



Paul Richard Gardella, Jr. CDR, USN (Ret)

June 19, 1956 - May 28, 2012

Paul was born in Vineland, NJ on June 19, 1956. In 1978, he graduated Magna Cum Laude from Villanova University with a BS in Business Administration and served as the Battalion Commander for the Navy ROTC. He was an enthusiastic member of the Rifle Team, where he met his wife, Joyce.

Upon graduation, he was commissioned in the United States Navy where he led a distinguished career as a Surface Warfare Officer and Intelligence Officer. Paul received his MS in Information Systems from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA and graduated from the Command and Staff College in Quantico, VA. He retired in 1998 as a Commander with a number of decorations, to include the Navy Commendation Medal with two gold stars, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal; Joint Meritorious Unit Award; Overseas Service Ribbon with two bronze stars; the National Defense Service Medal; Meritorious Unit Commendation with bronze star, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal; Sea Service Deployment Ribbon with three bronze stars; and a Battle "E" Ribbon.

Paul developed an early passion for flying when his father took him up at age 3. He received his private pilot's license in 1976, commercial rating in 1996, and flight instructor certification in 1997. With over 4000 hours of flight time, he was certified in single-, multi-engine, and seaplane aircrafts.

After a couple years as a government contractor and retiring from his second career as a software engineer, he devoted himself to his passion for flying and sharing his love of flight with others. In 2008, he joined SkyWorld Aviation, Inc. as the Chief Flight Instructor and Flight School Manager. Paul continued to work in the same capacity with Aviation Adventures, LLC. in 2010.

Outside of his professional activities, Paul was active in volunteer flying with the Civil Air Control (CAP), where he served as the National Capital Wing as a Mission Pilot, Instructor Pilot, Check Pilot, Squadron Commander, and National Capital Wing Standardization and Evaluation Officer; and as a Volunteer Humanitarian Airlift Pilot for both Angel Flight and Mercy Medical Airlift organizations.

Though his professional accomplishments were many, God was the center of Paul's life. Raised Roman Catholic, he later came to have a personal relationship with Christ in 1996

while attending a weekly prayer breakfast at the Pentagon. He recommitted his life to Christ and was baptized again in February of 2012. He was devoted to carrying out the mission of Christ through his personal activities on a daily basis, and obedient to spreading the good news of the gospel to others, particularly through his passion for flying. By combining his loves of Christ and flying, he strove to share his passions with others instead of just "punching holes in the sky," as he often said. He did all of this with the love and support of his family.

Together with his wife, Joyce, of 31 years, they raised three children and successfully navigated the adventures of Navy life with assignments domestic and abroad. We'd like to thank the many friends who have come along side to support Paul's family: his wife, Joyce; children, Julie and Hugh with granddaughter Lucy, Peter and Sarah, and Regina; his parents, Paul and Louise; his siblings, Denise and Jim, and Joe and Janet with their children, Katie, Daniel, and Claire.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to one of the organizations listed below:

Civil Air Patrol <http://www.natcapwg.cap.gov/>

Mercy Medical Airlift <http://mercymedical.org/give/>

Angel Flight <http://www.angelflightmidatlantic.org/donors-and-partners/give/>

Pilots for Christ <http://www.pfcal.net/>

Central Union Mission
http://www.missiondc.org/support_us/give/

Our Daily Bread <http://www.odbfairfax.org/>

Sanctity of Life Ministries <http://www.slmgetinvolved.org/donate.html>

Comments



“ 1 file added to the album Obituary Wall

Jefferson Funeral Chapel - January 28 at 09:16 AM



“ Mrs. Gardella, I, to this day, continue to pray for you and your family. Having you as my civics teacher in 8th grade was a real gift. I hope everything is going well for you and your family. You're still in my heart and my prayers.

Take care,
Harlan

May 30, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ To Joyce and Family, May God's richest blessings surround all of you. Paul was indeed a great man and we are proud of all the he was able to accomplish while he was here with us. Take Care.

November 16, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ It gives me great comfort to read your kind words of Paul and condolences to our family. Your remembrances call to mind happy days of our past. For those whom I've not met, your memories of Paul bestow a newly shared connection for which I'm grateful. "Though He brings grief, He will show compassion, so great is His unfailing love." (Lamentations 3:32). We await the day when our "grief will turn to joy." (Jn 16:20). Thank you!

June 26, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce - We were very upset by your loss. Please let us know how we can be of service to you. Michael Salkind

June 07, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ I worked with Paul in Dumfries for a relatively short time. His patience and dedication to quality work will always be something to be admired and remembered for. I am still in shock from the news of his passing (too early) and am saddened at the loss felt by his family and friends. You are in my prayers. Peace,

June 04, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce & Family: Saddened are we by your tragic loss. Never were two people made for each other, like Paul & Joyce! Our prayers are for you and your family always. Sincerely,

June 03, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ My thoughts and prayers are with Paul's family and friends. I have not seen Paul since Villanova but his leadership and kindness are remembered fondly

June 03, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dearest Joyce - We often think of you and Paul in Bible Study at BCC! Those are great memories of a close knit group striving to learn more about Christ and how to live a Godly life. Our hearts ache for you and your family in the loss of Paul. We pray that the memories you have will help you during the tough process of healing. If there is anything we can do for you, please let us know. In His Grip, Phil & Cindy Breedlove

June 03, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ To the family of Paul whom I never met. Just want you to know he had many friends and fellow aviators. He was a kind and gentle man and it was an honor to have instructed him years ago and shared aviation stories. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family. I will miss him. God Bless Norman

June 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce and The Gardella Family, My deepest condolences on the loss of Paul. I've had the privilege of being a member of our Saturday morning men's bible study group for the last 4 1//2 years and have benefited greatly from Paul's insight regarding our studies and his views on many other topics of the day. He was a strong man of Faith and we have assurance that he has gone on to be with our Lord - Jesus Christ. We will miss him deeply. My family's thoughts and prayers are with you all.
Buzz Hackett

June 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce - I mourn for you and your family at this time of great loss, yet take comfort in knowing that right now as you read this Paul is in a resurrected body, dancing on streets of gold! May our Holy Spirit comfort you and your family in the days ahead. Blessings, Bob Tate, CAPT (Ret), USN, VU Class of 1979.

June 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ I pray for God's special blessings of love, comfort, and peace for all of the Gardella family, friends, and Paul's colleagues. He was a stalwart man of God, and we will miss him, but we know he is at peace in the presence of his God and Father in heaven.

June 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce and Family, May God wrap you in His arms and hold you during this difficult time. We are praying for you all. Geri and Sherman Hairston

June 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ I was a classmate of Paul for 12 years at SH in Vineland. I have fond memories and am saddened to hear of his passing. From what I read Paul realized his life goals and made a difference in this world. My sympathy to his family.

June 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ I will always remember Paul's easy smile and can-do attitude, but most of all his desire to please the Lord in everything he did. He was always encouraging us to go higher, be more real, and be intentional about our faith in Christ. Thank you Lord for sharing Paul with us.

June 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce, We are greatly saddened by Paul's passing. He was a trusted friend, superior aviator and an amazing person. Paul was always ready to help in every way that he could, a great flight instructor and someone who's friendship and association we greatly value. His passing will not only leave a void in our lives, but in the hearts of everyone who knew him. If there is anything that we can do to help you in anyway, please do not hesitate to call us (703-815-1897, home) at anytime. Our sincere thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. With deepest sympathy, Hank & Olga Hernandez

June 02, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce, Julie, Peter, Regina, and family, We are so sorry to hear about Paul fellow Naval Officer and watchstander, family friend, and brother in Christ. Please accept our sincere sympathy over your tragic loss. We take comfort in knowing Paul is with the Lord. Ps. 116:15.

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Your family is in our thoughts and prayers. May the Lord bring you healing and peace.

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ So sad to hear the news. Know Paul is now enjoying the fairest of winds and the best following seas.

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce and family, During our years at Sacred Heart, Paul was one of my dearest friends. From my earliest memories of Paul, he had the greatest desire to join the navy. Together, we joined boy scout troop 36, were simultaneously inducted into "The Order of the Arrow", fished, biked, collected coins, and ran on Sacred Heart's first winning cross country team. When Paul first earned his pilot's license, he flew me over Landis avenue in Vineland at night and it was very memorable. Our country was extremely fortunate to have a man of Paul's character and integrity in the service. Everyone in school loved and admired Paul for his witt,intelligence,and friendship. Paul was a true role model for anyone having the pleasure to have known him. I was happy to learn how Paul became dedicated to the Lord and know how very much he will be dearly missed by all.

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce and the Gardella Family, Deb and I are so saddened by the loss of Paul. He has been a wonderful brother in Christ and fellow servant of God. Our hearts and prayers go out to you and we are wishing God's grace and His comfort be with you all. Please know that we are always right here with you and that we love you. T. J. and Deb Vercooteren

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ As long as we have been in the BCC family, Paul, you have been our encourager in Christ, an example in His way, real salt and light from the city on the hill. Our hearts, thoughts and prayers go to Joyce and family, knowing that Paul is in the heavenly realm, with our Lord and Savior.

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Gardella Family, Although I only had the privelege of flying with Paul for a short time, I will always remember his kind words, encouragement and professionalism as my instructor. He will be missed.

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce, Julie, Peter, Regina, and all others of Pauls beloved family, Our hearts are filled with sorrow at the loss of Paul! We have always felt so blessed by the conversations we had with Paul at BCC, and by his true servant heart. His love and devotion for his Lord and his family was clearly foremost in his life. Paul always had

such a pleasant demeanor and great smile and we consider ourselves blessed to have known him. The only true comfort is the knowledge that Paul is now in the presence of our Lord and Savior, experiencing true glory. We pray that God will sustain you in this most sad and difficult time, and that you will be able to draw comfort/strength from all the wonderful memories of your beloved Paul. Our world is a much better place because of the time Paul spent here and the exemplary life he lived. You will all be in our thoughts and prayers, now and in the coming days. We will miss him!!

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce and family, We are shocked and saddened by the news about Paul. We will keep you all in our prayers.

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce, Judy and my prayers will remember Paul.

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Gardella Family Our deepest sympathy. Our lives have truly been enriched beyond measure both by knowing Paul and working and flying with him. Thank you for sharing him with us.

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce and Family, May the beautiful memories that you have of Paul and your lives together bring you comfort during this difficult time. You are in my thoughts and prayers. Fondly, Sharon Denisar

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce and Family, Pastor Marty shared the news of Paul's death with Ruth Tuesday. No one would have anticipated Paul being taken home so suddenly. It is still difficult to recall the many times we have shared duties in the lobby with you serving coffee at BCC or the time Paul spent helping with breakfast and so many different church activities. We are fortunate to know that Paul is now with our Lord and there are no more tears, pain or sorrows, but only his everlasting joy of praising

our Lord. That does not limit our grieving his death with you but we serve a Sovereign Lord and we have to believe He is in charge of whatever happens in our lives. God bless you and your family as you grieve together, and we pray that you will feel His comfort. He knows our every need and is our refuge in times of trouble and sorrow.

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Mr. & Mrs. Gardella Sr., Joyce, and family, You are in my thoughts and prayers! I am so sorry for your loss! May Paul Jr. RIP! Rhonda Ehlman

June 01, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Julie, HT, and Julie's family, We are so sorry to hear about your Dad. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. love, Uncle Bobby and Aunt Kak

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce and Family, Paul was a tremendous blessing to all of us at Burke Community Church. He was a strong man of God with great character and a servant's heart. What a great legacy to leave for your family that he was a man with Christ in the center of his life. God is well pleased! While we mourn with you, it is a blessing that we don't mourn without hope (1Thessalonians 4:13-18), and we know that Paul is present with our Lord and Risen Savior. May our Lord comfort you all during this time.

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ To the Gardella Family, our thoughts and prayers are with you.

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ I will surely miss Paul. He was an Italian-American who came to Christ, much like my own background. Hanging around Paul and Joyce made me feel like I had family in the area. He was always willing to help out and had a "get it done" attitude. We will met again..

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce and Family, I have know Paul since 2003 when a Bible study was started and has continued every Sat morning since then. I really enjoyed his fellowship and insight into our Bible study. I know you will miss him greatly and so will the men in his group. May God grant you his peace during this time. Ralph

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce and Family, Your loss is so great and the loss to the church is as well. Be comforted by this: "To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it." Rev. 2:17. Paul was more than a conqueror (Rom 8:37) in Christ Jesus and although we mourn for you and ourselves, we rejoice in what God has done. We love you.

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce and Family, Paul's love of aviation and love of life was outstanding. His generosity and selflessness will be missed by all. Please accept our condolences. Ron and Nour David

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ I'm sorry for your loss and you are all in my prayers.

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Peter and Family: I am so sorry to hear about this. May God give you the strength to endure the pain. Your family will be in my thoughts and prayers.

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce and family, John 16:22 So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. Sorry for your loss of Paul. I had the pleasure of flying with Paul one time in Civil Air Patrol it was one of my most enjoyable flights I have ever went on. He was a true professional and dedicated member of CAP. He taught me so much about flying and how to be a good

pilot.

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce, My heart is grieving for you during this sadness for the tragic loss of your husband, Paul. You and your family are my thoughts and prayers. God be with you all in your time of need. Love, Vicki

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Paul will be missed at the airport in Warrenton. He helped me out many times and never asked for anything in return. I wish I could have repaid him. I hope his memories will sustain you in the future.

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce, My thoughts are with you my friend. May Paul's memory be a blessing to you. Love, Peggy

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Blue skies, Paul! 13 years ago I was your nervous student. Today I am a proud Gardella-trained pilot. I was blessed to have you as my primary instructor. You are with me on every flight. Semper Fi.

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce and family, Our sincere condolences on your loss of Paul. Although we only knew him since he joined Civil Air Patrol, we enjoyed every moment of that time. He was a true professional and dedicated member. He loved to fly and helped others to realize their goals. We all lost a really good guy.

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce, Mark and I send our deepest sympathy to and your family. We have planted a tree in the Holy Land to keep Paul's spirit alive and celebrate his life. You wil receive certificate. Our hearts are with you. Margie Bodner

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ I was Paul's first student back in 98 at the Quantico Flying Club. He was a great instructor and friend. I will greatly miss him. Chris

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce - My thoughts and prayers are with you and the kids during the time. I am so sorry. Jenn

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce, Julie, Peter and Regina, We send our deepest sympathy to your family in the loss of your beloved husband and father. May the Lord surround all of you and comfort you in your grieving.

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Peter and Family, I am so sorry to hear of this tragic accident. May God be with your family during this time of loss and mourning, I will be keep all of you in my thoughts and prayers.. If there is anything I can do please feel free to let me know. God Bless!!

May 31, 2012 at 12:00 AM