



Armando Ramirez

January 6, 2017

Known to his friends and grandsons as “Mando” and to his son Victor as “Papi”, Armando was born in Cuba 95 years ago to Elijo and Piedad. He grew up in a sugar cane plantation where his father was a foreman. He was the oldest of 9 children with 8 younger sisters. As a young boy he worked weighing the sugar cane in the ox drawn carts during the yearly harvest. He moved to Havana as a teenager to further his education. There he finished high school and attended the University of Havana. He obtained a law degree and practiced as an attorney in Havana.

He married Rosa de los Reyes in 1948. She was a fabulous wife and mother and the best thing that ever happened to him. They had two children, Hortensia in 1949 and Victor in 1950.

In 1960 he moved to the U.S. to escape the stifling oppression of Fidel Castro’s communism.

The family followed in 1961. They settled in Reno, Nevada where Mando had friends that worked in the casinos. Not able to practice law in this country he worked as a window washer in Harrah’s Casino. Meanwhile, he also studied and earned a degree in accounting.

His search for a better job and career eventually led him to Los Angeles

where in 1966 he became the controller of Bob Waldeck's Overseas Operations, Inc. The company and he relocated to Redondo Beach in 1972. He worked at Overseas for 40 years until his 80's. There he not only enjoyed a satisfying, rewarding career, but developed life-long friendships with what became his extended work family.

Over the years he frequented all the horse racing tracks in Southern California and Tijuana, often with the company of his son Victor. Oddly, their shared love for horse racing and sports betting helped to further the bond between father and son.

If gambling was his salient weakness, he otherwise had many virtues.

He loved Spanish literature and especially poetry, which he often wrote in his younger years.

He despised and eschewed discrimination, and as a young man wrote a poem decrying it.

He was intensely loyal and loving to his family and friends. Not once did he ever fight with or strike his wife or children. He was summoned one day to the grammar school principal's office for the accusation (false) that Victor had stolen change from a payphone. Without asking Victor's side of the story he abruptly stood and said "my son doesn't steal". Father and son stormed out to eventually enroll in another school. Even though he had been a stereotypical Latin man and husband, when Rosa had a disabling stroke at age 56, he became cook, housekeeper and her caretaker for the next 25 years.

He was humble and generous. An uninsured driver caused a crash that severely damaged our car in 1966. Mando's salary was very small at the time, yet he forgave the other driver of the expensive repairs, because he was of

humble means and had several children. He financed Victor's college and medical school and set up investment accounts for the benefit of his grandsons Nic and Casey. When he moved into a dementia care facility a few years ago, his mail was forwarded to Victor's address. There was a flood of mail from charitable organizations to which he had regularly contributed.

Hortensia died at age 20 of complications related to severe cerebral palsy. Rosa died in 1997.

He subsequently re-married to Victoria Dorantes who provided him with the companionship that he direly needed.

Sadly, he developed dementia which depleted what had been an intelligent, beautiful mind.

Despite the ravages on his memory and body by dementia and senescence, he maintained much of his personality to the end. He spent the last few years of his life in a dementia care facility, the last year and a half at Nazareth Rose Garden in Napa where the staff took stellar, loving care of him.

He is survived by his son Victor and daughter in law Kelley, his second wife Victoria, who now lives in Mexico, grandson Nicolas his wife Flynn and children Isla and Embry, grandson Casey and four of his eight sisters who live in Cuba, Lile, Juanita, Marina and Myrna and several nieces and nephews and their families. Deceased sisters are Hortensia, Yolanda, Aida and Elsa.

Cremation is planned.

Memorial Mass January Jan 28, 10:30 p.m., St Apollinaris Catholic Church, 3700 Lassen St., Napa, CA 94558.

Prayers requested in lieu of flowers. Donations are not requested, but consider that your own charitable donations include Alzheimer's Association and/or Catholic Relief Services.

Tribute Wall



“ Armando Ramirez

September 29, 2022 at 04:54 PM



“ Armando Ramirez

September 29, 2022 at 02:55 PM