
Philip Joseph "Phil" VACCARO(1938 - 2015)

VACCARO, Philip Joseph "Phil" Philip Joseph Vaccaro "Phil" passed away peacefully after a long battle of COPD at his home in Prosper, TX on March 11, 2015 surrounded by family. Phil was born on March 31, 1938 in North Bergen, NJ to the late Salvatore Vaccaro and late Santina D'Amico. He spent his childhood in North Bergen and graduated from Memorial High School in West New York, New Jersey. After graduation, he entered the [United States Marine Corps](#) and served during the Post Korean Era at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina with an honorable discharge. Phil then moved to Dallas, Texas to begin his pursuit of a business degree at Southern Methodist University which he earned in 1961. He was a member of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. While in college, Phil began working at his Aunt Christine and late Uncle Mario Vaccaro's restaurant Mario's at one of its original locations on Lemmon Avenue near downtown Dallas. He started as a parking attendant and eventually worked his way up to manager. This ignited the beginning of his restaurant empire in Dallas which spanned from the late 1960's until the early 1990's. He was founder and CEO of Universal Restaurants which consisted of Mario's, Old Warsaw, Les Saisons (both in Dallas and Destin, FL), Arthur's (with one location in Dallas and another one in San Antonio, TX), and Arthur's West by Love Field Airport. Phil also developed several other concepts during his Universal Restaurants/Vaccaro Restaurant's tenure such as Seascape on Greenville Avenue, Dixie's Hamburgers in Campbell Center, and the Pits barbeque, to name a few. He also managed Harper's Corner on top of the Hilton at Mockingbird Lane. His conglomerate of restaurants (Universal Restaurants) was one of the original paradigms for gourmet dining in Dallas during the 1970's and 1980's. He also involved many of his family members in his restaurant empire. His Aunt Christine was a familiar face with the customers at Mario's until its closing. After retiring from the restaurant industry, Phil worked side-by-side with his wife Marjorie running her company, Kennedy Licensing. After ten years, they sold the business to their employees. Since then they have enjoyed their retirement years with family and friends splitting their time fishing at their lake house in southeast Texas and winters in their home in Florida. Phil loved his family and was generous to all who knew him. He was the epitome of a host and always made sure anyone he was with had a wonderful time. After retiring from the restaurant business, he pursued his passion with food by preparing exquisite meals for his family and friends. He is survived by his wife of eighteen years, Marjorie Kennedy, daughters Christi Hart (fiancé Victor Levy) and Nancy Stephenson (Jay), grandchildren Taylor, Chandler, Morgan, Diana, Sam and Ben, sister Maria Smith (Gene), nieces Lisa and Gina, nephew Lee, beloved cousin Brenda Vaccaro, friend and home care assistant, Maria Vega, and a host of other family members. He was loved by many and will be greatly missed. Phil's family would like to thank Gentiva Hospice and All About You caregivers for their loving care and support to Phil in his final days. Donations in Phil's name may be made to the [American Lung Association](#) , 8150 Brookriver Dr., Suite 102, Dallas, TX 75247. A private memorial service will be held at the end of March.

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