

The Life of Anthony J. LaRocca

Born January 25, 1929 in Chicago, IL to Sicilian immigrant Salvatore LaRocca and Grace Campo LaRocca, Anthony Joseph LaRocca would live a life of exemplary accomplishment not only in his chosen careers but in service to his community and fellow man. During his high school years he left school for a year learning to finish concrete in order to contribute to the financial well-being of his family. Tony learned early in life the importance of hard work and diligence. These lessons would serve him well throughout his lifetime and lead him to 50 plus years of service to his community in various capacities.

In February of 1950 Anthony married Rosemary Cerceo, a daughter (Mary Grace) and a son (John Anthony) were soon to follow. In 1955 Tony moved his small family to the home he had built for them in Addison, IL. From 1956 to 1960 he served as a part time police officer for the Village of Addison. In July of 1958 he accepted a position as Addison's first full time waste water operator. He later looked back on his decision to accept this position as "one of the smartest things he ever did". Tony received the IEPA award for Outstanding Waste Water Treatment Plant Operator of the year from the Illinois Association of Water Pollution Control Operators in 1964. This would be the first of many awards honoring his dedication and commitment to his field.

Serving in the capacity of Superintendent of Water Pollution Control until 1984, he then accepted the position of Village Manager. Tragedy struck Tony's family with the sudden loss of his wife Rosemary in 1985. With difficult times ahead, Tony continued moving forward finishing his career and retiring from the Village of Addison in 1989 serving his Village for 35+ years. After retiring from the village, Tony served the City of Darien, IL as Interim City Manager for six months. He was then employed as Manager of Business Development for Pavia Marting Consultants in Roselle, IL until 1994.

Tony's family continued to grow adding five grandchildren to the LaRocca clan. Besides excelling in his profession, Tony never lost sight of the importance of family. Family first was his motto.

Tony served almost twenty four years as an elected trustee for the Addison Fire Protection District from 1989 until his death in 2012, serving at that time as President of the Board of Trustees. He also served as a Director and President of the Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts for more than 12 years.

In June of 2008 Tony married Bernadette Hanrahan adding 3 step children and 3 grandchildren to his family.

Professional Memberships included;

The Institute for Solid Wastes

DuPage County Water Pollution Control Operators (President 1963)

Illinois Society of Water Pollution Control Operators

Illinois Association Water Pollution Control Operators (President 1971-1972)

American Public Works Association

DuPage Wastewater Treatment Managers Group

Illinois Association of Sanitary Districts

Central States Water Environment Association
Water Environment Federation
Illinois Water Environmental Association
DuPage County Mayors & Managers Conference, Metropolitan Managers
IAMMA, International City Management Association
Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts
Illinois Professional Firefighters Association
Northern Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts
Illinois Fire Service Association

Tony was the recipient of numerous awards during his illustrious career including

The south wastewater treatment plant in Addison was renamed the Anthony J. LaRocca Environmental Facility.

Addison Fire Station 3 has also been named in honor of Anthony J. LaRocca

IEPA, Annual Award for the Outstanding Illinois Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator of the Year, 1964.

Central States Water Environmental Association, Operator of the Year Award, 1965 and 1982.

Distinguished Leadership Award, Illinois Association of Water Pollution Control Operators Association (1986)

Clarence W. Klassen Service Award, Illinois Association of Water Pollution Control Operators (1986)

DuPage County Clean Streams Association, Hugh Dugan Memorial Commendation, 1967.

In 1999 Anthony was awarded the Presidential Service Award by the Northern Alliance of Fire Protection Districts.

Tony was also a member of the Knights of Columbus, Kiwanis of Addison, Order of the Sons of Italy, Loyal Order of Moose, Honorary Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #7446, and Life Member of the Addison Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

From cement finishing to police officer to wastewater operator to village and city manager to fire district trustee, Anthony's life was exemplary in so many ways. His legacy lives on to inspire others to be all they can be and always strive to go the extra mile in serving their fellow man.

The A. J. LaRocca Memorial Fund has been established in order to help provide the means to those who choose to serve in the water pollution control or fire service industry. As Tony would always say, "Think Happy Thoughts!"

Support of this foundation is always appreciated.