



Samuel J. "Sam" Vitanza

March 12, 1933 - May 26, 2026

Samuel J. "Sam" Vitanza, age 93, of Mentor formerly of Willoughby, passed away peacefully on May 26, 2026. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, on March 12, 1933, to the late Sam and Nancy (née Bindo) Vitanza, Sam lived a long, full life defined by family devotion, service to his country, and a wonderful sense of humor.

At the very center of Sam's world was his beloved wife, Dorothy "Dotty" Vitanza (née Urban). The two met working together at Leece-Neville Co. Together, they shared an extraordinary 69 years of marriage, building a legacy of love, laughter, and strong family ties that will carry on through generations. A proud patriot, Sam honorably served his country as a Veteran of the U.S. Navy. Following his military service, he established a long and successful career, eventually retiring from Spence Tech.

Sam was a man of many simple joys. He loved golfing, testing his luck with a bit of gambling, and enjoying a lively game of bingo. His favorite shared story was winning \$200,000 in the Let It Ride Tournament in Las Vegas. More than anything, he was a man with a servant's heart who loved helping others. He was known as the ultimate neighborhood handyman, always ready to fix absolutely anything for anyone who asked. Of course, those who knew him best knew that his legendary "specialty tools" of choice were always a roll of duct tape and a tube of super glue-and he could work wonders with both.

Sam is survived by his devoted wife, Dotty; his loving daughters, Tammy (Robert) Baker, Cindy Sedivy (John Starkowicz), and Tina (James) Sullivan;

his cherished grandchildren, Amanda Ciero, Rocky Ciero, Nic (Hanna) Rocazella, Sam (Gillian) Rocazella, and Skylar Sullivan; and his great-grandchildren, Shyanne, Aniyah, Xzavier, and Jerimiah.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his siblings Connie and Joe, and his beloved great-grandson, Quincy.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Saturday, July 11, 2026, at 9:30 AM at St. John Vianney Church, 7575 Bellflower Rd, Mentor, OH 44060.

Following the Mass, Sam will be laid to rest with military honors at Western Reserve Memorial Gardens in Chesterland.

Sam's steady love, gentle guidance, and trademark humor will be missed tremendously by all who were blessed to share in his 93 years.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Geauga County Dog Warden, 12513 Merritt Rd, Chardon, OH 44024 or Suncrest Hospice, 6100 Rockside Woods Blvd N Suite 240, Independence, OH 44131.

Upcoming Events

Funeral Mass

JUL 11. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

St John Vianney Parish
7575 Bellflower Rd
Mentor, OH 44060

Burial

JUL 11 (ET)

Western Reserve Memorial Gardens
11521 Chillicothe Road
Chesterland, OH 44026

Tribute Wall

JV

“ Aunt Dotty and family, I was so sad to come across Uncle Sam's obituary. My husband, Steve Vitanza, was his nephew (Joe's son). Steve and I loved running into him and Aunt Dotty from time to time and were lucky to spend a lovely evening at Texas Road House with them many years ago to celebrate an anniversary of theirs. When Steve passed away during Covid, Uncle Sam was there to pay his respects. We will treasure the memory of him and were so lucky to have him as an Uncle. God's blessing on Uncle Sam and may God assist Aunt Dotty and the family during this time of love and loss. Jo Ann Vitanza and Steve from Above.

Jo Ann Vitanza - June 03 at 06:48 PM

DO

“ Sammy's obituary says it all. When my Father handed a copy of his Will to me, he said if anything goes wrong in your life, call Sammy. Sammy was that kind of man.

So many fond childhood memories. Dottie's spaghetti and meatballs! My Mother and Sammy were thick as thieves. Always planning the next neighborhood hijinks or party. My parents are welcoming him with open arms.

My Deepest Sympathy to the entire family for your great loss.

Diane Oblak-Durham - May 28 at 08:18 AM

KC

“ It was always a pleasure when Sam came into the office. A great story was getting ready to be told.
Kent A. Caserta

Kent Caserta - May 27 at 08:20 PM