

Harry J. Cusick

April 3, 1945 - September 17, 2018

Harry Joseph James Cusick, age 73, beloved husband of Cecelia J. (Skala) Cusick, of Royersford, PA, passed away on Monday, September 17, 2018 in the Pottstown Hospital - Tower Health. Born on April 3, 1945 in Philadelphia, PA, he was a son of the late Harry and Rita (Leahan) Cusick.

Mr. Cusick graduated from Father Judge High School in Philadelphia, PA. He attended Penn State University, Philadelphia Community College, Holy Family University, and received his Master's degree from St. Joseph University. He was a member of the Philadelphia Fire Department, rising through the ranks from a Firefighter to a Battalion Chief. He was the Chief of the Philadelphia Fire Academy at the time the old academy closed, and the new was opened. He was a Fire Marshal in Philadelphia, and was an integral asset to the founding of the HAZMAT team in Philadelphia, where he would eventually lead as a Chief. Following his retirement from the Philadelphia Fire Department, he went to work for R.F. Weston in environmental studies. He then moved on to St. Joseph University, where he served as the Director of Occupational and Environmental Studies, and finally moved on to the University of Pennsylvania, where he was the Fire and Occupational Safety Director. Mr. Cusick was asked to join the Domestic Preparedness Task Force, which eventually turned into the Department of Homeland Security, where he traveled the United States serving as a HAZMAT training officer. He was also involved with the Department of State Anti-Terrorism Unit, traveling

abroad internationally as a HAZMAT trainer. Mr. Cusick enjoyed sharing his knowledge and wealth of stories from experiences with those around him.

In addition to his wife, Mr. Cusick is survived by two children, Cecelia, wife of the late Wayne Harris of Telford, PA and Harry J., husband of Theresa (Falini) Cusick of Royersford, PA; three greatly loved grandchildren, Rachael, Claire, and Dominic James; three siblings, Rita Schmidlin of Williamstown, NJ, John, husband of Joan Cusick of Philadelphia, PA, and Anne, wife of John Coyle of Southampton, PA; eight Godchildren; many nieces and nephews; and countless friends worldwide.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend his funeral mass at the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church, Lewis Road at Walnut Street, Royersford, PA on Friday, September 21, 2018 at 12:00 pm. Burial will be held in the St. Ann Cemetery, Phoenixville, PA. Friends will be received from 9:00 am - 11:30 am Friday at the Church. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in his name to the Philadelphia Fire Department Local 22 Widow's Fund, 415 N 5th St, Philadelphia, PA 19123. Condolences may be made by visiting www.RoyersfordFuneralHome.com. Arrangements are being handled by the Cattermole - Klotzbach Funeral Home, Royersford, Pennsylvania.

Cemetery Details

St. Ann Cemetery

502 Main St
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 21. 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church
P.O. Box 64, 838 Walnut Street
Royersford, PA 19468

Mass

SEP 21. 12:00 PM (ET)

Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church
P.O. Box 64, 838 Walnut Street
Royersford, PA 19468

Tribute Wall

JO

“ HARRY, MY FRIEND ; LOVE YOU BUDDY . JOHN FOSTER

johnfoster - December 15, 2018 at 01:36 PM

IS

“ I just heard of Chief Harry Cusick's passing. I attended several of his counterterrorism courses at the CDP. I remember calling one of my sons on our break in my first class and telling him that I was blessed, I was being trained by a genius. I quit taking notes or even highlighting, because I didn't want to miss a word. What impressed me most, was when he told his stories, sharing experiences, he remembered the name of every firefighter ever, in his command. Rest in peace you wonderful man. Thank you!

Inspector Brenda S Safran - November 06, 2018 at 05:25 PM

JM

“ It's been more than 6 weeks since Harry passed away. I have started to write something on this tribute wall countless times. Somehow I can't come up with how I've been feeling. He was a wonderful person and the greatest cousin. I was always so proud to talk about him and his many accomplishments. He certainly had a great impact on my life. Harry will always be in my heart.

Janet Marsero-Berman - November 01, 2018 at 10:46 PM

DB

“ I just heard that Harry passed away. My grandmother lived a few doors away from his family. I spent a lot of time with her due to the fact that she watched us due to my Dad's passing away. He was my very first boyfriend. So sorry to hear of your loss. Always had a special place in my heart for that memory. We had a lot of fun together with all the kids on Dover street. In those days we played street games. Played in the water hydrant as kids. Had hula hoops, played hide and seek, etc. He was a great guy. My name is Doris Widmann Blash.

Doris Blash - September 28, 2018 at 08:49 PM

CW

“ My most vivid memory is of our time spent together at the airport at Traverse City, Michigan waiting to board our flights after the Michigan State Police Hazmat Conference. Frank and I were so lucky to have that one-on-one time with Chief Cusick and Mrs. Cusick. My impression of Chief Cusick was that he was such a gentleman and the stories he told were quite humorous. To the Cusick family, I am so, so sorry for your loss. Chief Cusick was very special.



Cheryl Weaver-Docimo - September 22, 2018 at 12:54 PM

RP

“ I was a member of Ladder 7 Fourth street above Girard Ave when Harry arrived as the Lieut. of Engine 29. It was one of the best years working with Harry. His humor and knowledge of the job. He was well loved by all the members. Harry RIP

Robert F. Burns ret. PFD

PS I am sorry I did not know about Harrys death until 1 PM Friday. I feel really upset that I did not make his Mass.

Robert F. Burns PFD - September 21, 2018 at 01:00 PM

JP

“ Ceil, Harry and Cecelia,

God bless you and your entire family. What a wonderful person the world now has to get along without. So so sorry for you loss and for the fact that Pat and I could not gather the courage to bring ourselves to the service. May you all remember Harry's contributions to yourselves and so many others. I am certain he is continuing to do wonderful things in whatever form God has planned for him.

With deepest sorrow,

Jim & Pat Petaccio

Jim Petaccio - September 21, 2018 at 08:58 AM

JK

“ When “Harry met Jason” It was 1998 in Jacksonville Florida , Harry came down with a team to train us on terrorism response now this is way before homeland security was even thought of as this was pre-September 11th. We messed with hairy as our claim to fame here in Jacksonville is to have the first established hazardous materials team in the nation which Harry refuted many times. As he explained he established the first Hazardous materials program in his city of Philadelphia , it was a good banter and we enjoy the week with him and on his last day we gave him a T-shirt stating Jacksonville’s Americas first hazmat team which he found a marker and drew a circle across through.

Five years later I was hired on by the center for domestic preparedness at that time there was no homeland security it was under the office of domestic preparedness located in Anniston Alabama. There is where I was reunited with Harry not as a student but as a fellow instructor even now I know I was still the student I had a blast seeing and spending time with hairy not only at the center in Alabama but also traveling this country training first responders with him. I would always make sure that Harold was up in the morning and ready to go not that he needed it but I felt it was my job as a junior guy, always referred to it is going to do training and lectures with him as going to church because I’ve seen Harry in a crowd of 300 lift them out of their chairs with his lectures on how to identify and respond to terrorism incidents. At dinner time here he would always talk about his family to the point where I felt that I was part of it, Harry was truly a pioneer way beyond his years!

To Harry’s Family you are truly blessed as the time I had with him was a blessing in itself so I can only imagine the love that you guys shared during his lifetime, so tomorrow at 12 o’clock I will raise a glass to hairy !

jason kerr - September 20, 2018 at 10:39 PM

NM

“ I have so many wonderful childhood memories of time spent with Harry and Ceil on Hellerman Street. A few favorites: playing the piano at their parties while the "adults" sang irish songs badly after many beers, wrapping a ridiculous amount of Christmas presents and countless games of Yahtzee! So easy to remember Harry's smile and laugh. I could go on and on! It has been a long time and yet the news of Harry's passing makes my heart feel so heavy! To Ceil and family - our family's prayers are with you all!

The Hardiman Family: Natalie (old and young :) , Patty, Kelly and Michael.

Dad - Pat Hardiman

Natalie Mills - September 20, 2018 at 07:27 PM

TR

“ Harry was my Lt. at E29 and a dear friend for life . So sorry that his family has lost him so soon. He deserved a much longer retirement with him family.

Thomas H, Rocke - September 20, 2018 at 06:00 PM

GS

“ Was my "homeroom" Teacher in fire school 1974, HazMat teacher in Community College 1980-83, and always loved him and his entire family of great people. I'll pray for all & wish Cecilia & the kids Strength. Jerry Beaucheane PFD Ret

Gerard C Beaucheane Sr. - September 20, 2018 at 05:39 PM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Harry J. Cusick .*



September 20, 2018 at 10:02 AM



“ *Cusick Cousins purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Harry J. Cusick .*



Cusick Cousins - September 20, 2018 at 08:59 AM



“ *Chief Cusick was instrumental in shaping my career as a firefighter. He was one of the smartest people I ever knew. Harry, you were a great man. May GOD bless you and receive you. And may GOD give comfort to your family.*
Dennis LoPresti

Dennis LoPresti - September 20, 2018 at 08:39 AM



Harry was one of my childhood friends. We both attended Saint Ludwick school in Brewerytown in Philadelphia. We only saw each other occasionally during our lives, but I'll never forget Harry. My thoughts and prayers will be with Harry and his family during these trying times. God bless and rest in peace Harry.

Bill Burr - September 20, 2018 at 02:53 PM

TL

“ Chief, there was no one in the PFD I respected more than you. I had the pleasure of working with you and no one did more for me and my career than you. You taught me at Community College in the Fire Science Program and at Holy Family College when I was going for my degree there. I fought many fires with you as my Chief. God Bless you and your family Chief, You're the Best. Tommy Leonard

Tommy Leonard - September 20, 2018 at 08:02 AM

DI

“ I met Harry in elementary school (I believe 8th grade). Sadly, we lost touch after high school but I will always remember him as one of the finest men I have ever known. And yes, Harry was a man, a true gentleman even as a teenager. It was an honor to know Harry.

Diane - September 19, 2018 at 04:37 PM



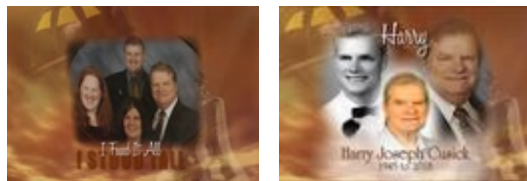
Christine Trimble

“ Lots of love to your family Harry, Cecelia, and everyone. We are thinking of you at this time- your Dad was a terrific guy. From the Tarlecki family

Christine Trimble - September 19, 2018 at 10:31 AM



“ 2 files added to the album VIDEO TRIBUTE



Campbell-Ennis-Klotzbach Funeral Home - September 18, 2018 at 09:03 PM

JP

“ *Harry was one of the greatest , he has shared his knowledge and experience with me and was someone I admired .It was truly an Honor to have taught along side this Great man.I will always treasure those days .You will be greatly missed my BROTHER !*



Jason Pastuch - September 18, 2018 at 07:02 PM



“ *Rainbow Of Remembrance Spray was purchased for the family of Harry J. Cusick .*



September 18, 2018 at 02:49 PM

SM

“ *To my dear friend Harry I wish you the best in your joinery to haven, I know there you will be able to run all the fire and Hazmat calls you want. Good bye Harry*

Stephen

Stephen McManus - September 18, 2018 at 02:34 PM

JS

“ To say that God "Broke the mold" with Harry Cusick is an understatement....he was in many ways a Pioneer in Haz Mat response and training, a world class wit, a gifted educator and the pioneering student at Saint Joseph's University Master's degree in Public Safety curriculum....retiring as a Battalion Fire Chief from the Philadelphia Fire Department, he went on instructing across the country with FEMA Center for Domestic Preparedness. Harry and his wife adopted several children and as much as he was rough and tumble in the Fire Service, he was caring and compassionate as a Daddy. Eternal Rest Grant Unto Him, Amen.

Jeff Stauffer - September 18, 2018 at 01:11 PM



“ A really great guy. And an excellent firefighter. Harry and I went to Judge together and met up at the PCS fire seminars. He will be sorely missed

Jeffrey DeLuca - September 18, 2018 at 01:00 PM

LD

“ To Ginger and family, my sincere condolences for your loss.

Lori DiDomenico - September 18, 2018 at 08:59 AM

CB

“ More than friends.... a piece of us is missing but memories last forever ❤️
Chip and Bobbie

Chip and Bobbie - September 18, 2018 at 08:17 AM

CD

“ I have so many memories since i was a little girl he was always there for me he was a Philadelphia fire chief haz may and weapons of mass destruction worker he had told me so many stories about being a fire fighter in the city of Philadelphia he could go on for hours and i could listen for hours i love you Har Rest In Peace until we meet again 🥰😄😇

cathie Durgun - September 18, 2018 at 01:12 AM

AC

My big strong brother has gone on to heaven . I Miss you already . I'm so glad you are finally at peace but I'm sad that you left us . I'll always remember the laughter no matter what was going on or what was happening you always made me laugh . I love you and will never forget the fun times . See you on the other side . RIP love Anne

Anne Coyle - September 18, 2018 at 06:44 AM

DW

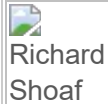
“ Glad I got to spend time with Harry in his last couple weeks. May he rest in peace and be out of his pain. My condolences to Ceil, Ceceila, Harry James & Theresa and siblings Rita, John, Annie and their families. Love Cousin Dot Marsero Wadlinger

dorothy wadlinger - September 17, 2018 at 10:32 PM

DC

“ my cousin ginger and hary got me through a lot. I love them so much and hary ALWAYS made me laugh. I will always remember his laugh

debbi coe coulter - September 17, 2018 at 10:23 PM



Richard Shoaf

“ *Mentor, friend and co-instructor in more places than one can count. I will miss you old friend. I know your telling St. Peter an inappropriate joke at the gates right now. Prayers are with your family.*



Richard Shoaf - September 17, 2018 at 09:50 PM

RS

“ *A life-saver, mentor, friend, brother and ...just call Harry, he was there. I first knew Harry in late 1990s with the DP program and later with the CDP in Anniston, AL. I will always feel honored that Harry would give me hell, tell a joke, and always have a story. He would come into my office and start in on me...that was Harry's loving way.*

Harry traveled with us often as we went throughout our nation. I would tease him about his rental cars..."hey Harry, do you need blocks on those pedals?" I could always count on something coming back at me...a word or an object!

You taught all of us so much and we all are better because of you. Please check in on us from time to time...you rest now brother, we will take it from here.

*With much respect and love,
Rick Schlegel*

Rick Schlegel - September 17, 2018 at 09:48 PM

JM

Harry was so many things; a hero, lifesaver, friend, mentor, colleague, trailblazer, educator and leader, just to name a few.

I met Harry while we were working with the DP program. We became fast friends, like many others have and will say, Harry was a veritable cornucopia of all things hazmat, firefighting and domestic preparedness-both terror and non-terror related.

Harry had a great sense of humor and could keep an entire audience entertained while teaching detailed technical course material.

One of my favorite Harry stories involved a Velcro suit and running, jumping as high as he could to affix himself on the Velcro wall.

I, along with the legion of family, friends, and colleagues will miss Harry.

May God bless and keep your family and welcome you home.

With a tremendous amount of love and respect.

James McNair

James McNair - September 18, 2018 at 09:43 AM

CM

“ *Harry was our dear friend for 53 years. We will miss him but he will always be in our hearts. With Love Cass & Doug Meder*

Cass meder - September 17, 2018 at 07:19 PM

LC

“ *Lynn Schonewolf Cotellese lit a candle in memory of Harry J. Cusick*



Lynn Schonewolf Cotellese - September 17, 2018 at 05:55 PM

LC

Such a great loss of a very special person. Rest in peace Harry. Condolences to the Cusick family.

Lynn Schonewolf Cotellese - September 17, 2018 at 05:59 PM

PM

Our Condolences and sympathy to the Cusick Family From Pat & PJ McGill.

[An Irish Blessing]

*Those we love don't go away,
They walk beside us every day,
Unseen, unheard, but always near,
Still loved, still missed and very dear.*

PJ McGill - September 17, 2018 at 09:02 PM

MM

Many good times with Harry and Ceil. May he rest in peace and condolences to Ceil and family.

Mike McCool

Mike McCool - September 18, 2018 at 10:55 AM

BB

A huge loss to your family I'm sure, my condolences to you. Babs

Barbara Blum - September 19, 2018 at 08:21 AM

DR

Chief, you no longer have to "Put the wet stuff on the red stuff". Thanks for all you taught us in the PFD. Your knowledge and innovations in firefighting will be shared by generations. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you taught me.

Dan McFadden, PFD Ret.

Daniel McFadden, PFD, Ret. - September 20, 2018 at 07:16 AM

JK

Harry you were the best - a real mentor, teacher and a hero among us. I will miss you so much. I remember you as a young Lt. and admired you as you progressed through the ranks on into your Hazmat career. Most of all I miss your humorous stories. Knowing you on the PFD and Traveling with you when we were at Weston was a kick. God bless you and your family.

Jim Kilpatrick, PFD retired (HAZMAT)

James Kilpatrick - September 20, 2018 at 10:58 AM

R(

I knew Harry through my friendship with Rita. We met 61 years ago in the 5th grade at BVM. Harry and my brother were in the same grade. So many memories, so much fun. I am truly sorry for lose of Harry. I have been blessed to have known and been part of this funny and wonderful family. God bless you Harry. Rita Visco schimmel.

Rita Schimmel (Visco) - December 30, 2019 at 07:09 PM