



## John Craig Nunez

April 15, 1946 - May 14, 2018

JOHN CRAIG NUNEZ

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When John Nunez came into a room, you knew it! Just to stir things up, he'd crack a funny (and possibly unrepeatable) joke. That fearless sense of humor helped him through his heroic fight with cancer that ended on May 14, 2018.

John was born in 1946, not so much with a silver spoon in his mouth as a butterscotch square from See's Candies. For this he could thank his beloved mother, Margaret See. (His great-grandmother is the candy company's logo.) She married physician Gilbert Nunez, and John grew up in Los Angeles.

From ninth grade he boarded at the Webb School in Claremont, where he won the Hard-Nose Award in football and made friends who became his lifelong family. This was especially important after his mother died when John was fifteen.

For summers and vacations, he lived with his Uncle Harry and Aunt Betty See. John attended USC, where he majored in English, joined Beta Theta Pi fraternity, and roared around on a black Triumph motorcycle--definitely a ladies' man. John remained loyal to USC football always!

In 1971 he married Jane Welch; they moved to Santa Barbara, the home of his aunts and cousins. John proudly served in the National Guard and trained as a medic. With his sharp intellect, he also enjoyed delving deeply into all kinds of subjects, from Early Man to fine wristwatches, barbecuing to the Spanish Reconquista.

On a trip to Seattle he reunited with an old teenage crush, Karen Bloomquist, who was, like John by then, newly divorced. Moving north to Seattle, John also acquired two loving stepdaughters, Danica and Marta. He acquired a new passion as well--scuba diving. After eighteen years, he and Karen parted.

On dive trips to Anacortes, Washington, John met the beautiful Bela (as he called her) a Dutch-American blonde who owned an inn popular with divers. He pursued her, and after several years together, Bela agreed to be his wife. Expanding his horizons, she traveled with him to Spain--a country John loved, being a distant relative of Spanish explorer Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca.

John also loved cats, starting with the comical Oat Willie and ending with the handsome Maine Coon cat, Ramon. Bela's Australian Shepherd, Mocha, was his favorite (well only) dog.

When John was diagnosed with stage four lung cancer, he was given a short time to live. He beat that prognosis by nearly three years. John's strength and determination were deeply admirable. His openness and humor about his health ups and downs did away with the awkwardness that often accompanies serious illness.

Bela took care of John with love, courage, and a down-to-earth Dutch attitude. Toward the end, Karen came to Anacortes and joined Bela in caring for John at home. The two became close friends. They created a loving, cozy nest for him, and he often said how grateful he was for their affection, comfort, and company. John's good friends also came to visit, and he had the chance to say the goodbyes he wanted.

When John made his final goodbye, his leave-taking was the best possible. He was in no pain, and Bela, Karen, and Danica were at his side.

John Craig Nunez is survived by his wife , Bela Berghuys and her sons Jarad and Skyler; Karen Bloomquist and her daughters Danica and Marta; Jane Nunez; and many See and Nunez family members.

In lieu of flowers, John's family gratefully suggests donations to the Reef Foundation at [www.REEF.org](http://www.REEF.org) . Due to his love of the sea and the hundreds of hours he spend scuba diving.

# Cemetery

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**Calvary Cemetery**  
199 North Hope Ave  
Santa Barbara, CA, 93110

# Events

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**MAY 21 Graveside Service 11:00AM**

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Calvary Cemetery  
199 North Hope Ave, Santa Barbara, CA, US, 93110

# Comments

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“ John was one of my dearest friends for 43 wonderful years. I miss him so much. He was hilarious, outrageous, brilliant, sometimes stubborn, but always loyal and loving.

He made a family of his wife, Bela, his ex, Karen, his step- children, and his closest friends.

John fought a valiant fight for three years. He never wavered in his battle. His spirit was strong, and it kept us all afloat during the tougher times.

it was an honor to be his friend.

Love to this family,  
Merry Dunn

**Merry Dunn** - May 20, 2018 at 05:50 PM