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# Ernest Russo, 71

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STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. — Ernest M. Russo, 71, of Willowbrook, a decorated member of the military, died Sunday in Staten Island University Hospital, Ocean Breeze.

Born in Westerleigh, he lived in Westerleigh and Willowbrook throughout his life.

Mr. Russo graduated from Port Richmond High School and the former Staten Island College with a degree in criminology.

He enrolled in the military in 1955, receiving countless honors during his 38 years of service with the U.S. Navy, Army, National Guard and the Air Force Reserves. He retired in 1993 as a senior master sergeant with the U.S. Air Force Reserve.

Mr. Russo also worked as a court officer with Criminal Court, Stapleton, retiring in 1997.

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Following retirement, he continued to serve his country as a member of the Staten Island Guardsmen. He was a member of the American Legion; the North Shore VFW Post; AMVETS

Tamburri Post and the Knights of Columbus.

Mr. Russo liked to visit Atlantic City, cook and read. He also enjoyed playing football and softball. He was a parishioner of St. Roch's R.C. Church, Port Richmond.

Surviving are his wife of 36 years, Judith; a son, Ernest, and six sisters, Lucille Kleid, Nita Stahler, Frances Crispino, Carmel Malec, Anne McDermid, and Marguerite Cericola.

The funeral will be Friday from the Matthew Funeral Home, Willowbrook, with a mass at 10 a.m. in St. Roch's Church. Burial will follow in St. Peter's Cemetery, West Brighton.