



## Joseph L Ulrich

October 31, 2025

Joseph L. Ulrich, of Cresskill, New Jersey, passed away on October 31, 2025, in a tragic accident while doing what he loved: taking care of trees.

"Jersey Joe" was born on November 4th, 1960 and raised in Closter, N.J., where he graduated from Northern Valley Regional High School at Demarest in 1979. A man of many talents and interests, he graduated with his bachelor's degree in Marketing from Villanova University in 1984 and later attended Western States Chiropractic College in Portland, Oregon, before returning to his true passion: trees. He founded Palisades Tree Service in 1990 and cared for trees in his community for thirty-five years as the business' owner and operator. Joe was a New Jersey Licensed Tree Expert and an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist.

Joe met his wife, Loreen, while working in her parents' backyard in Northvale, N.J., in 1986, and they married in 1990. Earlier this year, they celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary with a champagne toast at the top of the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Together, they raised two talented children, Morgan, 27, and Devon, 25. Joe was preceded in death by his brother Christopher, nephew Steven, and his parents, Patrick and Elizabeth Ulrich, and is survived by his loving wife, children, siblings Patricia, Peter, and Anne-Marie, in-laws Kevin, Parmelie, and Robert, and niece and nephews Ashley, Bill, and Thomas.

A generous man with a kind heart, Joe was beloved by his community for always lending a hand and sharing his ideas in thoughtful conversations. He brought his extensive knowledge and passion for trees to the Dumont Shade

Tree Commission, where he was an active member and seminar speaker for nineteen years. He was also an Executive Board Member on the Cresskill Environmental Commission since February 2020. Joe was also an avid lover of music, from Bach to Bob Dylan, and he especially enjoyed listening to his children play flute and trumpet. Joe was an outdoorsman who enjoyed spending time in nature, and his early passions included rock and ice climbing in the Catskills and Adirondacks. He enjoyed traveling, especially annual trips to Marginal Way in Ogunquit, Maine.

A celebration of Joe's life will be held at Barrett Leber Funeral Home in Tenafly, N.J. on Sunday, November 16th, from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. The family requests that guests wear green to celebrate Joe's love of trees and nature.

A luncheon will follow for family and close friends by invitation only.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Friends of the Shade Tree for Joe's memorial at the Dumont Arboretum: <https://fotst.org/product/joe-ulrich-memorial-fund/>

# Previous Events

## Memorial Visitation

NOV **16**. 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Barrett Leber Funeral Home

148 Dean Dr

Tenafly, NJ 07670

(201) 568-8043

<https://www.barrettleberfuneralhome.com/>

# Tribute Wall

WR

“ sorry, just hearing this from another of Joes clients...Joe delivered many cords of wood to my house in Harlem and we always seem to spend the entire time talking....talking about everything!! His last delivery to me was from Rudy Van Gelders yard...i still have some of it. - Our condolences, he will be thought of whenever i light a fire - Bill Rohlfing and Jeannette McClennan

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**William Rohlfing** - February 17 at 11:23 AM

“ When I first met Joe, my idea of a fun Saturday afternoon was going to the mall, while Joe’s was climbing a rock wall at the “Gunks” in New Paltz. Although Joe did introduce me to rock climbing, I liked having my feet on the ground and discovered a passion for running. Together we enjoyed running, biking and hiking, and after we honeymooned in Maui, he took me on my first camping trip in Acadia National Park in Maine. In addition to his outdoor lifestyle, Joe had a passion for learning and shared his extensive knowledge of the world around us with me and our two children. When Morgan was five, he read her the entire Harry Potter series, and later on quizzed her nightly for Word Masters Challenges. A couple of years later Joe reread the Harry Potter series to Devon, and later on had in-depth conversations with him about Einstein’s general theory of relativity, and other scientific phenomena. He was a big advocate for their interest in playing flute and trumpet, and drove them all over the state for various rehearsals and never missed a concert. When we decided on a trip to France earlier this year, I found Joe mumbling to himself and discovered he was using Babble to learn French. His index cards were also always within reach, so he could study Latin nomenclature and detailed facts about trees any chance he got. I’ll miss his wit and zest for learning, and his knowledge of history and science while trying to guess the answers to our nightly episodes of Jeopardy.

*Although our story ended too soon, I have wonderful memories of our life together, and will carry those chapters in my heart forever.*

*In memory of Joe, let’s plant flowers and trees to help make our environment a little greener.*





**Loreen Ulrich** - December 06, 2025 at 12:23 PM

FC

“ *A memory of Joe for Loreen, Morgan, and Devon:  
Many years ago we were all together at my parents' home in Fairview, NJ; Mary Ann and I had just recently met Joe. My father was ailing and was pretty much confined to the apartment. Joe noticed that my father's eyeglasses were very smudged. Without a word he got up and removed the glasses, washed them at the sink, and then gently put them back on my father. I was very moved by Joe's quiet act of caring. To this day, as part of my morning ritual of cleaning my own glasses as the shower is heating up, I think of Joe's kindness to my father. My condolences for your loss. Fred Garcich*



**Fred Garcich** - November 22, 2025 at 05:11 PM

“ When I first met Joe at Villanova, I was immediately struck by his ability to express complex ideas with disarming clarity. I assumed he must be a philosophy major, and I was genuinely surprised to learn he was studying marketing. Joe, his roommate, and I soon became friends—a small, disaffected corner of the student body who felt distinctly out of place on a conservative Catholic campus in the 1980s, during the height of the Reagan era, when the president was revered by many of our classmates. Still, we managed to have our fun, laughing at the absurdity around us and occasionally stirring up trouble of our own.

Joe’s roommate played guitar, and he looked up to Joe like the big brother he never had. I can still picture Joe putting him to bed one night after he’d been over-served—a gesture both tender and exasperated, and unmistakably Joe. He was always unabashedly himself, and people valued him for his raw, unfiltered honesty.

We both had our share of ups and downs during college, but Joe possessed a rare gift: he could turn his pain into poetry. Two of his poems were published in an underground newspaper created by some of our classmates, styled as the Villanova Free Press. I hope to find those old copies someday, but one poem—*Cold and Frozen*—has stayed with me. As best as I can recall, it read:

*Cold and frozen, the day dawns in pale shadows.*

*Winter sunlight proves incapable of loosening iron-strong despair.*

*Inner warmth slowly ebbs away,*

*Leaving the ragged cliffs of hope*

*Exposed to the ravaging winds of doubt.*

*Joe's great passion was rock climbing. It made him feel alive, and he shared that sense of vitality with anyone willing to follow him up a rock face. The first time he took us climbing at Fairmount Park, I remember thinking it would be fun—and quickly realizing it was anything but easy. Yet Joe had a way of coaxing me out of my shell, challenging me to do things I never would have attempted on my own.*

*After graduation, he tried working an office job in New York, but it didn't suit him. When he later learned that his former roommate had passed away, Joe told me it pushed him to live life entirely on his own terms. He joined a tree service, where he met Loreen while working at her parents' home. Eventually, he founded Palisades Tree Service, a business that allowed him to blend his sharp mind with his love of climbing, nature, and working outdoors.*

*With time, Joe and I drifted apart, as people often do. But even though we haven't spoken in more than a decade, I know I will miss him every day for the rest of my life.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Carl Poveromo*

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**Carl Poveromo** - November 15, 2025 at 09:10 PM



“ Will always remember Joe for his kindness, empathy and wit. As my neighbor for the past 30 years, we’ve been through a lot. He was a big help with my parents, uncle, aunt, and BIL’s passings. Also, when I had my stroke and subsequent rehab and dialysis for the last couple of years. He was always there as a caring friend and neighbor, cause that’s the kind of person he was. I will miss our daily talks and reminiscing about the “old days” and griping about the current events of the day. Also how much he took pride of his children’s accomplishments! He also was so happy after the 35th anniversary trip to Paris! He was still talking about it to the time he passed. Sending love and hugs to Loreen, Morgan and Devon. Joe was definitely one in a million and hopefully he’s having a great time in the heavens! He will be truly missed by all who knew him !



Nancy Yee - November 15, 2025 at 10:24 AM

ER

“ Lovely man. He would come to our house and I would learn more about my trees than any book could possibly tell me. He was a kind and compassionate person. We are keeping his family in our prayers. A good man taken too soon.



ELINOR M ROMER - November 13, 2025 at 12:07 AM

TA

“ Until we meet again my friend

Tom Auriti - November 11, 2025 at 12:21 PM



“ 1 file added to the album *Joseph L Ulrich*



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**Kevin Kyle** - November 09, 2025 at 03:42 PM



“ I first met Joe 25 years ago when I answered an ad for “Seasoned Firewood”. Joe arrived and delivered ½ cord of firewood AND told me the story of EVERY piece of wood. “This is Black Walnut, he’d say, or burn this huge piece of Oak at Thanksgiving Dinner, it’ll smell great and last forever.”

Over the years Joe has kept my property pruned, in shape and healthy, including a giant Pine tree in the corner of my property. There WERE times Joe, and my lovely wife didn’t see eye to eye on some trimming suggestions. Joe would not hesitate to refuse to make a cut if he felt it was unnecessary, and he’d explain his position.

Besides all the tree work – the BEST part of Joe’s visits to my home occurred after he was done (and all the debris put away). I’d make a big cup of strong coffee (Death Wish before they became Wimpy Wish!) and we would sit and commiserate about – whatever. We’d catch up on family and switch to politics – local and national. Our conversations were lively, and I should add we did not see eye to eye on most issues. Joe argued well and I always said he handled being wrong with great passion.

I will miss Joe and our talks. Like many of his friends and customers, I have memories, and, in my case, I get to look at a GIANT Pine tree and see the signs of Joe’s care over the years. The healed cuts, Joe would call them callus tissue. So, I will toast Joe with a cup of strong coffee and honor his good work and attitude. Goodnight, my friend.

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**Kevin Kyle** - November 08, 2025 at 09:25 AM

MZ

Thank you for sharing these wonderful memories of my cousin Joe

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**Mary Zesiewicz** - November 09, 2025 at 09:23 AM

SP

“ Susan Papa lit a candle in memory of Joseph L Ulrich



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**Susan Papa** - November 07, 2025 at 06:30 PM

LR

“ Very sad to hear about the passing of Joe. He was a wonderful client with hours or stories to tell. Rest in Paradise.

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**Laurie Roche** - November 07, 2025 at 03:03 PM

LU

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Loreen Ulrich** - November 07, 2025 at 03:03 PM

LA

*I'm so sorry for your loss. Although we hadn't been in touch for a long time we grew up down the street from each other and because our mom's were friends I think he was forced to come to my( 90% girls) birthday parties against his will lol. I have some funny pictures to prove it. I understand what this loss means to al of you and will keep you in my prayers*

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**Lisa Arcella** - November 19, 2025 at 11:42 PM

MO

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



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**Morgan** - November 07, 2025 at 01:47 PM

LU

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Loren Ulrich** - November 07, 2025 at 01:45 PM