

## Obituary

# Grocery patriarch brought vision to Mississauga

MN Feb 2, 2011

There's a saying at Longo's that's been around since the first fruit market opened more than half a century ago: "If we wouldn't serve it to our family, we won't serve it others." That attention to quality hasn't changed from the day Tom Longo and his younger brothers Gus and

the late Joe established their little store on Yonge St. in Toronto back in 1956. It was through Tom Longo's leadership, vision and acuity that the little market grew to a chain of 23 family-owned and operated stores across the Greater Toronto Area.

The new flagship store, located beside the Air Canada centre in Toronto, was a source of great pride for the businessman who'd retired as president in 1998. His sons Anthony and Joey came on board and have been moving the company to new heights.

More than 52 years ago, the Longo brothers sold produce from the back of their bicycles shortly after arriving in Toronto from their native Italy. They soon moved their blossoming business to Malton and then expanded into a successful chain of markets.

Longo remained involved in the daily decision-making of the business right up until his death. Today there are more than 4,000 employees working at its 23 family-owned Longo's locations across the GTA, including three in Mississauga.

"That flagship store was 50 years in the making," said Rosanne Longo, chair of the Longo Family Charitable Foundation adding the new downtown market was a dream come true for her uncle and her father Gus.

The much loved family patriarch died Sunday at the age of 76. In paying tribute to her uncle, Longo said he built a strong foundation for his family and the company based on honesty, trust and mutual respect.

Longo is survived by his wife, Zina,

his children Anthony, Joey, Rosie and Marie and 13 grandchildren.

A funeral mass will be held today at 10 a.m. at St. Clare of Assisi Parish at 150 Saint Francis Ave. in Woodbridge with the burial to follow at Holy Cross Cemetery in Thornhill.

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Longo, 1000