



# William Jesus Flores

FEB 10, 1921 - MAR 17, 2015



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## **William Jesus Flores**

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**W**illiam J. Flores was born on February 10, 1948 in Old Town San Diego, the first established town in southern California. His parents were Vicente Flores (age 47 from Coahuila, Mexico) and Maria Montelongo (age 27 from Zacatecas, Mexico) whose children also included Vincent, Francisca, Jennie, Antonia, and Rufina. Vincent died of tuberculosis at age 19. Francisca also contracted tuberculosis and was in a nursing sanitarium from age 15-26). The youngest in the family, William (Bill) was called 'Babe' by his sisters, a nickname which stuck when he played baseball in later years. He attended the first public school in San Diego, a segregated school for Mexican children at a time when speaking Spanish was often punished in school. During World War II, he dropped out of school and joined the army at 17 years of age. He fought in World War II in the U.S. Army Air Corps and was stationed in the Philippines as an aircraft mechanic. After the war, he married Velia Aldrete on April 19, 1947 and began working for the Navy as an assembler. Velia was born in San Diego to Rafael Aldrete (from Guadalajara, Mexico) and Concepcion Valenzuela (from Magdalena, Mexico). Their first son, Bill, was born in 1948, Gary was born in 1951, and Glenn was born in 1953. By the time his first son, Bill (now Dr. Flores), was in the third grade, his father started night school to complete high school and to study drafting. He graduated from high school a few years later and got a job for the U.S. Department of Defense Bureau of Naval Weapons stationed at North Island Naval Air base. Promoted several times, at the time of his retirement Mr. Flores was responsible for all helicopters in the 7th Fleet. Mr. Flores had privileges as a naval officer at the Commander rank and was injured in Viet Nam at Da Nang during the Tet Offensive. Despite his work schedule which required that he travel often, William found time to coach his sons' Little League teams and – by his example of going back to school to earn a degree – taught his sons the importance of education. While Dr. Flores was in the sixth grade he would join his father and watch high school



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classes on TV through the local community channel while his father worked on his home work, eventually earning his diploma. According to Dr. Flores, his father's perseverance in earning an education revealed his dedication to his family and his efforts to improve the lives of his three sons, Dr. William Flores, Gary, and Glenn. Velia Flores passed away on April 20, 2005, one day after her 58th wedding anniversary. William is survived by his three children, numerous grand-children, and many loving relatives. William J. Flores was cherished by his family and will be greatly missed. A memorial service will be held at 9:30 a.m. In the Salli Lynn Chapel on the morning of April 27th at Greenwood Mortuary in San Diego with military burial services at 11:00 a.m. Family and friends are encouraged to share stories of their experiences and fond memories with William J. Flores at the services. The family is establishing a scholarship fund to honor his memory. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the University of Houston-Downtown Foundation, where an account will be established in his name. For more details contact the Office of the President at (713) 221-8001 or [president@uhd.edu](mailto:president@uhd.edu).



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