



Joseph Paul Fonfara

January 31, 1945 - June 8, 2017

Joseph Paul Fonfara passed away on June 8, 2017. Joe was born in Detroit, MI on January 31, 1945 to Frank and Georgia Fonfara. He graduated from the University of Wyoming with a degree in Music in 1969, where he was also a member of the National Guard.

Joe married Penelope Senior in Laramie, Wyoming. In 1970, they moved to Fort Collins where Joe soon opened his music store, Appleway Center Music Co. In 1988, he began a career in law with a degree with honors from the University of Wyoming. After working as a clerk at the Wyoming Supreme Court, Joe started his own practice in Fort Collins and was most proud of his appellate work.

Joe was always short on small talk, but long on words and wit. He loved a good argument, was hard working, never idle, and a true craftsman who pursued excellence in everything he did. Joe was an expert aerobatic pilot, competitive shooter, accomplished musician, and caring father. He was very generous to those who would least expect it, and respected by all who knew him. Joe will be missed dearly.

Joe was preceded in death by his brother, Dennis. He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Penny; brother, Michael; son, Paul; and granddaughter, Sadie Josephine.

A Visitation will be held from 5:00-7:00 p.m. on Wednesday at Bohlender Funeral Chapel. A Requiem Mass will be held on Thursday, June 15, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. at St John XXIII Catholic Church, 1220 University Ave, Fort Collins. Interment Grandview Cemetery. Friends may send condolences to the family at bohlenderfuneralchapel.com.

Cemetery Details

Grandview Cemetery

1900 W. Mountain Ave.
Ft. Collins, CO 80521

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN **14.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (MT)

Bohlender Funeral Chapel
121 W. Olive Street
Fort Collins, CO 80524
(970) 482-4244
<https://www.bohlenderfuneralchapel.com/>

Requiem Mass

JUN **15.** 10:00 AM (MT)

Saint John XXIII Catholic Church
1220 University Avenue
Fort Collins, CO

Tribute Wall

FG

“ I clerked with Joe Fonfara at the Wyoming Supreme Court in the early 1990s and we commuted together from Fort Collins to Cheyenne after his clerkship with Justice Thomas ended. We had many interesting conversations in his little Porsche, driving I-25 in all sorts of weather. In 2015-16 Joe handled a legal case for me in the Larimer County courts. He did a great job.

Frank Gibbard - October 29, 2025 at 04:00 PM

MM

“ Penny and Paul, so sorry to hear about Joe. He and my Mom shared many good memories from the Wellington town council years. She always spoke so very highly of Joe's intelligence and caring personality.
Megan Matzen

Megan Matzen - June 21, 2017 at 09:47 PM

CL

“ Joe was referred to me when I first moved to Fort Collins. He was a pleasure to work with the couple of times I needed his services. I'm so sorry to hear of his passing.
Connie Lane

Connie Lane - June 15, 2017 at 08:16 PM

SB

“ I spent countless hours at the music stores Joe operated back in day when they were destinations for all the like minded to hang out and shoot the breeze and even buy stuff. Joe was a great guy, friend to all and despite what some would have you believe, also gifted in small talk. I have thought of him many times over the years and extend my sincere condolences to the family.

Steve Bennett

Steve Bennett - June 15, 2017 at 11:05 AM

AS

“ I have known Joe for many, many years since the late 70s. He and I met each other when he started flying at the Fort Collins Downtown Airport. My husband John and I spent evenings with him and his wife Penny. We also worked professionally when he became a lawyer. He will be missed by many. Hope you can meet up with John in heaven and tell each other a few flying stories. Rest in Peace Joe. Annette Saxerud

Annetta Saxerud - June 14, 2017 at 11:42 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Joseph Paul Fonfara.



June 14, 2017 at 10:57 AM

MW

“ Joe soloed me in a Piper Cherokee on my 16th. Over the last 42 years as a professional aviator I've flown with many pilots civilian and military, and I've always considered Joe to be one of the best. Joe taught me to fly, he showed me how to help others learn to fly, and he had a positive influence on how I live.

Mark Williams - June 14, 2017 at 10:06 AM

TH

“ Going to miss Joe at the range! We would talk so much that you could never get any shooting done. I loved it! He shared his knowledge of the sport with me. Great guy. My heartfelt prayers go out to his friends and family!

Thomas Hunsader - June 13, 2017 at 05:16 PM