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Joseph Andrew Baldi

April 9, 1917 - Feb. 7, 2021

Joseph Andrew Baldi, aged 103, passed away peacefully at the Berkeley Assisted Living Center in Morganton, in the early morning hours of 7 February 2021.

Joe was preceded in death by his treasured wife, Margaret, brothers Al and Louie, as well as sister Lucy. He leaves behind daughter, Patricia, and son Robert, grandchildren, Nichole, Carol Ann, Theodore, and Robert as well as 13 great-grandchildren.

Joe was born and raised in Newark, NJ, the second son of Gennaro and Lucia Baldi, who were immigrants from Cava De'Terreni in Southern Italy. Growing up he took an interest in music, learning to play the banjo, guitar and bass fiddle. Following his graduation from high school he worked for the Western Electric Company as an equipment tester. In his spare time, he played in various music groups and gave music lessons to area students.

During World War II Joe served his country in a B25 Mitchel Bomber air group, with the Army Air Corps in North Africa as well as continuing to play in bands with the USO. Upon discharge from service, Joe returned to Western where earned his engineering credentials through the Newark College of Engineering and subsequently assisted in the laying of the first transatlantic voice undersea cable from the United

States to Europe. He also continued to play in various orchestras and served in the U.S. Navy Reserve. The Korean conflict saw him called to active duty, where he served as an Electrician's Mate aboard the USS Shakori and later the USS Missouri. After his service in the Navy, Joe returned to work at Western Electric, now involved with the design and implementation of communications microwave shots along the

entirety of the West Coast -- a system that would be the mainstream of television and telephone transmissions until the advent of fiber optics in the latter half of the 20th Century,

In the early 1960s, still with Western, Joe worked on Project Mercury, the U.S. manned space program. His efforts ensured that communications with the Mercury capsule were maintained spanning the circumference of the globe. In the following years he worked on communications projects for the Department of Defense, some of which entailed working and living overseas with his family. In the mid to late 1960s he and his family lived in Paris, France, and numerous cities in what was then West Germany. Joe continued to work defense and diplomatic communications projects through the 1970s and retired from Western Electric in 1981.

Upon retirement, Joe once again began playing in an orchestra, this time the Sawtooth Swing Band, in Winston Salem. He continued to do a bit of consulting work with Western, but retirement called for other interests and passions. He and wife Margaret traveled far and wide, visiting relatives in Australia, and son, Bob who was at the time posted at the U.S. Embassy in Poland. They both were avid cruisers and enjoyed numerous trips to Polynesia, the Panama Canal, and a wide range of Caribbean destinations, often in the company of daughter Pat and her husband Wayne. Joe continued to enjoy travel all the way up to his 100th birthday, as well as gardening and repair projects around the house. Always one to appreciate all that life had to offer, he encouraged his children and grandchildren to do the same.

Services will be held at the Western Carolina State Veterans Cemetery Chapel, Black Mountain at a future date to be announced.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.