



## Ralph R. Arena

February 16, 1935 - February 9, 2023

Ralph R. Arena, 87, of Berlin, husband of the late Lois (Kozalka) Arena, passed away Thursday (February 9, 2023) at the Hospital of Central CT in New Britain. Born in Plainville, he was a resident of Berlin since 1976. Ralph was a graduate of New Britain High School, Class of 1954 and served with the US Navy during the Korean War aboard the Aircraft Carrier Lake Champlain. Ralph was a Letter Carrier for the Cromwell Post Office until his retirement in 1990. He was a member of the Berlin Congregational Church; the Berlin VFW Post; the Berlin American Legion Post; and the Berlin Senior Citizen Center. Ralph loved gardening and was an avid NY Football Giants and UConn Women's Basketball Fan.

Surviving is his brother-in-law, Joseph Kozalka Jr. and Joe's former wife and companion, Jane Holmstrom of Berlin; a brother, Richard Arena and his wife Sherry of Benbrook, TX; Ralph's special caregiver, Prosper Emmanuel Saygbae, who provided wonderful care for Ralph during the latter part of his life.

Funeral services are Wednesday (February 15, 2023) 11 AM at Berlin Congregational Church, 878 Worthington Ridge, Berlin, CT 06037. Burial with military honors will follow in Maple Cemetery. There are no calling hours. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Berlin Congregational Church. Carlson Funeral Home, New Britain is assisting with arrangements. Please share a memory or note of sympathy at [www.carlsonfuneralhome.com](http://www.carlsonfuneralhome.com)



# Cemetery Details

## Maple Cemetery

Worthington Ridge  
Berlin, CT 06037

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

FEB 15. 11:00 AM (ET)

Berlin Congregational Church  
878 Worthington Ridge  
Berlin, CT 06037

# Tribute Wall

JM

“ *Ralph and his brother Richard were amazing guys. We are 'distant' cousins, who resided at Hawks Nest Beach, CT during the summer. across the street from them. What fun! I am sorry about Ralph, as is everyone. They both were so handsome and always ready to kid around with us. Sorry about his passing and sorry for his brother Richie. Judy Mirliani*

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**judith mirliani** - April 19, 2024 at 11:00 PM

MA

“ Our condolences to Jane, Joe, and other family and friends who are missing Ralph.

*The Russell family had been multigenerational friends with the Kozalkas by the time I married into it 35 yrs ago, and when I met Lois & Ralph Arena, they were introduced as “extended family.” Over the years, they became so much more to Charlie & me, dear friends and even mentors. They were especially kind and loving to Charlie’s “Grammy,” Bertha, and they were loved in return.*

*From time to time we enjoyed visiting, playing games, meals in and out together, always able to rely on Lois for a good joke and the news of the day and on Ralph for his kidding and good appetite! We’ll forever cherish the memories and the laughter.*

*Together and individually they exemplified the definition of good neighbors and were fortunate to have good ones in return, often praising them for the deliveries they received of homemade pierogi, eggplant parm, and spicy dishes that Ralph so enjoyed, to name just a few.*

*Blessed to eventually be matched with the perfect caregiver after Lois’s passing, between health episodes and with assistance, Ralph settled into a routine and was able to plant and then harvest his last garden this past fall. He grew the most delicious tomatoes! We want to personally acknowledge and praise Prosper for his compassionate, attentive care and wonderful disposition. You made a huge difference in Ralph’s life and we thank you.*

*Unable to see Lois due to Covid when she passed, we were glad to be able to spend time with Ralph in the hospital to say our goodbyes. He was aware, brave, and his final wishes before entering twilight sleep were to be with Lois and able to breathe, in that order.*

*RIP, dear Ralph; you, like your lovely wife, will be thought of often*

*and remembered fondly by many.*

*Marge & Charlie Russell*

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**Margie** - February 17, 2023 at 02:54 AM

ES

“ *My condolences, Had a lot of good times with Lois and Ralph.*

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**Eileen Sytulek** - February 13, 2023 at 02:23 PM

LM

“ *Remember Ralph when I would go visit my cousins the Mirantes next door and all the delicious tomatoes I would get .AND I remember his little dog a miniature collie following him.*

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**louise Mercadante** - February 13, 2023 at 11:03 AM

DO

*Such a nice person and he always supported the church at events and helping with the grounds.  
Dianna and John Orvis.*

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**Dianna and John Orvis** - February 14, 2023 at 05:08 PM