



Velimir Jovanovic

NOV 9, 1941 - OCT 22, 2023



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Velimir Jovanovic

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In a time of change, seeming chaos and turbulence, Velimir “Velja” Jovanovic was an honorable man, steadfast in his beliefs and commitment to his family, friends, church, and the Serbian people. Velimir was born in 1941 in the Vracar district of Belgrade, Serbia, while the country was under German occupation during WWII. His father, General Zivota Jovanovic, had been taken as a prisoner of war by the Germans in the early days of WWII before Velimir was born, and was held in a prisoner of war camp in Osnabruck until the end of the war. As a principled Christian and royalist, Zivota was not able to return to a post-war Yugoslavia ruled by Tito’s brutal communist regime, which he would not support. At the same time, the communist regime would not allow Velimir’s mother (Jelena), his older brother (Branimir), and Velimir to leave Yugoslavia, even to visit Zivota. The family decided to emigrate to America in order to be reunited, but that was not an easy task given the political situation. It would take until 1957 for the family to obtain the necessary paperwork to allow them to leave Yugoslavia, and settle in Chicago, Illinois, where Velimir met his father for the first time. Velimir was an exceptional student, and graduated high school in Chicago a year early at age 17, despite recently having learned English.

After high school, he enrolled at the University of Illinois where he graduated at the top of his class in both his undergraduate and graduate studies in mechanical engineering. His main body of work, which focused on the field of thermodynamics, translated well to the time and period as America was growing to become a space, aeronautical, and nuclear power. After an internship working for NASA in Huntsville, Alabama, Velimir moved to San Diego in 1965 for a job at General Dynamics. An “engineer’s engineer,” he worked for several of the largest aerospace, nuclear, and high tech companies in Southern California where he designed, built, and patented the thermodynamic components of a number of rockets, satellites, nuclear reactors and heat transfer products.



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Velimir inherited his father's principled stance in both his personal and professional life. He truly believed that science should be used for the betterment of mankind, not for destructive purposes. Throughout his career, Velimir refused to work on projects that had military applications, sometimes to the detriment of his career. His principles were unshakeable outside of work as well. The Orthodox Church was central to his beliefs. At a time when the trend among many young men looking to advance their position in the workplace and society was to join organizations such as the freemasons, Velimir flatly refused to do so, recognizing that such associations were incompatible with his religion, and completely unnecessary to those with true faith.

Velimir's favorite pastime was chess, which he was taught to play at a young age in Belgrade by his uncle. Growing up, he and his brother would spend their free time battling it out on the chessboard, rather than on the soccer field. Upon moving to California, Velimir was active in chess clubs in Santa Monica and Long Beach, where he won many tournaments in the '60s and '70s.

After he returned to San Diego from the Los Angeles area in 1974, he and his future wife Mira, started dating and were married in 1975. Within a period of three short years, the couple was blessed with the birth of three sons, Mark, Toma, and Peter. Four years later in 1983, they were overjoyed with the birth of their fourth child, a daughter, Jelena.

During the past 48 years, Velimir and his family could be found at St. George Serbian Orthodox Church every Sunday, and multiple times a week, participating in cultural activities like kolo dancing, sunday school, parish weddings, christenings and many other religious services. Velimir was the Vice President of the church board for many years, as well as President of the choir. He was always seen as a man of few words, but quiet confidence. When he spoke, it was with a sense of Christian wisdom, based on honor that was always at the core of his thoughts. The church was central to the Jovanovic family's way of life, as it combined Orthodox Christian beliefs with Serbian traditions, and poured into a parish where the community was built on the same strong cultural and religious bonds. These bonds were passed on to each of the children and their next of kin. The family also enjoyed frequenting national parks and traveling all over America, but San Diego was always home for Velimir and Mira.

As the years passed, Velimir and Mira would spend time visiting family and friends, traveling all over America and Europe but mainly to Serbia and Montenegro. Whenever they would travel, they would always find a Serbian Orthodox church to attend, and visit places of meaning to



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Serbian people. One of their most meaningful annual trips was to Kosovo, where the couple would bring clothes, rations, and financial aid to the suffering Serbian people, clergy, and churches there.

On Sunday October 22nd, 2023, after singing in the choir at St. George Serbian Orthodox Church, Velimir came home, had a light lunch, and sat down in his favorite chair in the home in which he and Mira had raised their four children and built a wonderful life, and passed away to the Lord.

Velimir is survived by his wife Mira, their four children (Mark, Toma, Peter and Jelena), three daughters in law (Dijana, Vesna and Olivera) and seven grandsons (Filip, Luka, Stefan, Milan, Toma, Danilo, and Marko).

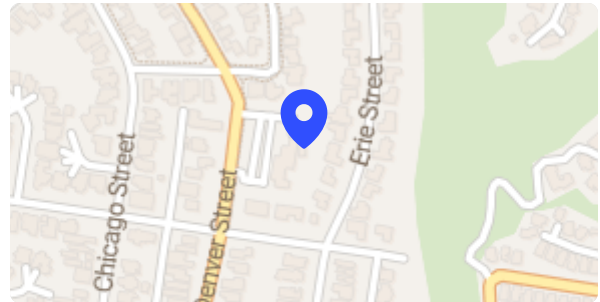


Events

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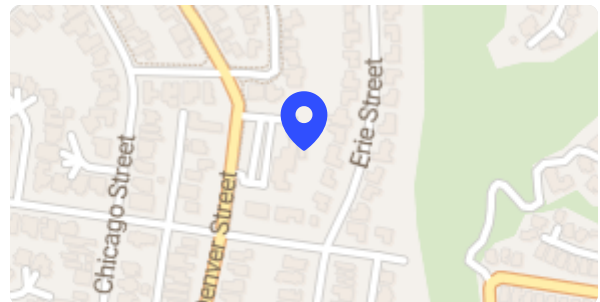
Visitation

- Friday**, November 10, 2023
- 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM PT
- St. George Serbian Orthodox Church**
3025 Denver Street, San Diego CA 92117



FUNERAL SERVICE

- Saturday**, November 11, 2023
- 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM PT
- St. George Serbian Orthodox Church**
3025 Denver Street, San Diego CA 92117





Tribute Wall

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The Sims Family planted a grove of 3 Memorial Trees in honor of Velimir.

November 10 at 8:47 AM



Anonymous sent an Ocean Breeze Spray to the Jovanovic family.

November 8 at 2:02 PM



Scott, Nora, Ana, Davide, Cammi, Sarah, Andrew planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Velimir.

November 8 at 2:02 PM



Anonymous sent a Gracious Lavender Basket to the Jovanovic family.

November 7 at 3:25 AM



Gary, Greg, Mark, Rhonda, Chris, Sherry planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Velimir.

November 7 at 3:25 AM



Anonymous sent a Full Of Love Bouquet to the Jovanovic family.

November 6 at 6:39 AM





Tribute Wall

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Bijelonic Family sent a Lavender Reflections Spray to the Jovanovic family.

November 5 at 3:49 PM



Bijelonic Family planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Velimir.

November 5 at 3:49 PM





Memories only last if you share them

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



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