



Mr. Joseph E. Torres

AUG 21, 1927 - NOV 12, 2021



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FUNERAL HOME, MEMORIAL PARK & CREMATORY

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Mr. Joseph E. Torres

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Joseph Espinosa Torres died peacefully in his sleep on November 12, 2021 at 6:14 p.m. surrounded by family at his home in San Bruno. He was 94 years old.

Joseph was born August 21, 1927 in Sunnyvale, California in a wood cabin on Evelyn Street. His father, Francisco Torres, and mother, Maria Espinosa Torres, were Spanish immigrants from Castellar de la Frontera. Francisco (also known as Frank) and Maria had an arranged marriage and sought opportunity in Hawaii where they had heard of work in the sugarcane fields. Quickly realizing that the sugarcane industry was not lucrative, they moved to San Francisco to try the canning industry. They had seven children: Mary, Pat, Jeannie, Betty, Anita, Francisco (Frank), and finally, Joseph.

Joseph (or Joe as he was fondly called) spent his early childhood in the cabin his father built, then on Muender Avenue in Sunnyvale. He recalled struggling at first in school, as he only knew Spanish, then becoming the class clown and having teachers tell him he should be on the stage. He formed a bond with his older sister Pat, who often watched him while his parents were at work. He remembered his mother and sisters waiting for the phones to ring at their house to let them know that it was time for canning.

When World War II began, Joe was a teenager and waited eagerly for his chance to fight for his country. In 1945, when he was 17, he enlisted. He was on a troop ship headed toward Japan when the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He arrived shortly afterward, relating that he found the Japanese people scared and relieved to see the American soldiers. He spent the next months stationed a safe distance from Nagasaki where he patrolled the coast in PT boats. He later served in the military during the Korean War, though he never saw action.

In 1951, Joe's friend set him up on a blind date with a woman named Inez O'Connor. The night of their date, he picked her up in his new chartreuse Ford convertible. In June of that year, Joe proposed to Inez and they married on New Year's Eve in Reno, Nevada. Inez and Joe had five daughters: Katherine, Judy, Mary Ann, Cynthia, and JoAnn. One day while driving home from



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work, Joe saw a sign that said, "If you lived here, you'd already be home!" It was 1958 and Inez and Joe were able to purchase the house in San Bruno with a move-in cost of \$100.00. They would reside in this house for the rest of their lives. Inez passed away in 2003 from congestive heart failure. Their marriage lasted nearly 52 years.

More than anything, Joe valued education and hard work. He had a handful of interesting work experiences that he credited with helping him become a successful man and achieving the American dream. He started working when he was nine years old, picking prunes, tomatoes, and cherries, earning two cents for every 40 pounds. He was able to pay for his own school clothes. Throughout his teenage years he worked for Shuckles Cannery before joining the Navy. He credits the Navy with teaching him the importance of education. After leaving the Navy, he took engineering classes at City College of San Francisco, driving across the Bay Bridge in his Model T. During this time, he worked at Hunt's Cannery in Hayward, at San Quentin Prison as a translator and censor for Spanish inmates, and at the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco as a junior engineer. Joe was able to see and meet many famous people in this last position, including John F. Kennedy, Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, Judy Garland, Frank Sinatra, and Sammy Davis Jr. After this, he worked several years at Bank of America on Montgomery Street in San Francisco, before obtaining his career job. In 1968, Joe began work as Chief Engineer for Bechtel at 50 Beale Street. He worked at the company until 1990, moving up in the ranks until he was a consultant traveling all over the world. Most notably, he spent time in Saudi Arabia, where Bechtel was building a city.

Traveling for work afforded Joe time for his greatest hobby. He loved geography from a young age, which aligned with his love of travel. He was always looking for the next opportunity to see a new place. By the end of his life, he checked six of the seven continents off his bucket list, only missing Australia. Perhaps his favorite place to visit was Spain, where he enjoyed renting lodging in the wall of the castle where his mother grew up. He kept in contact with cousins in Spain and took many of his children and grandchildren there over the years. He loved going on cruises, and more recently took a ship around the tip of South America to mimic the trip his parents took when they emigrated from Spain.

In his last years, Joe enjoyed living with his great-grandchildren Skylar and James Kattenhorn, who visited him in his room and watched Shirley Temple movies with him. He watched Turner Classic Movies, steamed vegetables from his garden, tended his plants, read James Michener novels, cultivated orchids, and corresponded with family. He notably did not get anxious about anything, letting things come and go. During a bout with bladder cancer in his 80s, he took each



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day one at a time and said there was no need to stress. He was an amiable and loving man. He could often be heard saying, "I love you with all my heart and that's A LOT!" He was also incredibly generous with his time and money. He always lended a helping hand to those who needed it.

Joe is survived by five daughters: Katherine O'Connor of Olympia Washington, Judy Wedekind and husband Gabriel of South San Francisco, Mary Ann Heran and husband David of San Bruno, Cynthia Kattenhorn and husband Darren of San Bruno, and JoAnn MacCallum, of Santa Rosa. He is survived by nine grandchildren: Justin Samuels, Jeanine (Heran) Charley, Joseph Kattenhorn, Rebecca (Heran) Wild, Jacob Kattenhorn, Jeremy Kattenhorn, Michael MacCallum, Jennah Kattenhorn, and Michaela MacCallum. He is also survived by five great-grandchildren: Skylar Kattenhorn, James Kattenhorn, Jaxon Wolf Samuels, Carter Wild, and Henry Charley.



Events

Mr. Joseph E. Torres

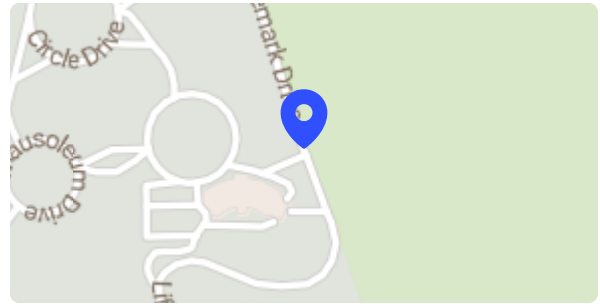
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Visitation

Monday, November 29, 2021

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM PT

Skylawn Funeral Home and Crematory
888 LifeMark Road, Half Moon Bay CA 94019

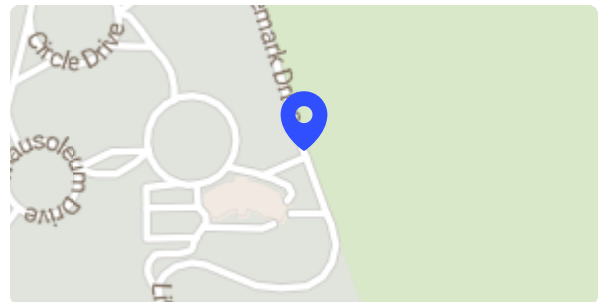


Funeral Service

Tuesday, November 30, 2021

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM PT

Skylawn Funeral Home and Crematory
888 LifeMark Road, Half Moon Bay CA 94019

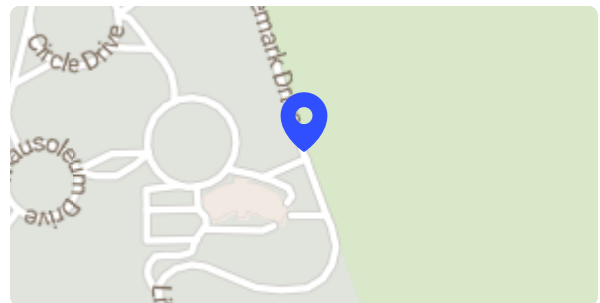


Burial Service

Tuesday, November 30, 2021

12:30 PM PT

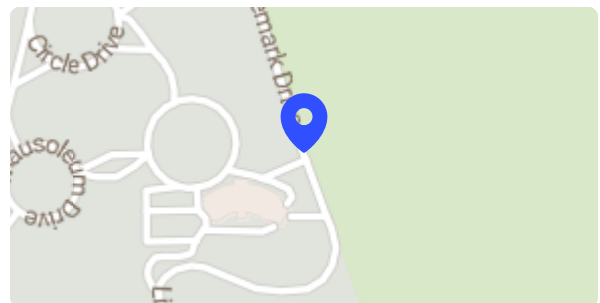
Skylawn Memorial Park
888 LifeMark Road, Half Moon Bay CA 94019



Cemetery Details

Skylawn Memorial Park
888 LifeMark Road, Half Moon Bay CA 94019

(650) 227-3142





Tribute Wall

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Jeanine Charley posted:

One of the most special memories I have of Grandpa as the years passed was that he never forgot my birthday - every year, he always sent a card, and he would sign it from Grandma too and draw her picture. He would draw his picture with his arms outstretched, and would write "I love you this much, and that's A LOT". It was part of his signature that he included on most every card he sent. I'll always remember the camping trips at Memorial Park when myself and my cousins were little. Grandpa always had a steak to cook by the fire - there was never a trip without steak. He always had a memory log book that we could all write in about our camping experience - some of which included going fishing for crawdads, going to the swimming hole (yes, we all called it the "swimming hole"), or sitting by the fire and roasting marshmallows. Grandpa loved his camping trips, and we all did too. The holidays were always special at Grandma and Grandpa's house. Easter was a particular favorite for me - grandma and grandpa had a massive backyard, perfect for hiding eggs for the grandkids. We always secretly hoped to find the brightly colored plastic egg that didn't just have chocolate in it, but also money. What bigger thrill than that? And Grandpa always made sure to be plentiful with those eggs. Christmas was another special one - my grandparents always had a record playing, one of the ones I recall the most is Roy Orbison. There would be piles of gifts under the tree - we could hardly contain our excitement. Those treasured holidays are something I will never forget. I love you, Grandpa. My heart aches but I feel peace knowing that you're with Grandma again and not in any pain. Love, Jeanine

November 30 at 3:47 PM



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Justin Samuel posted:

I'm the first grandchild of Grandpa Joe and while I don't have a ton of memories to share about him as I didn't get much of a chance to have a relationship with him the few memories I do have of him are still pretty clear in my mind. One memory that makes me smile is he used to put gum in his nose and pull it out saying it was a booger! Haha.. as a kid, probably 4 years old, I wondered why his boogers were white! I didn't figure it out until later in life that it must have been gum because nobody has white boogers! Haha! still remember clearly that he promised to give him his Model T and I used to love sitting in it when I would visit him, and then I learned that I wasn't the only one he promised it to! Haha oh well...I remember that he gave me a taste of his beer when I was probably 7 years old... And maybe that's why I didn't start drinking alcohol until after I was 30! Yuck! I remember him letting me drive his old station wagon on his lap. I have pictures of when him and Grandma visited us in Orange county that I would love to post here but I need to go get them from my dad's house. I am happy that my wife and step-daughter were able to meet him back in 2013, but I hoped he would have been able

November 29 at 6:55 PM



Justin Samuel November 29 at 7:02 PM

... I wasn't able to finish what I was saying, has my fat fingers hit the submit button before I finished..As I was saying, I hope he would have been able to meet my son Jaxon. Grandpa Joe never forgot my birthday and always sent a card and a money gift. Oh, another memory that I can't forget is when we went to Disneyland and we went into my favorite shop that used to be there on Main Street...the magic shop.. he told me to pick anything in the store and he would get it for me. I was so excited at the idea of being able to get anything in the store that I had a hard time choosing and ended up not being able to make a selection :- (It was a good life lesson that if you don't make a decision, even if it's not the best decision, you'll end up with nothing and having something is usually better than nothing! I have a recording of me talking to Grandpa on the phone at 4 years old somewhere my dad's house that I would love to find and share with everyone. Anyways, I'm sorry I couldn't be there for the funeral and I'm sorry I didn't have a closer relationship with my grandpa..I'm not a praying person but you are all in my thoughts and I hope you're able to share a lot more memories together of the good times you had with Grandpa Joe.



In My Heart Always, Patsy sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Torres family.



November 27 at 9:29 AM



Tribute Wall

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Love Sean And Kathie sent a Fairest of All to the Torres family.



November 27 at 7:10 AM



Memories only last if you share them

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



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