



## Frank Esparza, Jr.

December 21, 2013 - December 21, 2013

Esparza, Frank Jr.

Passed away peacefully in his home in Carpinteria, surrounded by his loving family on Saturday, December 21, 2013. Frank was 91 yrs old.

Frank is survived by his love of his life and wife of 70 yrs., Irma, daughter Delores Valencia and husband Ernie Valencia, grand daughter Anna, son James Esparza Sr. and wife Marivel Esparza, grandson James Jr., and grand daughter Kira, brother Felix, sisters Enedina and Jessie, and step brother Henry, step sisters Felicitas and Ramona, and many special nephews, nieces, cousins, and extended family. Deceased are siblings Manuel, Lupe, Mike, John, Tony.

Frank was born in East Los Angeles on Oct. 4, 1922, son of a hard working railroad worker. Frank spent most of his early years in Corona Calif. He attended Corona high, where he was an athlete of natural ability, and earned 7 letters in track, baseball, and football. He was team captain of track in senior year, and would later letter in 4 varsity letters in college. Frank was also an avid boxer and "golden gloves" competitor.

Frank graduated H.S. in June 1942, and the next day enlisted in the U.S. Navy serving from 1942 to June of 1946. Frank became a skilled aircraft machinist and mechanic. He was assigned to the USS Lexington and repaired

a variety of aircraft. Frank was also a gunner and assigned shore patrol. He boxed for the Navy Kaneoe NAS team, and played fullback with the Kaneoe Klippers. Frank met Irma Rawlins at a USO dance in Oakland, where they fell in love. They married in January 23, 1944.

After the war, Frank attended college on his GI bill, completing his undergraduate work at Riverside College and at Los Angeles State. He did his graduate work in Counseling and Guidance at Fresno State. Throughout his career in education, he wore many hats. He taught math, P.E., coached football and track, and counseled young men while in Bakersfield Ca. Frank was hired by S.B.C.C. In 1969, to fulfill a needed role in counseling for the Hispanic community. He worked to help create the many study programs still offered to assist underrepresented Hispanic youth. Frank's dedication to Counseling and educating youth spanned over 30 years.

Frank was one of the original founders of Casa de la Raza, member of Union Civica, Sister Cities Foundation, and had many more civic achievements, including being a member of the local American legion and uptown Lions Club.

Athlete to the core, he officiated countless track and field events at the schools and colleges, officiated at the 1984 Olympic trials, and marched in the Rose Parade where he hand carried the USA Olympic float.

Frank will be best remembered by his friends and family for his dedication to his immediate extended family, youth, and athletics activities. Many wonderful memories were made by participating for 30 yrs. in the children's Fiesta parades with family and friends. A true Navy Airman, now flying high in heaven with his new wings. Wherever Frank was, there was never a stranger- he had the wonderful trait of striking a conversation with everyone he met. God bless you Frank, for the many, many lives that you touched, enhanced, and improved by your love and guidance.

Visitation will be held at Welch-Ryce-Haider chapel on 15 East Sola, from 3:00 pm to 7:00pm. on Monday December 30th. Mass we be held on Tuesday December 31, at 10:00am, at Holy Cross Church ( 1740 Cliff Dr.) with burial to follow at Santa Barbara City Cemetery, and return for a reception in his honor at Holy Cross Church Hall.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC **30**. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PT)

Welch-Ryce-Haider - Downtown  
15 E. Sola St.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 965-5145  
info@wrhsb.com  
<https://www.wrhsb.com>

## Funeral Mass

DEC **31**. 10:00 AM (PT)

Holy Cross Catholic Church  
1740 Cliff Drive  
Santa Barbara, CA 93109  
(805) 962-0411

# Tribute Wall

JG

“ *Many great memories of visits with Uncle Frank. His sports stories, passion for life, and love of family are things that I cherish most. Much love to all my California family as you go through this time together.*

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**Joyce Gorham** - December 30, 2013 at 12:10 PM

KS

“ *Irma, Delores and Jim. So sorry to hear about Frank's passing. He was a great man who accomplished so much good. I lived two houses down from you on T Street (212) and have some black and white photos of you that you might like to have. I am on facebook (Kathy Pierce Simonson) or you can reach me at 661-631-9020. If you'll send me a mailing address, I'll send them to you. Again.....my condolences to you in this sad time. Kathy Simonson - Bakersfield CA*

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**Kathy Simonson** - December 28, 2013 at 10:50 AM