

*Homegoing Service for*  
*Joseph Ralph Van Valen, Sr.*

*Sunrise*

February 23, 1923

*Sunset*

July 23, 2011

**Service**

Friday, July 29, 2011 - 11:00 a.m.

**Woody Home For Services**

163 Oakwood Avenue

Orange, New Jersey

**Pastor Issac C. Jones, Officiating**

## *Life Reflections*

**JOSEPH R. VAN VALEN, SR.** (affectionately known as “Sonny”) was the sixth child of Alonzo and Sarah Van Valen. Born in North Bergen, New Jersey, Sonny moved with his family to Vaux Hall, New Jersey where he attended St. Joseph’s Parochial School. While in his teens he helped his family through the great depression by participating in the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corp) Works program. Afterward he worked for the government at the Picatinny Arsenal in New Jersey. While under their employ he was drafted into the US Navy Special OPS division, serving in the Pacific campaign during WWII. He was decorated with several awards and medals including a special citation from President Franklin D. Roosevelt for excellence in service. He was granted an honorable discharge and returned to the states where he secured a position with Elastic Stop Nut Association (ESNA) as lead machinist where he worked for forty years. During his employ he was voted shop steward representing his co-workers for the UAW in what was one of the biggest strikes in New Jersey history, where they claimed victory over the company.

Sonny met, fell in love with and married Arizona Conner (affectionately known as “Fifi”) with whom he shared the next fifty-nine years. They briefly resided in Roselle, New Jersey then ultimately settled in East Orange, New Jersey. Their union was blessed with four loving children, Joseph Ralph Jr., Catherine Ceceila, Vicci and Richard Louis.

Sonny was a very intelligent, multi-talented, special kind of man. He had a keen wit and a sharp sense of humor. He was a talented musician, played guitar, keyboards and sang the blues. He was a semi-pro bowler, winning several championships and dozens of trophies. He loved fishing, horse racing and sharing special times with his family. He was a hard worker, loving husband, doting father and grandfather. He was a wise and lovable man. People always came to him and he was generous with his time, direction and advice. He had a heart of gold and was always willing to help in any way he could. He had a special place in his heart for the little ones. He loved children and they loved him too. In his retirement Sonny was an amazing grandpa. He really gave his all to his grands.

Joseph R. Van Valen Sr. was a man’s man... the true Patriarch of the family. He lived a long beautiful life which impacted everyone who knew him.

He was predeceased by brothers, Alonzo, Nicholas and Paul Van Valen as well as sisters, Sarah Babbs, Mary Perry, Josephine Heard and Anna Van Valen who passed away in her youth. He is loved dearly and will be truly missed by his loving family: including his wife, Arizona (Fifi) Van Valen (nee Conner); children, Joseph, Catherine, Vicci and Richard Van Valen; grandchildren, Camille, David-Joseph, Victor, Joseph R. III, David Ashley, Richard L. Jr., Tina E. and Ashley A. Van Valen; a sister, Cecelia Rivera; and a host of nieces and nephews spanning several generations. He left a legacy of life and love that all who knew him will cherish.

# Order Of Service

**PROCESSIONAL**

**HYMN OF COMFORT**

“How Great Thou Art”

**OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE**

Psalm 23

**NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE**

John 14:1-7

**OBITUARY**

**MUSIC**

“Going Up Yonder”

**EULOGY**

Pastor Issaac C. Jones

**BENEDICTION**

**RECESSIONAL**

## Interment

Brig. Gen. William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery  
Wrightstown, New Jersey

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*Services Entrusted To:*

**G.G. Woody Funeral Home, LLC**

206 East Eighth Avenue • Roselle, NJ 07203

[www.ggwoodyfuneralhome.com](http://www.ggwoodyfuneralhome.com)

*“Where Our Sympathy Expresses Itself Through Sincere Service”*

Pall Bearers  
Family of Joseph "Sonny" Van Valen, Sr.

*Our hearts are filled with sadness  
Our eyes are filled with tears  
Our thoughts are of the times we shared with you  
Over the many, many years.*

*Some of the times were good  
And some of the times were bad  
But, we thank the Lord above,  
For all the times we had.*

*And as the tears roll down our cheeks  
From our sad and tear-filled eyes  
And with our heavy and broken hearts  
We say our last goodbye.*

*A place is vacant in our hearts  
Which never can be filled  
But we will always have beautiful memories  
Of the one we love so dear.*

*Acknowledgement*

The family of **Joseph Van Valen, Sr.** acknowledges with sincere appreciation every thought and act of kindness expressed to us during this our hour of bereavement. We will always keep you in our prayers.  
May God continue to richly bless you.