



Albert James Tortorella

FEB 11, 1942 - MAY 6, 2025



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Palm Beach Memorial
Funeral Home & Cemetery

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Albert James Tortorella

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Rome had Cicero. We got the better draw and had Al Tortorella.

“Don Alberto,” Albert J. Tortorella, passed on to the next life on Tuesday, May 5, 2025, after a lengthy illness. He was 83 years old. He is survived by his beloved wife, Karen Riley Tortorella, children John and Anne, and brother James.

Al was born February 11, 1942 in Washington, D.C to Caesar and Rose Tortorella. After serving in the U.S. Army in 1959-1960, he became a William Randolph Hearst scholar in journalism at the University of Maryland and later did postgraduate work at American University in 1971.

He began his career as a reporter for the Wall Street Journal and later spent 10 years in corporate communications for the General Electric company in Washington and New York. In 1978, he joined the corporate communications firm Burson-Marsteller, where he spent most of his career, eventually becoming its Vice Chairman. In 1982, Burson-Marsteller client Johnson & Johnson suffered a very public crisis: seven people died in the Chicago area after taking cyanide-laced capsules of Extra-Strength Tylenol, the painkiller that was the drugmaker’s best-selling product. Al was the lead communications counsel to Johnson & Johnson and its CEO, James Burke, throughout the crisis. Because of how Johnson & Johnson responsibly managed that crisis – inventing and introducing, for example, tamper-proof packaging to consumer packaging – a specialty known as “crisis communications” soon emerged in the corporate world and Al soon became its foremost expert worldwide. He never took any credit for the Tylenol case, however, deferring all accolades to Burke and Johnson & Johnson because of the actions they took. Al received Silver Anvils from the Public Relations Society of America in 1982 and 1984. He lectured on his craft at the Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University. Al was very much in demand as a communications counsellor. He eventually found new vistas and challenges with U.S. Tobacco and Ogilvy Public Relations both in New York and in California.



Obituary

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To those who knew him and loved him, Al will remain unforgettable as a beloved, one-of-a-kind personality who loved the English language and mastered it.



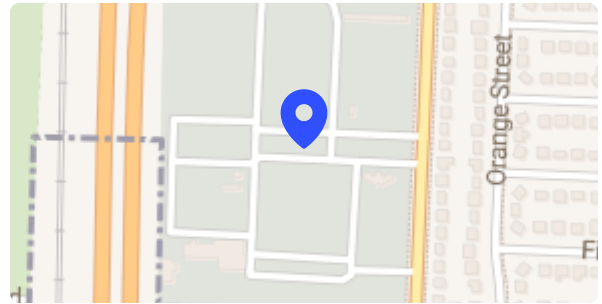
Events

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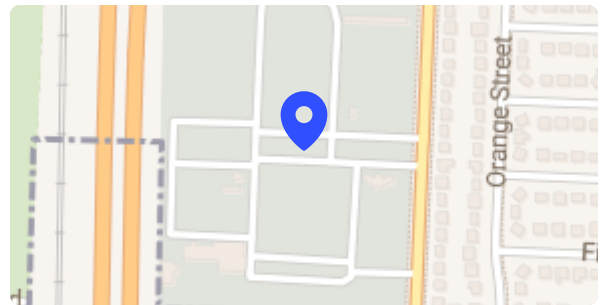
Visitation

- Tuesday**, May 13, 2025
- 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM ET
- Palm Beach Memorial Park**
3691 Seacrest Blvd., Lantana FL 33462



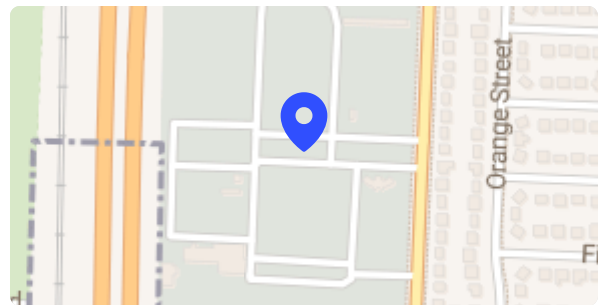
Funeral Service

- Tuesday**, May 13, 2025
- 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM ET
- Palm Beach Memorial Park**
3691 Seacrest Blvd., Lantana FL 33462



Burial

- Tuesday**, May 13, 2025
- 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM ET
- Palm Beach Memorial Park**
3691 Seacrest Blvd., Lantana FL 33462





Tribute Wall

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K

Karen posted:

Albert was the love of my life. I miss him so much

December 1 at 1:22 PM

T

Tim Riley posted:

Al was my Brother-In-Law, but he was also as much a Brother and friend to me as my own Brothers are. I will miss him greatly.

September 16 at 12:11 PM

PC

Paula Bellino Corso posted:

Albert was my 1st. Cousin. His mom & mine were sisters. I have good memories of our growing up years. I am saddened to learn of his passing. My sincere sympathy to all his family & friends.

June 9 at 5:38 PM

DC

Dan Cappiello posted:

Al was a kind and joyful soul, helpful and wise, traits he got from his wonderful parents who I was close to and loved very much. They are all sadly missed by this world, and hopefully they are in each other's loving arms again. My deepest sympathies to his wife, children, brother and his wife and all who were blessed as I was to have known him.

June 7 at 2:50 PM

ED

Emil Dalessio posted:

Al and my father were first cousins. My first job after college was in the accounting group at Burson-Marsteller, with a big help from Al. :) We lost my dad last May, they are together reminiscing about the old days. My condolences on your loss. Cousin Emil D'Alessio

May 22 at 9:08 AM

MB

Mark B. planted a grove of 3 Memorial Trees in honor of Albert.

May 13 at 11:00 AM





Tribute Wall

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Kent C. planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Albert.



May 13 at 10:15 AM



Liz Atlee posted:

Al was a mentor and a mensch. When I was a young account executive at Burson Marsteller, he took me under his wing and helped me develop a presence. He was careful and thoughtful in his training and always so impressive with clients and his craft. He was also my sponsor for my first American Express card! Every time I look at the "member since" date I think of Al. I was glad and lucky to know him.

May 13 at 9:43 AM



Jimmy And Peggy sent a Lavender Reflections Spray to the Tortorella family.



May 11 at 12:03 PM



Victoria C. planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Albert.



May 10 at 10:39 PM



Victoria Corbo May 10 at 11:23 PM

I thought "what would make Al laugh?" Planting a tree in his memory would be a most appropriate gesture from an aging hippie. I'm sure Al is rolling his eyes and laughing. I have missed our phone calls and debates but most of all I will miss the funny stories and pontificating that he did so well. Condolences to Karen and the rest of his family. I hope that many happy memories will give them comfort and laughs.



John And Anne sent a Sentiments of Serenity Spray to the Tortorella family.



May 10 at 12:48 PM



Tribute Wall

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Kent Cooper posted:

Everything.

May 9 at 7:38 PM



Mark Boyer posted:

My condolences to Karen and family. I still vividly remember when he came back to LA from New York and introduced me to Karen late one night. He was beaming with such joy! I have so many great memories of Al. He was a wonderful mentor and friend. We had many great times together professionally and personally. I still tell many of the tales to friends, family and clients as if they had happened yesterday. I have missed him, and will continue to miss him for a very long time.

May 9 at 7:33 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Albert by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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