future telling. Still learning how much of a hole Joe's loss will have on us all.

Colleen Schleicher - June 29, 2019 at 12:09 PM



“ A gentle man, a Gentleman, a kind, compassionate, exemplary Doctor who I was lucky enough to have as my Gastroenterologist for 35 years. My sincere condolences to his family.....I am so sorry for your loss. We are all better for having known him.

Janine Peterson - June 28, 2019 at 08:06 PM



“ I was fortunate to not only have worked with Dr. Spaar at Atlantic gastroenterology, but I was also a patient of his for many years. He was a pleasure to work with, always being the consummate professional and an incredibly caring and dedicated Dr. to his many patients. He was thoughtful, insightful, intelligent, And had a genuine concern for each and every person Who came to see him professionally.

He always showed me the same level of care and made me feel like he was really paying attention to me when I saw him as a patient myself for years after I stopped working there. He spoke incredibly fondly of his wife and family and had a true love of life. He will be greatly missed.

Deana Donofrio - June 28, 2019 at 07:41 AM

EC

“ A sweet and gentle man! An excellent and caring doctor!
When I had a serious diagnosis, his deep concern and support
Carried me through. Up, down all around with test results. He
couldn't
Wait to call me when my final results came back perfect. He felt like
family!
He will he missed!
My husband and I have been his patients for 27 years.
Our hearts are breaking!
You will be kept in prayer.

Sincerely,
Ellen Coyle

ellen coyle - June 28, 2019 at 12:04 AM

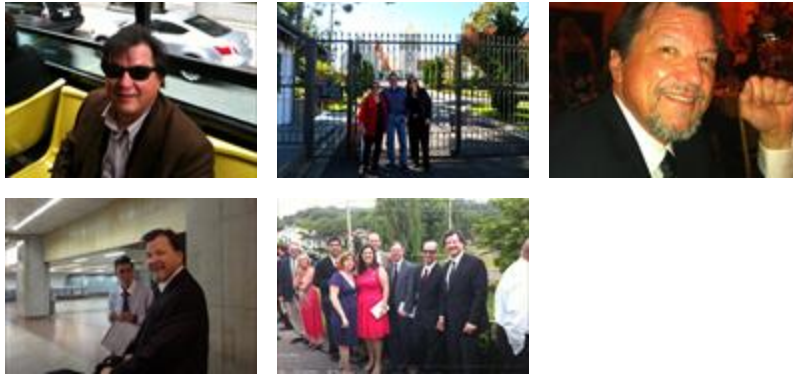
AB

“ Dr. Spaar took care of my mother for a very long time. He’s known me since I was very young. I’m almost 40 now and a physician. He always made sure I knew what was going on with my mom when she was in the hospital. It was nice to talk “medicine” with him. Such a great person!! I am so grateful my mom was in his care all this years!! He will be missed.

Alex Buford - June 27, 2019 at 09:48 PM

PF

“ 34 files added to the tribute wall



Petrin Fiol-Silva - June 27, 2019 at 09:46 AM

CC

“ My uncle was a wonderful, loving, and funny man. He loved back scratches and pumpkin roll. He gave great advice and asked heartfelt questions. He brought Aunt Zori to us and her wonderful family. I am honored to be his niece and thankful for the time we had him with us. All my love to Aunt Zori and Mom ❤️

Cathleen Carroll - June 27, 2019 at 08:11 AM

DJ

“ Dr. Spaar always seemed to get a kick out of my Mom, Charlotte, who was close to 90. He told her that she had the colon of a 16-year-old. I reminded him of that right before going under for my first colonoscopy. The first thing I remember after waking up was him telling me that I had the colon of a 40-year-old. (I was in my 50's). Dr. Spaar was a wonderful doctor, and when you asked him questions, you felt like he had all the time in the world to answer them. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.
Donna Josephs

Donna Josephs - June 26, 2019 at 09:29 PM

CJ

“ I was a patient of Dr. Spaar's. One time he told me how his back hurt, and that he used an exercise machine that turned him upside down. He said the only problem was that his wife would tickle him. We both had a good laugh. When I had a brownie piece that wouldn't go down my throat, Dr. Spaar came in from home on Christmas to do my emergency endoscopy.
Charlotte Josephs

Charlotte Josephs - June 26, 2019 at 09:21 PM



“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Joseph L. Spaar, M.D..



June 26, 2019 at 08:27 PM

KE

“ So many wonderful memories of Uncle Joe. If he was able to make a holiday gathering or special event in the life of one of his nieces and then great nieces and nephews he was there, even if it meant a long drive in Philadelphia traffic. We were always so glad he and Aunt Zori made the drive to see everyone. A few memories that stand out from way back are all the back rubs he bribed his nieces to give him because he was so exhausted from long hours in the hospital or studying. Then the time in high school he helped me with my homework and would not just give me the answer but made me figure it out, always so wise Uncle Joe. And lastly, one time while visiting Uncle Joe and Aunt Zori, I was telling him about the new stethoscope I got the first year of nursing school, he quickly showed me the ones he had and said, "Here, take this one, it's much better". It ended up being the only one I used the rest of nursing school and the one I took in to the work force. It still has J.Spaar engraved on it, something I will always treasure. Thank you for many great memories Uncle Joe!

Kelly Everett - June 26, 2019 at 05:19 PM

KC

Wonderful memories Kelly ❤️

Karen Christman - June 26, 2019 at 05:27 PM

PE

“ 30 files added to the album Memories Album



Pete Everett - June 26, 2019 at 05:41 AM

KC

Love looking at these pictures Pete! Makes me smile.

Karen Christman - June 26, 2019 at 05:28 PM

ZF

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Zoraida Fiol-Silva - June 25, 2019 at 10:09 PM

SS

My deepest sympathy to Dr. Spaar's Family. May his memories bring you comfort.

Serena Swaggerty/ - June 26, 2019 at 08:31 AM

CA

Zori - thank you for sharing this video - I love it! I can see the love you two have for each other. He may not know all the words but he doesn't care he is enjoying life!!!

Carol - June 29, 2019 at 11:16 AM



Zori, thanks for sharing your love for each other, inspiring!!

Colleen Schleicher - June 29, 2019 at 12:01 PM

CP

Thank you for sharing this video.....The Love you both shared is obvious.....that video says it all.....you both look like teenagers in Love after so many years....it's beautiful to see...

Chris Petrosch - June 30, 2019 at 09:58 AM



Joe, you are so missed!

Petrín Fiol-Silva - July 22, 2019 at 06:21 PM

ZF

“ 51 files added to the album Joe ...



Zoraida Fiol-Silva - June 25, 2019 at 09:36 PM

KS

“ Mary, Caitlin and I first met Joe and Z when we moved in across the street on Lexington Court. Our movers may have had a hand in ensuring we had a quick introduction, because when they left, they rolled their front wheel across part of Joe's lawn. If you know Joe, you know how passionate he was about a well maintained lawn! We quickly got that straightened out and discovered we liked many of the same things - Siamese cats, Corvettes, computers, and good wine. We still tell stories about some of Joe's practical jokes. He and his partners were off to a Gastroenterology Conference, and Joe modeled the shirts they were planning to wear the first evening: dark brown shirts with light brown lettering: "S**t Happens!". We also remember the wonderful birthday party Z surprised him with at Harrah's -- we still have one of the buttons she made, with a picture of six year old Joe wearing his cowboy hat, vest, boots, and sitting on a pony! Every guest got one -- and every guest had a wonderful time. Joe was a marvelous guest of honor. I think he enjoyed the theme more than anybody. He was a thoughtful and caring guy, too. You needed help? Joe's your guy. He will be sorely missed.

Kevin & Mary Smart - June 25, 2019 at 06:58 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Joseph L. Spaar, M.D..



June 25, 2019 at 03:08 PM



“ *Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Joseph L. Spaar, M.D..*



June 25, 2019 at 01:05 PM



“ *Pink Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Joseph L. Spaar, M.D..*



June 25, 2019 at 09:41 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Joseph L. Spaar, M.D..*



June 25, 2019 at 08:38 AM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Joseph L. Spaar, M.D..*



June 25, 2019 at 08:37 AM

KC

“ A memory of my Uncle Joe that I will always treasure is Christmas. He and Zori would arrive at our house with so many gifts that all the great nieces and nephews would march out to their car and form a parade to help carry them in! Actually when the kids saw their car they would announce, “They’re here!” and run out the door. Then after all the welcomes and greetings Uncle Joe and Zori got down to business. They sat in the living room with a huge pile of gifts around them. The 15 kids all sat on the floor waiting for their names to be called. Zori would sort and hand off to Uncle Joe and he called each niece and nephew up to receive their gifts. The kids loved it. Wrapping paper flew, Hess trucks, rocking horses, scooters, electronics all sorts of toys were played with. But I think as much as the kids loved it Uncle Joe and Zori loved it even more. Thanks for the great times and memories Uncle Joe❤️

Karen Christman - June 25, 2019 at 08:27 AM

SA

The scooter was one of my favorite toys ever! A thoughtful gift from a thoughtful, loving couple.

Sarah Alleman - June 25, 2019 at 09:41 PM

LD

“ That was a lovely obituary, Uncle Joe will be greatly missed, thinking of you Aunt Zori

Lynn Santo Domingo - June 24, 2019 at 11:21 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Joseph L. Spaar, M.D..



June 24, 2019 at 09:38 PM

JB

“ *Dr. Joseph Spaar was the Consummate Physician. He was Caring, Compassionate, Considerate and Cool. His knowledge of Medicine in tandem with his Life experiences provided him with Protean Talents! It was an honor to have been able to call him friend; and, a privilege to have worked by his side. He taught me so much and was always willing to offer advice on any subject. I will treasure my memories of him. My Condolences to Zoraida and the Spaar Family.*



John Bartholomew - June 24, 2019 at 09:30 PM

NA

“ *Zori, sending love, prayers and sincere condolences for your loss. Love Natalie & Kerry 🙏*



Natalie - June 24, 2019 at 08:32 PM

CD

“ *I've been looking through old photos trying to find a good picture of Uncle Joe and I can't seem to find a good one to post. But, I can see him in the background of many holiday photos playing cards or games at the table or attempting to play BOP-IT with another kid. In another photo he is sitting beside Aunt Zori handing out gifts with his great-nieces and nephews sitting at his feet waiting their turn. He is always smiling or sitting on the sofa snoozing after eating. I will miss him dearly and wish I could say "thank you and I Love You" one more time.*

Carol Santo Domingo - June 24, 2019 at 07:35 PM

KC

Carol, you are right. Uncle Joe always ended the day with a snooze 😊

Karen Christman - June 26, 2019 at 05:41 PM

SS

“ *I have know Dr. Spaar for over 30 years. He was a true Gentleman who happened to be an exceptional physician. He was funny, compassionate, professional, and a little ornery. He always placed his patients first. I never heard him complain about anything. He would make me laugh with stories about Zori and told me how they met at least 10 times. Telling me it was love at first sight. I once saw him give money to one of his patients. I am sure this wasn't the first or last time that he helped someone. Oh how he will be missed. My thoughts and condolences are with Zori and family. Sally Sikora*

Sally Sikora - June 24, 2019 at 05:47 PM