

## IN MEMORIAM

**JOSEPH (JOE) S. D'ELIA**  
**Master Chief Quartermaster, USCG (Ret.)**  
**27<sup>th</sup> CPOA Gold Lifetime Member**  
**30 April 1943 – 2 June 2016**

Master Chief Joe D'Elia was born in Middleborough, MA, graduated from High School in 1961, and from the Cambridge School of Radio/TV Broadcasting in 1962.

He enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard in May 1963, graduating from Boot Camp in Cape May, NJ, in August 1963 (India-52), and received orders to RM "A" School. It only took a few months for then SA D'Elia to realize that (as he put it), "All those dits and dots just weren't for me!". He subsequently struck QM on the CGC CHILULA, a rate he dearly loved, advancing to QM3 in 1966.

1966 was a great year for Master Chief D'Elia for another reason ~ he met Jan, the love of his life, in April and they were married two months later. The D'Elia's were the epitome of a Coast Guard family ~ Jan joined the CG Reserves in 1978 as a YN3 and became a CPOA member after making Chief in May 1991. Their son, Joe III, graduated from the Coast Guard Academy in 1989, and daughter Joleen (Jo) helped create and became the first President of the Las Vegas Lobos/Wranglers CPOAA.

Master Chief D'Elia advanced to Chief Petty Officer in December 1977 (going through Chiefs Initiation on the CGC GLACIER at McMurdo, Antarctica) and he joined the CPOA in March 1978. Over the course of his 26 year career, he sailed all 7 seas, visited 5 of the 7 continents and all 50 states. He was an honored member of the illustrious crews of the Realm of the Arctic Circle (2), Imperium Neptuni Regis, Domain of the Golden Dragon, Domain of the Antarctic Circle and Order of the Ditch, and was a member of the USS/USCGC GLACIER Associations. Other tours of duty included: COTP Baltimore, CGC MADRONA (2 tours), 2 tours at CGD5, CGC CAPE SMALL, CGD9, CGC POLAR SEA and CGD13. On 1 November 1989, QMCM retired from the Coast Guard on the CGC POLAR STAR, and accepted a position on the CGD13 IRM Staff.

Master Chief D'Elia held the distinction of graduating #1 in his class from the Joint USAF/USCG Search and Rescue School in 1973. He was very proud to have served on the CGC CAPE NEWAGEN in 1979 as XPO to then LTJG (now CAPT) Beverly Kelley (Ret.), the first female Commanding Officer of any military vessel in the world.

Master Chief D'Elia was named the CPOA's 27<sup>th</sup> Gold Lifetime Member in 2007, and was a member of the Mavericks Club. He also held numerous positions within the CPOA, serving as the Las Vegas Mavericks Chapter Secretary, Vice President and President until the dissolution of the Chapter in 2009. He served as the Las Vegas Mavericks Chapter Chair to the 1996 & 1999 CPOA National Conventions, as Convention Committee Vice Chair in 2001-2004 & 2007, as Convention Committee Chair in 2005, and was the Master of Ceremonies at many more Conventions. Master Chief D'Elia also designed the Mavericks Club coin and the GLM coin ~ the latter, a beautiful and individually numbered coin, is presented to all new GLMs at Convention. He further designed and donated a shadow box which sits at the National Office to hold the coins of our GLMs who have Crossed the Bar. A staunch and vocal advocate of the CGEA, Master Chief D'Elia served as a mentor to our junior enlisted members. He believed in and exemplified the second half of our Motto, "As a guide for those who follow".

But perhaps Master Chief D'Elia's most impactful and lasting contribution to the CPOA was his creation of the Association's website in April 1997, singlehandedly serving as Web Manager for seventeen years. Seeing the need for a new CPOA webpage, he oversaw the format & content changes, and the subsequent transition to the new web host. He turned the job over to the new web managers in 2014, but continued to serve as Webmaster Emeritus.

As much as he loved the Coast Guard and the CPOA, Master Chief D'Elia was most proud of his family ~ he loved spending time with his son, Joe & his family (wife Jie and grandson Jake), Joleen (who also resides in Las Vegas) and his brother Dick. At the 2014 Convention in Norfolk, he was most enthusiastic about visiting the house they lived in when Joleen was born.

Master Chief D'Elia left a lasting impression on all those who met him. He was loved and will be sorely missed by his family and countless friends and we know we will never see his like again. While we grieve his passing, his family and friends take solace in the knowledge that he is once again with his beloved wife, Jan, who passed away in January 1993.

***"We mourn our loss, but we are consoled by the abiding faith that when the final watch changes for us, and we too cross the bar, our Shipmate will be waiting to pilot us to safe anchorage."***

**FAREWELL, MASTER CHIEF ~ SAFE PASSAGE...**