



## Joseph John Shoemaker

May 12, 1939 - July 29, 2018

On Sunday, July 29th, 2018, Joseph (Joe) John Shoemaker (79) of Butte, MT, passed on to his eternal home while in the presence of his beloved family at St. James Community Hospital.

Joe was born in Leadville, CO, on May 12, 1939 to Joseph and Angela (Widmar) Shoemaker. At a young age, his family moved to Butte where his childhood years were spent on the Parrot Flat, attending Grant Elementary School and graduating from Butte High. On August 18, 1957 Joe married Wilma Stedman and they raised four daughters: Michone, Christine, Robin and Natalie Jo. On February 14, 1986, Joe married Mary Danielson and added two more children to his life, Lisa and Rich.

A salesman at heart, Joe's first job at the age of 13 was selling magazines door to door. He continued in door to door sales selling RenaWare pots and pans, china and silverware. In 1962, he began his life long and very successful career as a New York Life Insurance agent. Along with numerous accomplishments and many awards such as his lifetime membership to the Million Dollar Roundtable, CLU and ChFC degrees, the one at the forefront of his career was his qualification for his 55th consecutive New York Life's Council level, an accomplishment very few have attained. He loved his profession, serving clients near and far, making sure all their needs were met day and night.

Joe was a self taught master of many things including the construction of his first home at the age of 24. He learned the "how to's" of construction by watching others and reading books. He spent countless hours woodworking in his "little" shop where he made many treasured pieces for family and friends. He was an accomplished game hunter enjoying many years at his rugged hunting camp and countless weekends waiting for the arrival of ducks and geese. He loved his hometown of Butte, and was a dedicated volunteer and active member for The Greenway, Project Green, and Restore Our Creek Coalition.

Above all else, Joe's greatest pride and joy was in his family. With six children, thirteen grandchildren and thirty-seven great grandchildren, his life was full beyond measure and he relished in every moment he had with all of them. He never ceased to amaze his family with his ability to remember every single birthday and the names of each of his thirty-seven great grandchildren. When asked of the family how you would describe this most honored man words like wonderful, magical, giving, kind-hearted, loving, dignified, suitable, happy, strong, generous, wise, joyful, dreamer, optimistic, humble, thoughtful, fun, encouraging, inspiring and so many more were expressed.

Our dad, grandpa, and great grandpa was a pillar of strength to all of us. We loved his contagious smile, the twinkle in his eyes, his wonderful stories and his quirky love for gummy bears but most of all we loved his larger than life presence. He will be greatly missed.

Joe is preceded in death by his parents, his brother Anton Bresich, and his son-in-law Jay Newby. He is survived by his wife Mary, his children Michone (Kevin) Stewart, Christine (Jim) Winjum, Robin (Wendell) Niewenhuis, Natalie Jo Shoemaker (Mark Wilcox), Lisa (Michael) Regan and Rich Danielson (Jennifer Leight), his grandchildren Jacob (Decia) Newby, Rachel (Daniel)

Merrick, Joel (Samantha) Newby, Alysha (Ryan) Ruffato, Stephanie (Nick) Venhuizen, Britton (Rebeccah) Clark, Ciana (Joey) Jimenez, Elise (Matthew) Leonard, Ross (Kayla) Moslander, Christiana (Christo) Wolmarans, Corbin Moslander, Austin Shoemaker, Jesse Wilcox, Joshua Wilcox, Caitlin (Landon) Graves, his thirty-seven great grandchildren, his sister-in-law Maria Bresich and two nieces Sonya Davis and Linda Barton.

Memorials may be made to the Butte Food Bank.

# Cemetery Details

## Holy Cross Cemetery

4700 Harrison Avenue  
Butte, MT 59701

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG 1. 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM (MT)

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
2100 Farragut Avenue  
Butte, MT 59701

## Vigil

AUG 1. 7:00 PM (MT)

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
2100 Farragut Avenue  
Butte, MT 59701

## Service

AUG 2. 11:00 AM (MT)

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
2100 Farragut Avenue  
Butte, MT 59701



# Tribute Wall

CW

“ From the first day we met, I knew Joe was someone special. His wonderful smile invited you into his loving embrace and his eyes spoke to your soul. He was a master story teller which captivated my attention and created a longing to return to hear more and more about those things that Joe loved and treasured. He was the real deal, genuine and honest, thoughtful and caring, compassionate and with conviction. He believe in the best and delivered it, professionally and personally. He had great wisdom born out of age and experiences. To meet someone like Joe is a blessing . . . a gift of great value which is treasured. His legacy is what you desire . . . etched in the hearts of those who knew him. Rich in friendships, generous of spirit and godly in lifestyle. A man who touched my life in a way few have. I long to see you again dear friend.. God speed and comfort to those grieving your absence in their life.

carin e wise - August 02, 2018 at 06:32 PM



“ Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Joseph John Shoemaker.



August 01, 2018 at 05:49 PM

RE

“ I remember when the Shoemaker's lived on the same block of the same street as the Renz family.. Was it really so long ago? The Renz kids and the Shoemaker kids spent time together, some times snow surfing down the hill. Ah,the good times. Rose Everett-Martin

Rose Everett-Martin - August 01, 2018 at 05:46 PM



“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



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**Wayrynen-Richards Funeral Home** - August 01, 2018 at 02:24 PM

GB

“ *Mary and Family.*

*My deepest condolences. Joe was a very good friend of mine, and recently supported me in in some insurance affairs. I am saddened by his passing. I will always remember his joyful spirit and generosity.*

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**George Butorovich** - August 01, 2018 at 01:20 PM

BH

“ *Joe was such a wonderful man who will live on in the hearts of many. I have nothing but great memories of him during my time at New York Life. He was the epitome of class and integrity and his love for his work was something truly admirable. I did not know him well, but he always made time to say hi and I am honored to know such a fine gentleman. He will forever be remembered as a wonderful and kind soul. You left your mark on this world in such a beautiful way. May you rest in eternal peace. Love and prayers to the family at their time of loss.*

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**Bethany Hein** - August 01, 2018 at 11:58 AM

FM

“ *My condolences to Mary and family and all the many friends that Joe had.  
He will be missed, but not forgotten by the many people he helped along the way  
to turn their life around. RIP and thanks for being my friend and the many others  
who benefited by your caring and devotion to being there year after year.*

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**Fraser MacDonald** - August 01, 2018 at 11:50 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Joseph John Shoemaker.*



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August 01, 2018 at 11:23 AM

TE

“ When I think of Joe, I can't help but recall the saying, "he/she/they have forgotten more than I will ever know." For the last 6 years I have been honored to be Joe's corporate support for all life insurance related questions and needs. Joe holds, and probably will forever, the record for stumping me. He was blessed with a great memory, that was in part fueled by his deep concern for his clients. He would call me to ask questions about policies he wrote 50 years ago with quirky features and benefits I had never even heard of and Joe, almost verbatim from the manual, and all from memory, would explain to me exactly how it worked. And then it was my job to make it actually happen. To say I was humbled almost every time I spoke to Joe is an understatement.

Joe loved his family. I know this because I was one of the first people to know when a new grandchild was born. Joe would call me to construct a policy for them just like all the others he had put in place before. And he was always so thrilled to be able to do so!

I loved Joe and still remember the first time I met him in Butte. It was a cold snowy day, and when I walked into the office and was greeted by this giant of a man, I apologized for being not only overdressed (suit, tie, and leather soled shoes) but also inappropriately dressed for the weather. Joe looked me up and down and said, "I've worn a suit and tie everyday for the last 50 years." With one line, he taught me a life lesson. The New York Life Insurance Company is PROUD to have had Joe Shoemaker represent us for 50+ years, there are few that ever have or ever will do it better.

tyler

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**Tyler Ellis** - August 01, 2018 at 10:05 AM

PL

“ Joe embraced me when I began my career with NYL 29 years ago. He was genuine and wise and always willing to share his wisdom with others. This year during his Council run he said to me, "I promised my Mary I would take her to the island...we are getting too old to hang out with all those youngsters at Executive Council." (As a side note, this meant his production had to be about double of the youngsters he was referring to.)

Last year when I attended his open house of his new office, he pointed across the street and said, "that's where I grew up...the house isn't there anymore, but my memories still are." Joe loved his family.

It's mindboggling to think of the legacy he will leave in his community. As a legend in a very noble profession his work will affect the people he loved and cared about for generations to come. I love you Joe.

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**Patti Larsen** - July 31, 2018 at 06:21 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Joseph John Shoemaker.



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July 31, 2018 at 05:39 PM

VB

“ *My most sincere condolences on your loss of such an outstanding man. I joined New York Life 5 years ago, and Joe was one of the first "Greats" to put his arm around me and give me the encouragement I needed. He was a genius with people, and Joe was a reflection of the true human spirit. Everyone loved Joe and his contagious laugh and smile. My heart goes out to everyone that he touched, and I know he is shining inside all of us. God Bless.*

*Vanessa Bucklin*

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**Vanessa Bucklin** - July 31, 2018 at 05:37 PM

LV

“ *Joe was not only a great man, he was a Legend. One of the sharpest, caring, dynamic financial professionals in the insustry. He was a leader, encourager, and a Legendary New York Life Agent.*

*We will miss you.*

*Lisa Vanzant*

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**Lisa Macalister Vanzant** - July 31, 2018 at 05:00 PM

TH

“ I am so sorry for the loss of a truly great man. I remember a few years ago when Joe was being honored for his 50th consecutive Council. I had noticed him at all the business sessions taking copious notes and listening intently, and I thought “That’s why.” He was dedicated and wanting to learn more -- even after five decades! -- so he could better serve his clients. What a role model for other agents.

*The last night of that same Council meeting, we spent a few hours with Joe at the annual dinner in the float museum in New Orleans. I can still see him listening to the bluegrass band and swaying to the music. He was so much fun to spend time with -- and a decent, honorable man.*

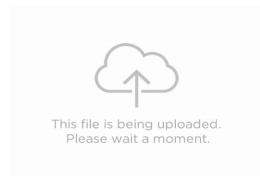
*Joe was truly one of the "Greats" and the world was better with him in it. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family and all of the people he touched and inspired over the years.*

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**Trish Hendrix** - July 31, 2018 at 04:58 PM

AG

“ 2 files added to the album Joe



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**Adam Gross** - July 31, 2018 at 04:55 PM

AM

“ I feel privileged to have been able to call Joe a friend during these last 22 years. My sincerest condolences to Joe's family.

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**Anthony Miller** - July 31, 2018 at 04:52 PM

TH

“ So very sad to hear about Joe. I’ve known him for over 20 years. He was always a top producer for New York Life. I was honored to be a friend of his. Joe will be missed by so many. He was always kind and enjoyed helping others. His legacy will live on through the people he helped.

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**Tom Hegna** - July 31, 2018 at 04:52 PM



“ Joe will be missed. When I started with New York Life almost twenty years ago, Joe was so kind to me. I will miss him so much at company meetings especially Company Council meetings. One year, we were in California and we went on the ferris ride together. I didn't realize how motion sick he got. I went and got him a 7-up and throughout the rest of the evening kept checking on him. It took him several hours to get his feet back under him. He was a true gentleman. He would share his knowledge with all the new agents. Always dedicated to his clients, company and family. We truly lost a great man in our industry.. Always optimistic and fair.

**Shelly Gams, CFP(R)**

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**Michelle Gams** - July 31, 2018 at 04:19 PM

KC

“ I would like to be the first to offer my condolences to Joe's family. I've literally known Joe since the day I was born and his obituary is correct - he definitely had a twinkle in his eye, he was larger than life and to add to that - he had the best laugh! I could pick out his laugh in a room full of people. :-) A very kind man. To his family - take care in knowing that he is now looking down on all of you and smiling. You've all done him proud. See you soon.

*Karen (Jozovich) Conniston*

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**Karen Conniston** - July 31, 2018 at 03:56 PM