



Anthony Ernest Murray

June 11, 1939 - November 28, 2025

Anthony Ernest Murray, age 86, died peacefully at home November 28, 2025, with his beloved wife Michelle, son Mike and daughter-in-law Kim at his side.

Born in Philadelphia, PA June 11, 1939 to Ida Marie Rossi and Thomas P. Murray, Tony was the eldest of five sons (Anthony, Thomas, James, Ernest, and John). He was predeceased by his parents, brother James and best friend Ed Farley and survived by wife Michelle, son Michael (Kim), and four grandchildren: Erin (Wade), Ryan, Kate & London.

A 1957 graduate of Eddystone High School, Tony enjoyed reconnecting with classmates at their 50th and 60th class reunions. He also attended Saint Joseph's College.

In April 1962 Tony enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, where he served our country for six years. His keen mathematical skills in an era before computers were utilized as a fire direction officer of 105 Howitzers.

After the military, Tony returned to the Philadelphia area where he worked for several years in printing operations for Burroughs Corporation. His business career took off when he accepted a position at Chilton Publishing Company as operations manager in the direct mail division. He quickly rose to division manager. His drive to succeed motivated him to leave Chilton for Worldwide Direct Marketing and then Dependable List Company, by which time he lived in Washington, D.C. In 1985 he launched Tony Murray & Associates. Under his skillful leadership TMA grew to include Affinity Marketing Group and the Carol Enters List Company.

A skillful communicator and storyteller, Tony was a natural born salesman. He attributed his first sales training, at age 16, to his hardworking father who sold chain linked fences. Tony went door to door making introductions and setting up appointments. Sadly, his father's untimely death one year later remained a painful memory.

As a respected leader in the marketing industry, Tony was not only known for his professionalism, salesmanship and integrity but also for his joie de vivre, dashing good looks, tailored Armani suits and Italian silk ties. He had a head turning presence behind the wheel of his 1987 Porche 911.

Tony retired at age 60, selling his businesses to three key employees. He was most proud of his son Mike, who as President and CEO of TMA Direct transformed the business into a 21-century industry leader in the conservative fundraising arena.

While attending an Insight personal growth seminar in 1988 Tony met a nurse practitioner named Michelle Phalon. Three years passed before he called her at work to ask for a date. After their first date Michelle returned home that evening and called her mother to tell her she just went out with the man she was going to marry!

Five years later they were married on the beach in Negril, Jamaica. Blessed to have found each other in midlife, Tony and Michelle shared 35 years as soul mates, best friends, confidants, golf partners and travel companions. A passion for golf took them to Scotland, Ireland, France, Spain, Portugal, Costa Rica and many Caribbean destinations.

Life in early retirement centered around golf in Naples, FL and summers at their beach house in Dewey Beach, DE. As Tony entered “retirement phase two” life took on new meaning when they purchased a 40-year-old Frank Lloyd Wright inspired home in need of renovation on Big Pass, Sarasota. Tony loved classical music and for many years was a season ticket holder at the Kennedy Center, Wolf Trap, Naples Philharmonic or Van Wezel Performing Arts Center. He was a lifelong fan of the Philadelphia Eagles and Phillies.

Proud of his Italian heritage, enriched by years of genealogy research and numerous trips to Italy, Tony developed nostalgia, in his later years, for his paternal ancestral name Morinelli. In Italy he playfully referred to himself as Antonio Ernesto Morinelli. His love of history was further enriched by discovering his paternal grandmother’s southern lineage included many Civil War veterans. After many years he reconnected with his southern Adams family relatives. For several years he was a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

In his 85th year, as his health slowly declined, Tony accomplished a youthful ambition to become a writer. His autobiography “Quite a Ride” was his swan song. Once again, his perseverance, determination and drive to succeed were on full display. Feedback and reviews from friends and family alike provided a much-needed lift in his spirits.

Tony will be dearly missed by many. As a self-made man he lived life by his own terms, his passionate and charismatic personality worn on his sleeve. He was both introspective and outgoing. Never one to mince words, his opinions were freely expressed to anyone who would listen. During his last hospitalization he could be heard coaching young nurses and doctors about the five stages of a successful marriage, having finally achieved stage five himself. Beneath it all was a deeply caring man with a tender and loving heart.

In keeping with Tony's wishes, cremation was arranged at Toale Brothers Funeral and Crematory. There will be a small private burial.

Memorial contributions can be made to Mary, Queen of the Apostles, Parish Office, 158 Federal Street, Salem, MA 01970 (ph.: 978-745-9060) with special thanks to Father Robert Murray or to the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Tribute Wall

FM

“ I had been introduced to Tony and his wife, Michelle, some twenty years ago and through our mutual love of historical architecture (especially modern Frank Lloyd Wright) a union was born on what each of us considered a "diamond in the rough" on Sarasota Big Pass. Through patience, perseverance and unwavering commitment, incorporating the magnificent natural beauty (Sarasota Big Pass, South Lido Beach and downtown skyline) along with their love of art, style and simplicity, the vision became reality and their sanctuary

Through these many years our relationship has continually grown. I can truly testify that Tony was a man of uncompromising character always engaging with intelligence, humor and wit. His honesty was at times "to a fault" but always uniquely Tony!

I will miss him greatly and will often recall the many moments shared with my friend and considered brother.

God be with you Tony.

Frank Mang - January 5, 2026

Frank Mang - January 05 at 08:12 PM

MM

Frank is one of those rare people who came into our lives for a lifetime, not just a reason or a season. Tony often said, "If I could pick a brother, it would be Frank Mang"!

Michelle Murray - January 06 at 05:31 AM

BE

“ Tony was a wonderful man, and he married a very special woman . We became instant friends 15 yrs ago when my son Andrew and I were paired together at a golf course in Ocean City MD with Tony and Michelle.

There was probably not a day went by since then when we did not share an e-mail of friendship, politics, military matters, Trump or jokes.

Most of all, he and I always discussed our mutual families. They came first with Tony, and first with me.

I loved Tony's book, and I concur my friend, you had 'Quite a ride"

Michelle, you made Tony's life special to him, and he did the same for you.

God Bless the Murray Family, and as Frank Sinatra said, Tony did it his way!

Much love, Brian--Andrew and The Egan Family of Berkeley Heights, N.J

Brian Egan - December 31, 2025 at 01:07 PM

MM

Many thanks for your beautiful tribute Brian! You and Tony shared a unique and beautiful friendship. It was a lucky day when we were paired up with you and Andrew. Who could have guessed that was 15 years ago?

Michelle Murray - January 06 at 05:35 AM