

Matteo Lumetta, 72, was chief clerk of Surrogate's Court

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2000

By MIKE AZZARA
ADVANCE STAFF WRITER

Matteo L. (Mike) Lumetta, 72, of Eltingville, retired chief clerk of Surrogate's Court and a lifelong Staten Islander, died Wednesday at Belmont Park on Long Island of a heart attack. He regularly attended an annual outing of the Detectives' Endowment Association at the race track.

Born in Mariners Harbor, he moved to Eltingville 22 years ago.

Mr. Lumetta was a community activist and a prominent figure in the county Democratic organization. In 1977, he was named Staten Island's Democratic member of the city Board of Elections and in 1983 he was named president of the board.

He resigned as an elections commissioner when then-Surrogate Charles D'Arrigo named him chief clerk of the court in 1986.

He was a district captain for the County Committee for many years and served as chairman for Assemblywoman Elizabeth A. Connelly's first campaign in 1974.

Mr. Lumetta was self-employed as owner of the Mike Lumetta Painting and Decorating Co. in Elm Park from 1959 to 1969.

He worked for the former Standard Toch Paint Co. in Mariners Harbor from 1944 to 1959; as manager of the Columbian Lyceum Bowling Alley from 1969 to 1986, and as chief clerk of Surrogate's Court from 1986 to 1998. He and D'Arrigo reached the mandatory retirement age of 70 the same year.

Mr. Lumetta was a Port Richmond High School graduate.

He served in the Army from 1948 to 1952, attaining the rank of master sergeant.

"My Dad was always happiest when he was surrounded by his family, and his grandchildren were his greatest pleasure," said his daughter, Margaret Baran. "One of my father's favorite pastimes was traveling all over the country visiting presidential birthplaces and libraries. He especially loved the several times a year he spent time at his vacation home in Dothan, Ala. He was passionate about his garden and particularly proud of his marigolds."



Matteo L. Lumetta

"Although we lost him way too soon," Mrs. Baran said, "the family is grateful that he died quickly and peacefully while sitting in the afternoon sun."

Mr. Lumetta was an active parishioner of St. Mary of the Assumption R.C. Church, Port Richmond, serving as a trustee for 23 years and a member of the church's Holy Name Society.

He was a member of the Assumption Council, Knights of Columbus, 4th Degree Governor Dongan Association; regional director of the New York City Bowling Association; a member of the Mariners Harbor Post, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and past president and board member of the Staten Island Developmental Disabilities Center. He had been a member of the board of visitors of the former Willowbrook State School, predecessor of the developmental disabilities center.

He was active in the North Shore and South Shore Democratic clubs and the Staten Island Baseball Oldtimers.

Mr. Lumetta was also a member of the board of the Community Resources Foundation, whose parent organization, Travis-based Community Resources, will honor his wife, the former Opal M. Roberson, at a dinner Oct. 20 in the South Shore Country Club, Huguenot.

Surviving, in addition to his wife, Opal, and daughter, Margaret, are a son, Matthew Thomas; two other daughters, Michele Miller and Maria Ciardiello; two sisters, Mary Covello and Susan Colorossi, and five grandchildren.

The funeral will be Monday from the Meislohn-Silvie Funeral Home, Port Richmond, with a mass at 10 a.m. in St. Mary of the Assumption Church. Burial will be in Resurrection Cemetery, Pleasant Plains.

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