

Fort Taber flag to honor Dr. Joseph “Zack” F. Souza, Jr. 27 Year Military Career

During the month of October, the 26th Lights for Peace flag to fly at the Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum honors the memory of Dr. Joseph Figueiredo Souza, Jr. who served a long and distinguished military career including six years in the Marine Corps Reserve and twenty-one years in the United States Air Force.

Dr. Joseph F. Souza, Jr., known to family and friends, as “Zack,” was born on the Cape Verdean Island of Sao Nicolau, the son of Joseph F. Souza, Sr. and Anna Tavares Souza. He later emigrated to New Bedford, MA where he “became a world traveler, military officer, college professor, linguist, psychologist, artist, musician, and respected community member,” according to the publishing company Lulu.com.

Souza was a graduate of New Bedford High School and continued his studies at Worcester State College, Troy State University and Heed University, where he earned a Ph.D. degree in Counseling Psychology.

During his 27 year of military career, Souza served abroad in France, Spain and Panama. According to his obituary, he also worked in Portugal and Italy in the service of the Portuguese Government. Souza retired in 1983 at the rank of Captain.

Upon retirement he continued to stay busy and served on the boards of many local organizations including the New Bedford Historical Society, North Star Learning Centers and the Ford Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum. He was also an accomplished artist, musician and author. He would often donate his artwork to local non-profits to raise money for their organizations.

Dr. Souza is a self-published author of the book entitled, "Once an Islander," which is an autobiography, recounting his life's journey of a "young boy born in a humble country village on the island of Sao Nicolau, Cape Verde Islands, who made his way to America and became a military officer, a psychologist, and an accomplished artist and writer," as stated in the "About the Author" section of his book.

He later moved to Avondale, Arizona where he spent time entertaining members of the Avondale Senior Center with his music.

Mr. Souza passed away on July 28, 2021 on the day he turned 83 years old. He is survived by his wife Dawn Blake Souza; his two sons Paul and his wife, Isabell of New Bedford, Richard and his wife Ana Paula who reside in Washington, New Jersey; his two granddaughters, Christina and Vanessa and his great-granddaughter Lily Rose. He is also survived by his stepchildren, Cynthia Lopes Miles (Ira), Renee Lopes Pocknett (Vernon), Philip Lopes (Eva), Jason Lopes (Amy) and T.J. Thomas. He was previously the widower of Maria Rosa Lopes Morais of Lisbon, Portugal.

Linda Ferreira, of Empire Ford of New Bedford, researches the life histories of area residents. American flags are provided by **Empire Ford of New Bedford**. Flags are raised by the staff at Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum. Those who would like to honor a local veteran in the future can contact Ferreira at lferreira@buyempireautogroup.com.