



Anthony George "Tony" Faso

June 2, 1926 - February 23, 2019

LONGTIME SARASOTA RESIDENT, WORLD WAR II VETERAN, BUSINESS OWNER, AND RADIO PERSONALITY

Anthony George "Tony," Faso, 92, passed away on February 23, 2019. A resident of Sarasota since 1965, Tony lived a long and full life.

He was a devoted and loving husband, father, grandfather, brother, and uncle, making many friends and touching the lives of everyone he met. He was born on June 2, 1926, with his identical twin brother, Joseph Andrew Faso (deceased 2008) in Corona, Queens, New York, the fifth child of Margaret and Joseph Faso. He grew up in a modest home in a mostly Italian neighborhood on Long Island with 5 sisters and 3 brothers. As he often said, his family never knew they were poor and "ate our ration of dirt a week."

During high school and continuing after graduation in 1944, Tony worked for the Atlantic and Pacific Tea Co. ("A & P"), until he was drafted at age 18. He served stateside during the war in the U.S Army and subsequently enlisted in the Army Air Corps, where he was attached to the school of aviation and obtained the rank of Buck Sergeant. After his discharge in 1947, he attended the Casey Jones School of Aeronautics at Newark Airport, New Jersey and then worked as an airline mechanic for Slick Airways in Burbank, California.

Following a stint back in New York working for The Grumman Aircraft

Engineering Corporation, Tony moved to Bradenton, Florida, where he met the love of his life, Jeanne Davis Dominick (deceased 2013), a widow with a 3 year old daughter, Victoria ("Vicki"). They married in 1960 and were together 24/7 for 53 years.

After a time in Norwalk, Connecticut working for Sikorsky Aircraft and as an electrician for his brother-in-law, Tony returned to the Bradenton/Sarasota area to become co-owner of Rip Van Winkle Bowladrome with bowling legend, Andy Rapone (deceased 2009). In 1967, Tony, Jeanne, and Andy opened Ball and Shoe, a sporting goods store, in Sarasota, which they operated until 1980.

After becoming frustrated with the high cost of radio advertising, Tony auditioned for the sportscaster position at WQSA-1220. He became a local celebrity of sorts, providing complete run-downs three times daily and hosting "Dial a Score," with his twin brother Jay.

After a brief retirement, during which Tony built a sportscar in his garage, he and Jeanne started Tee Jay Sports Enterprises, Inc., a warehouse distribution company, which they ran until the late 1990's. After closing Tee Jay, Tony and Jeanne traveled extensively worldwide and also throughout North America in their motor coach.

Tony was a founding member of "The Early Birds," an assortment of fun and fit individuals who met while exercising at the Heart Center and later moved en masse to the YMCA. The Early Birds prided themselves on being up before sunrise and finding any excuse to arrive at the gym in costume with food befitting whatever real or made up occasion they were celebrating. The lasting friendships Tony made through The Early Birds enriched and sustained him for over 20 years.

Tony lived for baseball and was an avid Rays fan, holding season tickets for their inaugural season and more recently attending games with his daughter and son in-law. He had a lifelong passion for collecting stamps and coins and loved their historical representations. He had an undying love for all things reminiscent of the American west, including movies, TV shows, and an unfulfilled desire to move to Cody, Wyoming.

He was eternally an optimist and lived each day to the fullest, including his last. As he would often say in his final years, "I've had a good run."

He is survived by his daughter, Victoria Critchlow and husband John of St. Petersburg, Florida, his granddaughters who were his pride and joy, Margaret Critchlow of Bellingham, WA and Elizabeth Critchlow of Philadelphia, PA, two sisters, Dolores Haydel of Bradenton, FL and Marjorie Heim of Sandy Hook, CT, cousins, and numerous nieces and nephews.

His family will always be grateful beyond words to Tony's friends, doctors, and their staffs, who loved and supported him over the last years.

Services will be held at the Sarasota National Cemetery, 9810-State Road 72, Sarasota, FL 34241, on April 5, 2019 at 1:00 PM, with a reception to follow at Toale Brothers Funeral Home, Gulf Gate Chapel.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Tony's memory to Honor Flight of West Central Florida, www.honorflightwcf.org, or P.O. Box 55661, St. Petersburg, FL 33732.