



## Nicholas Toia

June 7, 1951 - February 15, 2026

Nicholas "Nick" Toia

Born in 1951 in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, and raised in Beaver, passed away surrounded by the family he cherished above all else.

Nick graduated from Clarion College and went on to earn his PhD from the University of Pittsburgh, beginning a lifelong commitment to helping others heal. He started his career as a therapist in the community mental health system before moving into private practice, where he treated hundreds of patients working to rebuild their lives after achieving sobriety. Nick had a rare ability to connect with people from every walk of life. Former patients and their families often reached out to thank him for the role he played in their recovery—a testament to his compassion, insight, and unwavering belief in people's capacity to change.

In 1994, Nick married Debbie Friedman and joyfully became an instant father to her three children—Jake, Max, and Rachael Dizard—whom he loved deeply and proudly. His family was the center of his world, the source of his greatest happiness, and the anchor through every chapter of his life.

Nick is also survived by his mother, Josephine Toia; his younger brother, Joe Toia; his sister, Joan Ciotti; and seven grandchildren, all of whom he adored

and who brought him immense joy.

He loved sports, especially racquet sports, both as a player and an enthusiastic spectator. Watching the US Open live was one of his greatest pleasures. He also loved traveling, movies (particularly those about World War II), good food, and laughter-especially his own. Nick had a gift for cracking himself up, and his humor brought levity and warmth to those around him.

Nick faced more than his share of hardships: a brain tumor in his thirties, significant hearing loss in the decades that followed, and dementia later in life. Yet through every challenge, his love of life endured. He remained grateful, present, and deeply connected to the people he loved.

Nick's legacy lives on in the countless lives he touched, the family he adored, and the joy he brought into the world.

Visitation will be held on Friday from 12:00-1:30 p.m. at the D'ALESSANDRO FUNERAL HOME LTD., 4522 Butler Street, Lawrenceville. A funeral service will follow at 1:30 p.m. Private burial to follow.

Zoom link for the service: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89959823721>

In lieu of flowers, the family welcomes donations made in Nick's honor to Doctors Without Borders.

[www.dalessandroltd.com](http://www.dalessandroltd.com).

# Previous Events

## Visitation

FEB **20**. 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM (ET)

D'Alessandro Funeral Home and Crematory Ltd.  
4522 Butler St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15201

# Tribute Wall

LB

“ I was his client when I was in my early 20’s when he was fairly new to the practice. He literally saved my life. We later became friends, and I know that bothered him ethically. I lost touch with him after his brain tumor, as I moved farther north. I just saw his Mom’s obituary and saw that he left us last month. Very sad. His family was lucky to have him, he was truly a great person. You all have my sincere condolences for Nick and his Mom.

Laurie Barnett - March 05 at 11:34 AM

EH

Nick did have a way of making clients into friends.

Edna Henrich - March 16 at 10:22 PM

BS

“ Nicky and I were good friends in high school graduating together from Beaver High School in 1969. We had many adventures together along with Cyd (Buddy) Fair. I have posted a picture here likely taken sometime during our senior year at our designated meeting place, "The Rock" on River Road, where many of our best times began. Included in that picture from left to right are Bob Swartz (me) Jack Vogel, Nicky, Barb Born, Cyd Fair (given name Carl) and Greg Puhalla, all classmates. I fondly post this picture on Facebook at least annually because it's one of my all time favorites. I believe it was taken by another classmate, Becky Reichardt, no selfie sticks back in 1969. Both Greg and Becky will be welcoming Nicky in heaven. RIP Nicky, you were one of the good guys!



Bob Swartz - February 23 at 04:28 PM

MW

“ Nick became a dear friend when he married my long-time friend Debbie and became an incredible dad to her children. His love was abundant and obvious to all. One of her teenage children confided to my daughter that there couldn't have been a better step-dad than Nick ... that says it all. John and I have missed the happy times we shared with Nick laced with meaningful conversations and insights. We are comforted now that his struggle is over.

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**MaryLynn Wigodsky** - February 19 at 11:27 AM