



# Edward C. Koolakian

JUN 18, 1948 - APR 7, 2020



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## **Edward C. Koolakian**

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**E**dward C. Koolakian, 71, of Liverpool, passed away Tuesday, April 7, 2020, at Upstate University Hospital. Ed passed away unexpectedly after heroically fighting complications from Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia for several months. Ed was a native of the Syracuse area, born to the late Edward G. and Genevieve (Mento) Koolakian. He was born and raised in Dewitt attending Jamesville Dewitt High School. He later attended Onondaga Community College, Brockport University and then served in the Air National Guard.

Ed is survived by his beloved wife of 40 years, Cynthia (Houck) Koolakian; his daughter, Tiffany Koolakian (Scott Zewe) of Boston, MA; son, Todd Koolakian (Mark Heller) of Sacramento, CA; sister, Dianne Koolakian (Frank Niles) of Manlius, NY; nephew, Damon Niles, and many other loving family members.

Ed was a true family man and deeply cherished his time with his loving wife and children. He also adored his time at family gatherings small and large with his close-knit extended Italian and Armenian families. Whether it was pool time in the backyard, trips to Cape Cod or family gatherings, Ed loved the time he spent with his family.

Ed was a third-generation custom tailor and clothier and was the longtime owner and president of Koolakian's Menswear in historic downtown Syracuse. He joined the family business at age 22 and operated Koolakian's for nearly fifty years. Ed Koolakian fitted suits for some of Central New York's most accomplished men. His shop has been an anchor in Hanover Square for over a century. For Ed, operating Koolakian's was his life's calling, and a love and passion, only outmatched by his love for his family and friends. He was an icon in the downtown Syracuse business community and a staple in historic Hanover Square where you could often catch him out front of his beloved store or visiting with neighbors and other business owners.



## Obituary

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Ed also loved giving back and had a prolific interest in the betterment of the CNY region. He served on the Liverpool Board of Education for eight years, was a longtime member of the Kiwanis Club of Syracuse, having served as its President from 1983-1984, was President of the Hanover Square Association, Board member and President of the North Area YMCA of Central New York, a Board member of the Children's Consortium and was appointed to serve on the Downtown Committee Board of Directors by several Syracuse mayors.

Outside of his passion for his business and the Downtown Syracuse community, Ed was very active spending nearly every winter weekend teaching skiing on the slopes of Toggenburg with life-long ski school friends and spending many summers on Cape Cod with his wife and two children. Ed also deeply appreciated the wonderful conversations and great friendships he made at his cherished "Coffee Club" where he spent nearly every morning before heading to work.

Services will be private, and he will be laid to rest at St. Mary's Mausoleum, Dewitt. A Celebration of Life Memorial for Ed will be scheduled at a later date.

Contributions may be made in Ed's memory to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Western and Central New York, 4043 Maple Road, Suite 105, Amherst, NY 14226 or the Francis House, 108 Michaels Ave, Syracuse, NY 13208.



# Events

**Edward C. Koolakian**

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## Cemetery Details

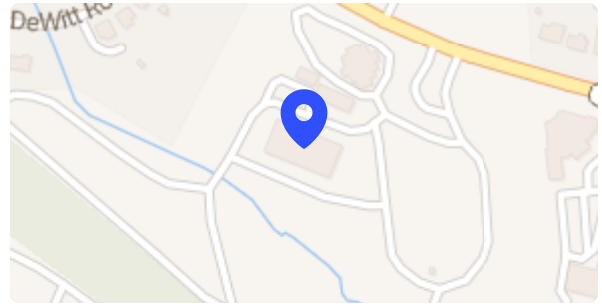


**St. Mary's Mausoleum**

4100 East Genesee Street, DeWitt NY 13214



**475-4639**





## Tribute Wall

**Edward C. Koolakian**

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KV

**Kathy And Fred Vaeth** posted:

Cindy, Tiffany and Todd, There are not enough words to express how saddened Fred and I are to learn of Ed's passing. His good-natured spirit and generosity will be missed by so many in the community he cared so much about. Our thoughts and prayers are with you 🙏 Kathy and Fred Vaeth

April 22 at 8:27 AM

DC

**Daniel Carno** posted:

Dear Cindy, Todd and Tiffany, I was very sorry to hear of Ed's passing. I always enjoyed our all-too-few conversations and appreciated his frank, straight-forward observations of the people and world around him. He had an effortlessly wry sense of humor that made me laugh and feel better about things. In these unsettling times, the passing of such a reassuring, rock-solid personality is a terrible loss. Dan Carno (cousin)

April 16 at 1:39 PM

PH

**Petey (Ellen Savage)Hildenbrand** posted:

Ed leaves a gaping hole in the Syracuse business community. We traded stories of working in old-fashioned family businesses downtown... he was a refreshing personality that believed that there were more important things to care about in your neighborhood than just making a profit. We loved his competitive spirit in the Hanover Squares events!

April 16 at 12:36 PM

JF

**John Farnach** posted:

So sorry for your loss. Ed was a one-of-a-kind guy. I was in the shop last fall to have a suit altered and enjoyed the great conversation and the fine work he did for me. He will be greatly missed in the shop that he ran for so many years.

April 16 at 9:37 AM



## Tribute Wall

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**Louis And Ruth Arace** posted:

My closet is full of suits, sport jackets and slacks, shirts and ties and various sport clothes that Ed made sure fit me perfectly before I purchased them. Over the years Ed became a dear friend and my wife and I looked forward to our excursions to add to my wardrobe because we knew Ed would make sure the fit was perfect. We will miss our dear, dear friend who made us feel like we were part of his family. We were astounded when he knew us by name no matter when we saw him. Our deep condolences to all the family. Ed left a lasting legacy for all of us who knew and loved him to live by. We will certainly miss his dedication to the service he provided to all of his customers. May God grant you His comfort and peace. Lou Arace

April 12 at 4:09 PM



**Cris Hafner** lit a candle in honor of Edward .



April 12 at 2:19 PM



**Cris Hafner** posted:

Cindy and beloved family, So sorry and shocked to learn of Ed's journey to the other side. Surely taken way too soon. Such a kind man. I will miss our conversations, during your visits to our restaurant. His cheerful disposition was contagious. Cherish your precious memories and believe he will always be with you. Our condolences, Tom and Cris Hafner

April 12 at 2:18 PM



**Susann H Panek** posted:

Cindy and family My deepest sympathy to you for the loss of Ed. He was such a wonderfully dedicated member of the downtown community. It was such a pleasure to interact with him the 10 years I was on the Common Council. He was always positive and with a smile, ready to do anything he could. May God bless you all and give you comfort. It is truly sad. Susann H Panek

April 12 at 10:15 AM



**Dr Jim Greenwald** posted:

Ed kept me looking great for 20 years. Will be sorely missed. Rest in peace

April 12 at 9:37 AM



## Tribute Wall

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JT

**Joseph Todisco** posted:

Cindy, Todd and Tiffany, We are so sorry to learn of Ed's passing. We have known each other for many years however the last ten years Ed has come to the diner downtown Monday and Tuesday for coffee and lots of good fun conversations. He would excuse himself weekly when Tiffany telephoned in the AM. We served as ushers and board members for many years at DCC and always had a great time. I'll miss the visits, the laughs, jokes, opinions but most the friendship. All my love to all of you. Joe and Angela.

April 12 at 8:58 AM

BL

**Bill Licker** posted:

So sorry to hear this news. Ed was one of the guys hanging out at the old DeWitt Billiards in our high school days. Have not seen him in many years but always remembered him as a good guy back in "the day" when life was simpler and he was known as Eddie. Losing a contemporary always hits close to home.

April 12 at 8:38 AM

DJ

**Dean Johnson** posted:

Dear Cindy, So very sorry to hear about Ed's passing. I will always remember our days at Toggenburg with Ed, Rob and our girls skiing. Also remember every year at the Daucher's Super Bowl party Ed and I would not discuss the game, but always that day's skiing. Please take comfort in knowing how many people enjoyed Ed's company. He was truly a great guy! Our deepest sympathy to you and your family. Dean and Betsy Johnson

April 12 at 6:57 AM

KN

**Kurt Noll** posted:

Sad to hear of the passing of my friend Eddie, he was one heck of of guy & the best tailor with great taste in clothing. My condolences to the family. RIP

April 12 at 5:14 AM



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RD

**Robert Doucette** posted:

My deepest condolences to the Koolakian family. Ed was a fellow board member and a good friend. I would stop by the store at least once a month to talk about anything and everything. He was a great guy and I am going to miss him very much. Bob Doucette

April 12 at 3:32 AM

DK

**Debbie Kaufman** posted:

CindySo saddened to hear of Ed's passing...Remembering your wedding and our first apartment when I met him. It was always nice to see you two at the State Fair. My sincere condolences for you and Todd and Tiffany. Debbie Kaufman

April 11 at 12:58 PM

BM

**Brian Mclane** posted:

I was deeply saddened to learn of Ed's passing. I was just about to call him to let him know that a mutual good friend, Michael Huonder, had passed away when I saw the tribute to Ed posted on the evening CBS News. I was introduced to Ed by Mike. I spent most of my life in a wheelchair and needed custom suits, sport coats, and dress shirts since I could not buy most clothes off the rack. He took great care in making me "look good". I will miss our visits. Peace and love always.

April 11 at 12:43 PM

JB

**Janet Burman** posted:

Our deepest sympathy and sincere condolences to Cindy and the family. Ed served and led in our community with his remarkable business and his magnanimous generosity. -Janet & George Burman

April 11 at 11:23 AM

CB

**Cheryl Bilbo** posted:

Cindy...I cannot believe this!! I am still in shock!! Edx was such a great guy. Every June 18th I would wish him a Happy birthday if I saw him outside...shared my father's birthday. I will miss seeing him outside working around the house and his sincerity and kindness. I cannot put into words how very sorry I am. May the Lord give you and Tiffany and Todd all the strength you will need through the days ahead. Xo

April 11 at 11:11 AM



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PD

**Pat Driscoll** posted:

To the Koolakian family...please accept my prayers and condolences on the passing of Ed. He was the consummate gentleman and a champion for our community. I wish you peace and comfort in the days ahead.Pat Driscoll

April 11 at 5:35 AM

RK

**Ron Klein Sr** posted:

Shocked and saddened to read of Ed's passing. He was an ICON in clothing and always had a friendly greeting. He made it easy at Christmas-Birthdays because my Dad would get a gift certificate or two and visit Koolakians for his business clothing. Years later I accepted a job in downtown Syracuse and it was right off to see Ed to make sure I continued to follow in my Father's footsteps. More recently my oldest son transferred to Syracuse and I sent him to see Ed with a gift certificate in hand..Three generations of my family were treated like kings by Ed and often I would just stop in to say hello. What a wonderful man and one of the sharpest dressers in CNY. RIP my friend and your memory will live on..

April 11 at 3:13 AM

RL

**Robbiewells/Lasvegas** lit a candle in honor of Edward .

To Kools Family,I sit here in my living room in amazement reading about my Good Friend Kool and wondering what the hell happened?Ed & I met in 1967 in the USAF when he was a ground power expert. We hit it right off the bat after we talked and found out that we had similiar friends.All these years go by and we had still kept in contact with each other since we met.Ed was one of the sharpest dressers I have ever know and I always complimented him for being the Kool Guy that he was. I am still sitting here shaking because I cannot believe a good friend like Ed is gone. From the service and going to his store to buy a shirt or whatever he was selling at the time he always took care of me and everyone.Rest In Peace Kool Man as you were one of the finest people that I have ever known.I will Never forget all the good time we had whenever we met wheather downtown or a Syracuse Game or at a function you and I always Smiled when we met up.I will miss you buddy.



April 10 at 9:39 PM



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BP

**Bette Prietti** posted:

I remember visiting the shop quite often with my mom because she bought all my dads suits there. It was an awesome store. This brings back memories. With deepest sympathy to the family,Bette Prietti

April 10 at 4:27 PM

SF

**Santo Di Fino** posted:

Dear Cindy and family,So very sorry.We will all miss him.A gentleman,a friend to all,a giant in our community and someone always on my side at the coffee club.He was always upbeat and energetic.Syracuse will never be the same.With sympathy,Santo Di Fino

April 10 at 3:12 PM

SS

**Sam Sgroi** posted:

Dear Cindy, Tiffany and Todd, I am so very sorry to hear about Ed. He was a great guy to work for and a lot of fun to be around. We shared many, many laughs and stories over the years that we worked together. Ed was always genuinely concerned about my family and asked about them every time I stopped in the store to visit. I will miss him. My thoughts and prayers are with you. Sam Sgroi

April 10 at 1:47 PM

AG

**Anna Giacobbe** posted:

Dear Cynthia and family,Our thoughts and prayers on the loss of Ed. We always enjoyed visiting with you at the JLS events and Peter was very pleased to have been a regular customer of the shop. May you have special memories of the times that you and your family spent together.Fondly,Anna Giacobbe (JLS member) and Peter Welge

April 10 at 8:46 AM

TM

**Tom Muench** posted:

Ed was a former student and a friend. He certainly was a very special man. My thoughts and prayers are with the family. Tom Muench

April 10 at 8:02 AM



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**Suzanne Kondra** posted:

I'm heartbroken hearing about Ed's passing. He always had time to speak with me when whenever we saw each other and he was so caring to me when we spoke after my daughter, Kimberly, passed from Leukemia. He was one of a kind..Rest In Peace my friend.Suzanne Kondra-DeFuria

April 10 at 7:45 AM



**Caroline Brust** posted:

Nick and I send our deepest sympathy to you Cindy, and to the family.....We were shocked and saddened to hear of Ed's passing....we will miss his beautiful smile and friendship.....Fondly, Caroline and Nick Brust

April 10 at 6:47 AM



**Jim Paye** posted:

Deepest sympathies to Cindy and all of Ed's family. I skied with Ed for 13 years and we shared a lot during all those 10-minute lift rides. We looked forward to a "pop" or two in the Foggy Goggle at the end of the day, where he knew and spoke with everyone. Great skier, great instructor, and wonderful person to know. We will think of him, speak of him, and miss him dearly.

April 10 at 5:58 AM



**Richard Isaacs** lit a candle in honor of Edward .

Eddie and I grew up together on Kittell Road in Fayetteville. So many stories of two young lads experiencing life from Cub Scouts at Mrs. Johnson's house to riding our bikes to Jackson's Store and buying milk for our moms and buying penny candy as a reward. Eddie liked the pinwheels, I the flavor sticks. Then "Jackie Paper" came no more, and only once in a while did we run into each other and have a laugh over "remember when?" Eddie, I will always cherish the memories you and I made and the "trouble" we got in to as young lads growing up. Rest in Peace my old friend, Rest in Peace.Richard (Ricky) IsaacsLiverpool



April 10 at 4:59 AM



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JP

**Joseph Pagano** posted:

Ed was a high school classmate and good friend of mine for 60 years. He was on the reunion committee with me. I've skied with Ed and spent a lot of fine with him reminiscing about old time. My sincere condolences to Cindy and the rest of his close knit family. He will be sorely missed

April 10 at 4:43 AM

JS

**Jim Skvorak** posted:

Ed and I shared a mutual love of skiing. We both taught at Toggenberg Ski Center. He was a very detailed instructor and his students benefitted greatly by learning from him. He will be missed.  
Jim (& Cathy) Skvorak

April 10 at 4:09 AM

MC

**Mike Cartini** posted:

To Ed's family I was saddened to see Ed passed unexpectedly. I was lucky enough to work downtown and deal with Ed over the years at his store. He was a real gentleman and master of his craft. Seeing Ed at the Dome or elsewhere he would always share a smile and a story. I have many fond memories of shopping at his clothing store. My condolences to you all.

April 10 at 3:06 AM

AK

**Anton Kreuzer** posted:

Dear Family of Ed, You were truly blessed with one genuinely fine gentleman. Did so enjoy knowing him and now shall very much miss seeing him so very much. Please know of my most respectful sentiments during your difficult days. Shall remember Ed in Easter prayers of hope and thanksgiving. Most sincerely, Tony Kreuzer

April 10 at 2:08 AM

DH

**Dianne Hollopeter** posted:

Cindy, Todd and Tiffany, We are so saddened by the passing of Ed. He was such a kind and gentleman, always had such a smile. We have fun memories of when our girls were in high school together, a lot of laughs, beautiful times that will always remain in our hearts. Always admired what a sharp dresser he was. Our thoughts and prayers are with you always.

April 9 at 6:08 PM



## Tribute Wall

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CT

**Campbell Tellman** posted:

I am sad to read of Ed's death. When working downtown I bought clothes from Koolakians regularly. Ed and I met after high school. He at JD and I was at FM. We skied many times and sailed on Cazenovia. Sometimes we'd go to his house and his Mom would fix a world class pasta banquet. I used to visit the store and talk with Ed and his father, Chuck and Bob. They were all professional and great friends. They always made me feel important and they were great tailors. Ed was a class act and I am thankful I knew him. Fair winds my friend. Campbell Tellman Beaufort, NC

April 9 at 5:09 PM

DC

**David O'connor** posted:

So sad to learn of my friend Ed's passing. Back in our younger days I would leave Lynch Shoes on Warren St and how get Eddie and we would take our daily walk down S Salina St and back up Warren St and we'd discuss our problems and the cities problems and how we were going to straighten them out. Those were the best days. I think Hanover Square should be renamed Ed Koolakian Square. Rest in peace my friend Ed.

April 9 at 4:46 PM

PB

**Pam Bowes** posted:

Bob and I are so sorry to hear the passing of Ed. Bob remembers the good times during T-ball and baseball. Our condolences to all of you. Ed was a great man with a huge personality.

April 9 at 3:50 PM

JM

**John Marcon** posted:

Cindy, Todd and Tiffany. I am saddened to hear of Ed's passing. I got to be good friends while working as Director of Security for the Downtown Committee. I enjoyed visiting Ed and his father and talking about family, friends, sports. We worked together to make Downtown a safe and clean environment for people. Cherish the many fond memories of him and know that my thoughts and prayers are with you. I smile remember talking to him at his birthday dinner at FRANCHESCA's after I retired. He was a true friend.

April 9 at 2:18 PM



## Tribute Wall

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MT

**Mike Toia** posted:

I am saddened to hear of Ed's passing. Ed was always a pleasure to speak with when I worked the downtown beat as a Police Officer for the City. He was a true gentleman and a dapper dresser. He will be sorely missed in the Hanover Square District and by all that had the pleasure to know Ed. My sincere condolences to the Koolakian family. Mike Toia Retired SPD "09"

April 9 at 1:41 PM

RC

**Rich Cifra** posted:

I so enjoyed walking into Ed's store and chatting with him. He was never in a hurry and took all the time in the world to share some stories. Very enjoyable and memorable conversations. He will be greatly missed. My sincere condolences. Rich Cifra

April 9 at 12:01 PM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Edward by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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