



## Mr Gabriel A Valenzuela

February 16, 1919 - March 23, 2018

Gabriel Valenzuela, 99, of Lenox, MA, loving husband of the late Svea Valenzuela, passed away on Friday, March 23, 2018. Prior to moving to Lenox, MA, Mr. Valenzuela resided in Somers, NY for over 30 years.

Mr. Valenzuela was born on February 16, 1919 in Croton, NY to the late Gabriel and Margaret Rooney Valenzuela. He attended Croton-Harmon High School in New York.

As a WW2 veteran, Mr. Valenzuela served in the Merchant Marines and was honored as one of the servicemen at the 50th Anniversary of the D-Day invasion of Normandy, France. At the invitation of the Longstocking Honor Flight Organization in 2017, he received a special honor for his military service at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. He was also a member of DOCA (the Defense Orientation Conference Association) – an association developed to provide members with education pertaining to national security under the jurisdiction of the Dept. of Defense and State.

After the war, Mr. Valenzuela began working in the insurance industry and became a General Agent of the Guardian Life Insurance Company. He formed his company, Pension Designs, Inc., in 1957 where he pioneered the development of the retirement plans as a critical employee benefit to

companies. He furthered his interests and talents in the area of estate planning.

Mr. Valenzuela's most passionate avocation was the study and appreciation of fine food and wine. He was an exceptional chef and wine connoisseur, having studied at the Culinary Institute of America. He was also a member of the Chaine des Rotisseurs – the oldest food and wine society in the world.

Mr. Valenzuela was also an avid traveler. He and his wife traveled extensively throughout the world and enjoyed the villa they created in the Algarve region of Portugal.

Throughout his life, Mr. Valenzuela had an insatiable thirst for knowledge. At 98, he was still taking college level courses and loved attending performances at Tanglewood and Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center.

Mr. Valenzuela is survived by his children: Gail Busch of Brewster, NY., Gabriel A. Jr., of Los Angeles, CA, Charles A. (Michele) of Ridgefield, CT. He is also survived by five grandchildren: Sheila (Steve) Gallo of Brewster NY, Ted Busch of Danbury CT, Laura (Nick) Grimaldi of Tennessee, Elizabeth Valenzuela of New Hampshire, Julie (Scott) Younger of Boston MA., as well as 8 great-grandchildren, Kevin Busch, AJ and Carson Gallo ,Caitlin, Isabella and Cole Grimaldi, Ava Ferland, Madison Younger. Gabriel was also pre-deceased by his sister, Margaret.

The celebration of life service will be held for Mr. Gabriel A. Valenzuela on Thursday March 29th at the Roche Funeral Home at 120 Main Street, Lenox, MA at

11:00 a.m. In lieu of flowers, donations in Mr. Valenzuela's memory may be made to the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, PO Box 690, Great Barrington, MA. 01230 or in care of the Roche Funeral Home.

# Previous Events

## Burial

MAR 29. 12:00 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

St. Ann's Cemetery  
1 Ore Bed Road  
Lenox, MA 01240

## Memorial Service

MAR 29. 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM (ET)

Roche Funeral Home  
120 Main Street  
P.O. Box 152  
Lenox, MA 01240  
(413) 637-0699  
eroche120fh@gmail.com

# Tribute Wall

RG

“ Back in 1963 Gabe Valenzuela rescued me from the Guardian Life home office to supervise his Agency’s Pension Department at the young age of 23. Gabe did the selling and I did the administration. As time past the insurance operation and administration increased to a total of 20+ agents and employees. Aside from our business contact Gabe educated me in fine food and expensive wine. He introduced me to Gourmet magazine, which I still have past monthly issues bound annually in hard cover. I was also introduced to fine wines (Chateau Y’Quem, Chateau Petrus, etc.).

That career with the assistance of Charlie Valenzuela as a key addition in the early 80’s lasted until I retired from Guardian Life in 1999, covering a wonderful 36 years. Gabe had a very deep influence in my becoming a key employee/partner and pension actuary.

*Robert Guarnera*

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**Robert Guarnera** - April 05, 2018 at 03:16 PM

RG

“ Attached is some thoughts regarding Gabe Valenzuela. I also sent a donation to Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center.

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*Robert Guarnera, MAAA  
Pension Actuaries Inc.  
2500 Westchester Avenue, Suite 106  
Purchase, NY 10577  
(914) 712-4897 x300  
(914) 251-1922 (Fax)  
bobg@paiqdro.net*

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**Robert Guarnera** - April 05, 2018 at 02:03 PM

SL

“ As a member of Gabe's extended family (my sister Michelle is his daughter-in-law), my husband and I shared many wonderful holiday meals prepared by Gabe and Svea. But there was one meal I will never forget. In 1994, we were living in France. Gabe was in Paris and called to invite us to dinner at the beautiful restaurant, Les jardins de Bagatelle, in the Bois de Boulogne. It was an unforgettable experience. Sitting on the terrace with its panoramic views of the Bagatelle Gardens while dining on a selection of sumptuous dishes and superior wine and talking well into the evening until the sun had set. It was magical, joyous, and oh so very Gabe.

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**Sharon Lahaye** - March 30, 2018 at 05:55 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr Gabriel A Valenzuela.



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March 26, 2018 at 03:37 PM