



Hercules Mfg. Co., America's oldest family owned and operated manufacturer of custom insulated & dry freight truck bodies, is grieving the loss of Retired President and President Emeritus Joe Banna. He was 78 years old.

He did an awesome job growing our company over the period of 40 years of service," said Jeffrey A. Caddick, CEO/Owner of Hercules. "When Mr. Banna joined Hercules in the late-60's we were building 5 bodies a week on average, now we build 4-5 bodies a day, which is a testament to the customer relationships that Joe cultivated, and the manufacturing team that Joe assembled.

We are grateful for Joe's friendship & leadership, and the fact that even after his retirement he stayed on in the role of President Emeritus and continued to share his knowl-edge and experience with us 'newcomers'."

A Catholic born in Israel of Armenian-Syrian descent, Banna arrived in America passing thru Ellis Island in the spring of 1960 to study @ the Baptist affi liated Campbellsville College from 1960-1964.

From 1964-66 Banna was employed by Central Grocery, Flint, MI, and from 1966-69 he was employed by Vesley Company, LaPeer, MI.

Banna was hired by George Caddick, longtime President of Hercules, in 1969 as VP of Operations and in 1993 Banna was named President, a role in which he served until his retirement in December of 2009.

When Banna joined Hercules, the metal needed for manufacturing truck bodies was fabricated @ Evansville Sheet Metal rather than in house, so a lot of money was going out the door. Banna brought to Hercules valuable experience from his years with Vesley Company, which manufactured the famed Apache pop-up camping trailers. Banna persuaded Mr. Caddick to purchase the equipment to allow the company to perform metal fabrication in-house. Banna also oversaw Hercules relocation from an old plant located on Main Street in Henderson to new facilities located on Adams Street and on Bob Posey Street in Henderson, KY. While much of Hercules' work involves manufacturing custom built truck bodies & trailers, with no engineer on staff, most of the design work fell to Banna who described himself as an "engineer by experience rather than education".

Perhaps more important is the personal relationship Banna formed with customers, never promising anything he couldn't do, being upfront and correcting anything that did not meet customer expectations. Banna did business strictly on the basis of a handshake and never had any contracts. Recognized as an honorable businessman, basing his business relationships on loyalty, honesty and integrity, and becoming a business partner with many of Hercules prime customers, including Borden Dairy based in Dallas, the Summit Truck & leasing Group which originated in Memphis, Truck & Transportation in New Orleans, and W & B Service Co. the largest Carrier Transcold dealer in the country based out of Dallas.

Upon his retirement in 2009 after 40 years of service, Jeffrey A. Caddick appointed Banna President Emeritus of Hercules, a role he filled up until his death.

Reflecting upon his 40 years with Hercules, Banna stated "It's been a helluva ride. We've had ups and downs. But overall it has been wonderful".

Banna is preceded in death by his brother Henry Youssef Banna (Samia) and his parents Mary Masri Banna and Youssef Elias Banna, and his father and mother in law WC and Pinkie Sinclair. Banna is survived by his wife of 55 years, Lewellyn Sinclair Banna; his daughter Leanne Banna-Pritchett and son-in-law Steve Pritchett all of Henderson; grandson Chase Pritchett of Atlanta, Georgia; his brothers Steve and J.C Nassim Banna of Hot Springs, Arkansas; sisters Siham Banna (Tony) of Nazareth, Israel and Afaf Masri of Damascus, Syria; his sister-in-law, Paula Sutton of Salt Lake City, Utah; brother-in-laws, J.P. Butch Sinclair of Campbellsville, Kentucky, Eddie Sinclair of Summersville, Kentucky, W. C. Bill Sinclair of Bilioxi, Mississippi along with many beloved nieces, great nieces, nephews and great nephews.

Jeffrey A. Caddick, Hercules CEO/Owner, stated "Mr. Banna was a continuous and constant force and presence at Hercules for 49 years, and while the loss is painful and he will be sorely missed, the simple fact of the matter is that Joe's life's work will live on in everything we do here @ Hercules for many, many years to come".

There will be no visitation or funeral at his request. A private memorial service for family and close friends will be held at a later date.