

The world lost a good guy this summer. Joseph “Joe” Barey passed away July 21, 2021 at his home in Homosassa, Florida at the age of 78. Joe’s health had been up and down the past few years but he remained steadfast in the care of his wife Trudy Barey (d. September 26, 2020); and was fiercely independent and was always looking ahead until the end.

Joe was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut on April 25, 1943, and grew up on a quiet cul-de-sac by a salt marsh and a stone’s throw from the town beach in Milford, Connecticut. The Connecticut shoreline is where he would call home most of his life and a walk on the beach there or on the Cape was probably one of his favorite things to do. However, he loved all of New England and made his living driving its backroads through every quaint town and village selling paper and packaging to the boutiques, jewelry stores, and gift shops. As a sign of his tenacity, and endearing relationships, he remained successful in this role for fifty years despite the proliferation of large shopping malls and the advent of the big box store.



He was a self-reported active child, interested in sports, and always with friends, although memories shared and comments made later in life suggest that overcoming Dyslexia and then the loss of an eye as a teenager was tough. For those who knew him you would never know. He loved life and people, was quick with a joke and was a persistent optimist. Tomorrow was always a new day and there was always something fun to do a movie, a round of golf, going out to dinner, a new recipe to try, live music to hear, a turn on the dancefloor. He really had a zest for getting out there was infectious.

As a young adult, Joe completed some classes at the University of Bridgeport and the University of New Haven in business administration while working full time. He bought his first car at 21. His mother discovered his newfound freedom one day at an intersection as the two cars passed each other. This was one of Joe’s favorite stories to tell of his mother. She was immediately incensed and worried about him “driving blind”, and he was smiling and laughing. Apparently, this was their relationship in a nutshell, and he loved her for it.

Polly was his first love, the mother of his two daughters and a positive influence on the adult he would become. They parted ways in 1983 but those days in Portland, Connecticut starting in 1973 were mostly good ones. In particular, he was proud of his membership in the Portland Lions Club and the service work they did. Joe was not an activist, but he did have a strong sense of fairness and justice. Any time he spoke of the Lions club he would say he joined not only because of their focus on improving peoples’ vision, but also they were one of the few clubs at that time where everyone was welcome regardless of wealth or race.

He married Trudy on April 25, 1988. They had been together awhile and joked that they decided to make it official on his birthday so he would never forget their anniversary. But that was unlikely. Joe was a romantic at heart and Trudy brought the best out in him. Trudy lived in the Berkshires when they met and Joe resided there as well for a time, but his daughters were in Connecticut and they soon made the move to Westbrook, CT. Anniversaries spent on the Cape, New Year’s Eve parties out on the town, their love of their pet dogs over the years and just generally doing things together made their

relationship a close one. They made the move to Florida in 2011, and although life started to slow down, there was no shortage of Valentine's Day cards and flowers on the table any day of the week until the end.

His two daughters, Emily Barey of Middleton, Wisconsin and Ashely Barey of Warwick, Rhode Island, and his grandchildren Nina, Anne and William Henderson of Middleton, Wisconsin survive Joe. Since the days the girls were born, you could not have a conversation with him without hearing about them. He was almost insufferable when it came to his pride in everything they did large or small, and even if small he made it sound grand. The girls have not won the Nobel Prize or become the President of the United States, but they are good people and have been successful in so many things because Joe role modeled a strong worth ethic, kindness towards others and offered relentless encouragement to try new things. They will miss him the most.

If you would like to celebrate Joe's life, Emily and Ashley, along with Joe's stepsons Scott and Gregg Blaha will be hosting a reception at Joe's favorite restaurant Bill's Seafood at 548 Boston Post Road, Westbrook, CT on November 6, 2021 from 11:30am-1:30pm. Please reach out via [joebarey@yahoo.com](mailto:joebarey@yahoo.com).

Another way to celebrate Joe's life would be to donate to The Connecticut Lions Eye Research Foundation in his honor at [Connecticut Lions Eye Research Foundation - Lions e-District Houses](#).