



Joseph "Joe" Appel

March 3, 1932 - November 25, 2024

Joseph M. Appel, 92, of Benton Township, died Monday, November 25, 2024, at Hanson Hospice Center in Lincoln Township.

Celebration of Life Mass will be held at 11:00 AM on Friday, December 6, 2024, at St. Bernard's Catholic Church in Benton Township. Visitation will be from 5-7 pm on Thursday, December 5, 2024, at the Fairplain Chapel of Florin Funeral Service. A reception will be held at the Moose Lodge at 2180 Union Avenue in Benton Township after the service. Arrangements are by the Fairplain Chapel of Florin Funeral Service. Please share memories or messages at www.florin.net.

Joe was born March 3, 1932, to Alex and Anne Appel. He graduated from St. John's High School in 1950. Joe was a well known and well loved fixture in the community as a rising young banker with Farmers and Merchants Bank, through its acquisition by National Bank of Detroit in 1980, and finishing his banking career as President of State Bank of Coloma, overseeing its 100th Anniversary in 1996.

Joe served in the Korean War from 1952-1954 as an artillery man in the US Army. He was awarded the Korean Service Ribbon, Bronze Service Star, National Defense Service Medal, and United Nations Service Medal.

Joe married his wife Wilma in 1957, and together they celebrated 66 years of marriage before her death in 2023. Together they had three children, Sharon, Michael, and Catherine.

As much as Joe loved his career, there were three things he loved more, his family, his faith, and his friends.

Joe was the type of father who attended every Little League game, every dance recital, every gymnastics and swim meet-no matter how tortuously long. He installed a swimming pool in the back yard to keep his children more interested in bringing their friends home than in running around with them somewhere else. When the four grandchildren (Claire, Amber, Anna, and his little namesake Joe) came along, he was thrilled to no end, and was very active in his grandchildren's lives. He babysat, taught the two oldest how to ride bikes, attended father/daughter dances, and helped teach them to swim. When his first great grandchild Alexandria was born, and then his second, Huntar, he stepped up and helped babysit them as well. He spent time with them and thoroughly enjoyed their company. When he got two step-greats, Rozemary and Dakota, he welcomed them to the family as well.

In his younger years, Joe was a busy and athletic man, golfing every weekend, bowling during the season (and once bowling a perfect game!), and swimming daily from Memorial Day until Labor Day.

Joe was preceded in death by his wife, Wilma, in 2023, and his daughter, Catherine, in 2009. He leaves two children, four grandchildren, four great grandchildren, and their assorted spouses. He will be dearly missed.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 5. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Fairplain Chapel of Florin Funeral Service
1053 East Napier Avenue
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
(269) 926-7222
staff@florin.net

Celebration of life

DEC 6. 11:00 AM (ET)

SS John & Bernard Parish, St. Bernard Catholic Church
555 Delaware
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Military Honors

DEC 6. 11:00 AM (ET)

SS John & Bernard Parish, St. Bernard Catholic Church
555 Delaware
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Tribute Wall

MR

“ I was recently in the Benton Harbor area, and my memories of Joe and Wilma Appel came to the surface, I just wanted to reach out to Mike and Sharon, and offer my condolences. I knew them for a brief period, but they had a significant impact on my life, and while I was very young then, their dedication to each other and their family stuck with me to this day.

Michael Richmond

Michael Richmond - June 25, 2025 at 12:13 PM

SD

Thank you, Mike. We appreciate your good thoughts and memories. It's been forever, but I hope you are well, and I hope Jake has grown up to be completely awesome! Geeze, he has to be in his mid 30s now, right? I can't believe how fast the years pass.

Sharon Desfor - July 13, 2025 at 07:56 AM

CL

“ 2 files added to the album *Through the Ages*



Claire - December 02, 2024 at 09:28 PM



“ *Michael & Sharon I am so sorry for your dad's passing. I would be there for sure if I wasn't in the hospital. I will keep you and family in my prayers.*

Djera Mucia - December 01, 2024 at 04:11 PM

JF

“ *With love and heartfelt sympathy to Joe's family. You have our prayers during this transitional time. We are thankful for Joe's service to his country. God bless the Appel family.*



Josephine Doss-Smith & Family - November 30, 2024 at 04:02 PM