Ralph Dominic Romano

July 22, 2025

Ralph Dominic Romano, 60, Detective and former Allentown Police Officer, of Upper Macungie Township, passed away on July 22, 2025. He was the husband of Lisa Ann Messino Romano and Devoted Father to Lucia & Nicholas Romano.

Born in Bethlehem, he was the son of the late Ralph D. Romano, Sr. and the late Anne S. (Fehnel) DiDonato. Ralph was a 1988 graduate of East Stroudsburg University. He went on to fulfill his dream, graduating from the Allentown Police Academy in 1989 where he began his service as a dedicated law enforcement officer, leaving a lasting impact on each and every person he encountered throughout his career.

Over the course of more than 16 years with the Allentown Police Department, he served on multiple platoons, including the First, Second, and Fourth. His roles included assignments in the Neighborhood Community Police Unit and the Traffic Division. He ultimately retired with distinction in the Criminal Investigations Division, as Detective in the Special Victims Unit, where he worked closely with children affected by crimes and survivors of sexual abuse. During his time with the department, Ralph received numerous commendations in recognition of his exceptional service and unwavering commitment to public safety.

He was a proud member of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP). He was a proud long-standing member of the Emergency Response Team and was recognized with several honors for his outstanding contributions, including the

prestigious Challenge Coin from Valliere & Counseling Associates, Inc., awarded to individuals who go above and beyond in the fight to end violence. He was the recipient of the Allied Professional Award from the Crime Victims Council, a testament to his advocacy and tireless support and respect for victims.

In 2002, he received a Top Cop Honorable Mention award for his unwavering commitment to duty and resilient character after battling Hodgkin's Disease while still helping others, nominated by Captain Roger J. MacLean. He began training for charitable half marathons immediately after finishing treatment, raising countless dollars for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Foundation. He was honored at a prestigious New York City Ceremony attended by former Presidents, numerous television and movie personalities, and the Port Authority Police Honor Guard. Only 2 years after cancer treatment, Ralph successfully trained and completed the New York Marathon. He was a dedicated advocate for and participant in the annual Tunnel To Towers Marathon. His charitable work continued throughout his life with fundraising for multiple causes including the Lymphoma Foundation and Breast Cancer Awareness. Quietly behind the scenes, he helped countless individual victims of domestic violence and the homeless by bringing food, clothes, and assistance with finding employment.

After retiring from the Allentown Police Department, Ralph worked as a Detective with the Monroe County District Attorney’s Office. He went on to serve for over 13 years as a devoted member of the Domestic Violence Unit within the Lehigh County District Attorney’s Office continuing his unwavering commitment to justice, serving with integrity, compassion, and quiet strength. While there, he taught the Domestic Violence curriculum at the Allentown Police Academy, ensuring that new officers were well informed about the profound effects of domestic violence.

While he made a lasting difference in the lives of the victims and families he served, he was the heart of his work family, neighborhood community, and his family — the one who always checked in, offered a kind word, and made sure

no one ever felt alone. He touched countless lives through both his work and his friendship, and his loss leaves an immeasurable void in the lives of those who had the privilege to know him. His care of his parents and father-in-law extended over a decade with tireless acts of service. His pride and devotion to his children, Lucia & Nicholas, was evident in every interaction. They were his greatest joy.

Survivors: Wife, Daughter: Lucia Romano of Allentown, Son: Nicholas Romano and his wife Rosalva Juma Martinez Romano of Allentown, Brother: Dominic Romano and his wife Susan Koch Romano of Northampton, Sister: Anna Marie wife of William Zeky of Northampton, Mother-In-Law: Rose Elissa Zanette Messino of Upper Macungie Twp, Father-In-Law: Ronald Anthony Messino (deceased) of Allentown.

Calling hours will be held on Thursday, July 31, 2025 from 2 P.M. to 4 P.M. at the J.S. Burkholder Funeral Home 16th and Hamilton Sts. Allentown, with the Allentown Police Honor Guard and services to follow the calling hours.
His burial will be held privately at Bethlehem Memorial Park in Bethlehem, PA with a quiet family service on Tuesday, August 5, 2025

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in Ralph's memory to: Sixth Street Shelter, 219 North 6th Street Allentown, PA 18102 (The Sixth Street Shelter provides housing and casework services to homeless families with children in Allentown, during their stay, family members work with the Shelter), or to Safe House for Survivors of Violence, 444 East Susquehanna Street Allentown, PA 18103. (Safe House for Survivors of Violence is the Turning Point's Safe House program which provides short-term, safe place for victims of domestic violence and their dependents).

Cemetery Details

Bethlehem Memorial Park

1851 Linden Street
Bethlehem
Bethlehem, PA 18017

Previous Events

Calling Hours

JUL **31**. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

J S Burkholder Funeral Home Inc
1601 W Hamilton Street
Allentown, PA 18102
(610) 433-5161
info@jsburkholder.com
https://jsburkholder.com

Service

JUL **31**. 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

J S Burkholder Funeral Home Inc
1601 W Hamilton Street
Allentown, PA 18102
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info@jsburkholder.com
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Tribute Wall

J S Burkholder Funeral Home Inc created a Webcast in memory of Ralph Dominic Romano

J S Burkholder Funeral Home Inc - July 31, 2025 at 03:55 PM

PR

Absolutely heartbreaking. God bless and thank you Ralph for all of your years of service. May God bring peace to your family.
Penelope Repyneck
Lehigh County Adult Probation/Parole

Penelope Susan Repyneck - August 01, 2025 at 08:49 PM

DS

Dear Romano family, Bob and I are so saddened to learn of Ralph's passing. We went to visit my dad's and Anne's gravesite yesterday and were shocked to see Ralph's marker there. Our sincere condolences to his family.
—Diane Schroeder

Diane Schroeder - December 20, 2025 at 07:44 PM

CS

Ralph,

Going to miss you. You were our starting strong safety on our 1982 Becahi football team. You were always dressed well in your uniform but still played hard and tough. Always very proud of you because you worked so hard to get that starting position. Great teammate. I was also very proud of you becoming a police officer. You became a tremendous member of the community. I am so sorry to hear of your passing and I send my sincere condolences to your family.

Coach Chuck Sonon

Charles Sonon - August 20, 2025 at 12:16 PM

AS

I want to offer my deepest condolences and sincere appreciation for Detective Romano. From the moment he became involved in my case, he showed a level of care and passion that I will never forget. As a domestic violence survivor, I was overwhelmed, exhausted, and—if I'm being honest—I initially saw him as a nuisance. My trauma made me want to bury everything and move on, to forget it all. But Detective Romano never let me disappear into that silence.

He was persistent, not out of force, but out of genuine care. He encouraged me, listened without judgment, and reminded me that I was stronger than I believed. His presence made it possible for me to speak up when I didn't think I could.

What touched me even more was how he spoke to my children—as if he'd known them forever. He treated them with warmth, respect, and kindness that brought comfort to all of us. It wasn't just a job to him. He carried our pain as if it were his own, and he gave us something we hadn't felt in a long time: safety and hope.

Detective Romano's dedication changed my life. I will always be grateful for his compassion, his persistence, and the courage he helped me find.

Thank you so much for your service.

A Greatful Survivor - August 03, 2025 at 01:45 AM

FP

Throughout all my visits to Allentown, I have shared many happy events with the Romano family. I want to extend my deepest sympathies to all the family.

Françoise Paiement (Caroline Chandik's mother)

Francoise Paiement - August 01, 2025 at 05:03 PM

GM

My deepest condolences to the Romano family. Ralph will always be remembered for his loving kind soul. May you rest in peace.

Gloria Martinez - August 01, 2025 at 04:57 PM

PM

I just learned this morning of your passing Ralph. You were my best friend at Our Lady of Perpetual Help all those years ago. I always remember going trick or treating in your neighborhood, the breakfasts your kind and beautiful mother would make for us when we had sleep overs and pretending we were the two paramedics from the TV show Emergence. It is no wonder you went on to serve and protect the public. And now Heaven has one beautiful soul to serve and protect the universe. Eternal Peace Ralph eternal peace.

Patrick Monaghan

Patrick A Monaghan - August 01, 2025 at 11:31 AM

CM

Sorry to hear about Ralph, sending my condolences to you Lisa, and family.

Carol Mullin , your former cleaning lady

Carol Mullin - July 31, 2025 at 11:37 AM

RH

Ralphie,

Thank you for always being there for me and making my days brighter during my time at the DA's office. Your determination in helping victims is something I've always respected. Thank you for everything you've done.

I'll miss you deeply. Rest in peace. -Reagan

Reagan Hronich - July 31, 2025 at 10:48 AM

CM

Anna Marie, Bill and family, my heart aches for you all. So very sorry for the loss of your brother/uncle at such an early age. His memories will live in all your hearts.
Chris and Mark Moyer

Chris and Mark Moyer - July 30, 2025 at 07:05 PM

MP

Ralph was a great cop and an even better friend. While it saddens me that I will not see you again, I am grateful for the good times we had and consider myself lucky to count you among my friends. You will be missed by all those who got to know you. Rest in peace my friend.

Mark Peters - July 28, 2025 at 08:19 PM

KA

This one hit deep. Such a special guy. Always positive and a smile when I'd give him my best Ed Norton's "hey Ralphy boy"! My condolences to his family. Rest In Peace my friend.

Keith Apgar - July 26, 2025 at 06:31 PM

MK

Ralph, Nick, Chase and I had great times in our Cub Scout troop! He will be remembered by our family as a friend … in good times and bad. Thoughts are with all of you!

Michael Kasprenski - July 26, 2025 at 01:30 PM

SK

Condolences to the entire Romano family . Our children grew up together and I will always remember how kind, supportive and wonderful he was to all of us . It's not often that people cross our paths and leave an indelible mark on our being … but Ralph certainly did. All of you are in our thoughts and prayers.
Sharon , Michael , Chase and Loewe Kasprenski

Sharon Kasprenski - July 26, 2025 at 01:11 PM

Condolences to Ralph's family. I worked with Ralph occasionally over the last 30 plus years. First when he was an APD officer and then when he worked in the DA's office. Ralph was always thinking of others. He was always going above and beyond in the cases he worked. He gave generously to buy Christmas presents for poor families in Allentown. Anytime you needed a witness located, Ralph was the first one to volunteer to find them. I felt fortunate to work with him those many years.
Renee Smith retired Deputy District Attorney

Re Smith - July 26, 2025 at 12:21 PM

JB

From high school to APD to platoon partners as rookies. The memories are outstanding and still make me smile and laugh.my favorite…. Being chastised by our Lt for Front and Tilghman assignments
And laughing our asses off after it. I still remember it vividly and your smile and deep belly laughing
Thanks for always having my back on the streets
May you rest in peace brother

JP Blair - July 26, 2025 at 11:57 AM

GR

Ralph,
Thank You for Your years of service to our community.

God Bless You!
God be with your family!

Sincerely,
Grateful

Grateful - July 26, 2025 at 07:32 AM

BL

Ralph, you always worked tirelessly with me to help the victims in the cases we worked together. We made some good memories when we had to trek to different houses to find witnesses for cases. You always had my back and never hesitated to do whatever needed to be done to help get justice for the victims. You always put the needs of everyone else above yourself. If only the world had more people like you in it, then it would be a better place. I'm gonna miss you buddy. I hope you are at peace.

Blackledge - July 25, 2025 at 08:09 PM