

Obituary - Gabriel "Gabe" Bruni



Gabriel "Gabe" Bruni, 81, passed away Wednesday, Jan. 9 at his home in Yucaipa.

He was born Sept. 9, 1931 in Calabria, southern Italy. As a young man, he made his way to America on a ship called the "Buon Compleanno." A few years later, a friend took him home for dinner and introduced him to his sister, Josephine Palazzolo. It was a thrill for Gabe to learn she had crossed on the same ship only a year later. Two years later they were married and soon came west to a small town called Fontana. Quickly he went to work for the Fontana Unified School District in the Maintenance Department. He worked there 30 years until he retired, and then went on call for an additional 10 years just for good measure. Gabe and his wife also

owned and operated Rafiela's Beauty Center here in Fontana for 30 years. They lived the first 24 years in Fontana, then moved to Redlands for 20 years, then moved in 2003 to their current home in Yucaipa. Gabe was a people person and was an active member of the Elks Lodge for about 10 years. Together they raised their beautiful daughter Rafaela. In retirement they traveled extensively, including three trips home to Italy on luxury cruise ships.

He is survived by his sweetheart of 54 years, Josephine Bruni of Yucaipa; their daughter, Rafiela Bruni of Boston, Mass.; one granddaughter, Gabriella Bauer (named for her grandfather) of Boston; one brother, Frank Bruni of Highland; and his sisters, Maria Barone of Canada, Saletta Bruni of Highland and Ester Guzzo of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

There was a viewing and visitation on Sunday, Jan. 13 from 1-6 p.m. at Dickey Mortuary, Fontana, with funeral services at 2 p.m. On Monday, Jan. 14, he was laid to rest in the mausoleum at Bellevue Memorial Park in a private ceremony with his immediate family. Dickey Mortuary was in charge of arrangements.