



John Degrica Baca

SEP 23, 1950 - NOV 27, 2025



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John D. Baca, 75, passed away peacefully on November 27, 2025, surrounded by the family he loved with his whole heart, in San Diego, California.

Born on September 23, 1950, in Trinidad, Colorado, John grew up with the kind of family values that shaped him into the devoted husband, father, and grandfather he would proudly become. In 1973, he enlisted in the United States Navy, serving during the Vietnam War and earning the National Defense Service Medal. A natural problem-solver and jack-of-all-trades, he worked in radar and radio operations. There wasn't a problem he wasn't willing to tackle. He went on to work at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot after his service. He eventually planted roots in San Diego, first working for Mission Tortilla. He then went on to build a long, respected career with Frito-Lay, rising through the ranks and earning numerous awards, including the President's Ring of Honor.

San Diego also brought him the greatest blessing of his life: Carmen. From the moment they met, they were rarely apart. He adored her with a loyalty and tenderness that set the standard for their children: together, inseparable and the epitome of love, devotion, and hard work. They raised four children—Veronica, Vanessa (who he may or may not have reminded was the “favorite”), John, and Krista. Providing for his family wasn't just a responsibility; it was his joy. He worked tirelessly to make sure his children felt safe, supported, and loved every single day. He instilled a strong sense of faith and community in his kids by attending Mass weekly and volunteering at their school—so often, in fact, that he earned formal recognition for his commitment. Through his actions, he showed his children what it meant to show up for others.

John cherished the simple moments. He loved to sing loudly in the car, explore new places and to take road trips that always seemed to include a not-so-short "short cut". This was usually followed by finding the "closest parking spot" that involved what seemed like a 2-block walk/run to keep up with him.



Obituary

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Becoming a grandfather was one of the greatest joys of his life. Whether he was crawling on the floor, handing out far too many treats, or proudly sharing their accomplishments with anyone within earshot. He loved his grandchildren with an open and overflowing heart. He believed each one was unstoppable and destined for something remarkable.

John gave deeply and freely. He was a steady mentor to nieces, nephews, and young family members, always offering encouragement, counsel, and reminders of self-worth. His home was a safe landing place for extended family, and his spirit was one of fairness, kindness, and fierce protection—especially toward those who were differently abled.

John was a prankster, a storyteller, and hilariously bad photographer —blurry, off-center, and somehow always capturing everyone in an awkward facial expression. Those imperfect pictures have become perfect memories, each one a reminder of his humor and the joy he sprinkled through everyday life.

John was preceded in death by his parents, Rose Barela (Trujillo) and Paul Barela, and his siblings Roy Paul, Joseph, and Veronica. His family takes comfort imagining his joyful reunion with his beloved sister Veronica.

He is survived by his wife and lifelong soulmate, Carmen Baca of San Diego; his children: Veronica (Tom) of Pittsburgh, PA; Vanessa of San Diego, CA; John (Amanda) of Stanwood, WA; and Krista (Rey) of San Diego, CA; his five grandchildren—Bella, Enzo, and Max Walsh of Pittsburgh, PA, and Grayson and Roman Baca of Stanwood, WA; his brother Raymond (Margie) Gurule of Colorado; his sisters Katherine McConnell, Pauline Duran, and Gloria Barela of Colorado; and a large, loving extended family of nieces, nephews, grandnieces, grandnephews, and cousins.

John will be deeply missed, lovingly remembered, and forever treasured by all who had the privilege of being loved by him.

If desired, donations to Sports for Exceptional athletes in John's name would be appreciated by him:




<https://S4ea.org>

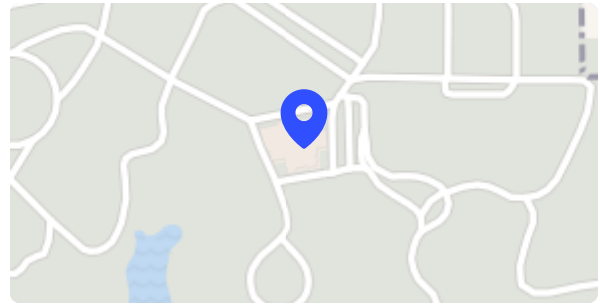


Events




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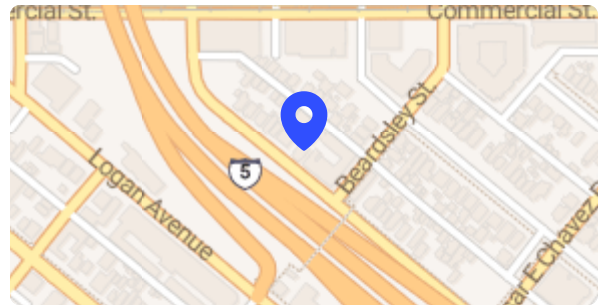
Public Viewing

-  **Sunday**, December 14, 2025
-  4:00 PM - 8:00 PM PT
-  **Garden Chapel at Greenwood**
4300 Imperial Ave., San Diego CA 92113






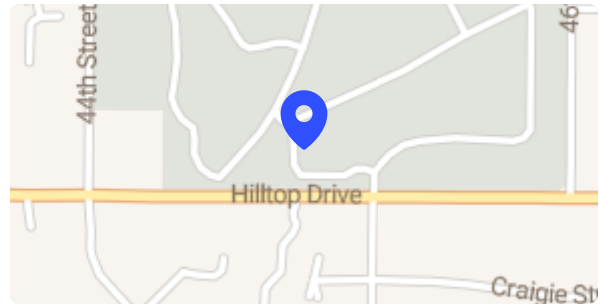
Church Service

-  **Monday**, December 15, 2025
-  12:30 PM - 1:30 PM PT
-  **Our Lady of Guadalupe - San Diego**
1770 Kearney Avenue, San Diego CA 92113



Burial

-  **Monday**, December 15, 2025
-  2:00 PM PT
-  **Holy Cross Cemetery**
4470 Hilltop Drive, San Diego CA 92139





Tribute Wall

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Anonymous sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Baca family.



December 14 at 6:18 PM



Danny M. planted a Memorial Tree in honor of John.



December 14 at 6:18 PM



Natasha McConnell posted:

Although I didn't get to talk with Uncle John as much as I got older, I will forever be grateful for the profound impact he had on my life. His presence, his guidance, and his quiet lessons shaped me more than he may have ever realized. When I was younger, and he would visit being pulled aside for one of his "small talks" or a quick chat on the phone, sometimes felt like a scolding, but those moments became some of the most important lessons of my life. He taught me to always do my best, to help my mom and my grandma, and to take responsibility for myself. He showed me that I had to show up for my own life—that no one else was coming to do it for me. Those lessons stayed with me long after the talks ended. Uncle John gave me experiences I never thought I would have. He gave me a summer filled with laughter and memories, but also perspective—reminding me that no matter how hard I thought things were growing up, life could always be harder. That trip to Tijuana was eye-opening, and it taught me gratitude in a way I didn't understand at the time. I will always be thankful and blessed that he gave us a safe home and the chance to grow up comfortably in a good neighborhood. His support gave me stability, and without him, I truly don't believe I would have made it through nursing school—especially as a young mom. His help carried me through one of the most challenging seasons of my life. As I've grown older, I've come to fully understand the depth of his influence. Those small talks turned into lifelong values: to work hard, to put effort into everything I do, to take care of what I've earned, to give when I'm able, and to genuinely care for others. These are the same values I now try to instill in my own children. If it weren't for Uncle John, I'm not sure where I would be today. I am endlessly thankful for his love, his sacrifices, and the role he played in shaping the person I became. I will always carry his lessons with me, and I will always be grateful to have been loved and guided by an uncle like him. To my Aunt and cousins, my heart is with you during this unimaginable loss. I hope you find comfort in knowing how deeply Uncle John was loved and how many lives he touched. May his memory continue to live on through the values he instilled, and the love he gave.

December 5 at 8:53 PM



Tribute Wall

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Rigo M. planted a Memorial Tree in honor of John.

December 13 at 6:51 PM



Lupe M. planted a Memorial Tree in honor of John.

December 13 at 6:46 PM



Anonymous sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the Baca family.

December 12 at 9:44 PM



Virginia Q. planted a Memorial Tree in honor of John.

December 12 at 6:16 PM



Alberto M. planted a Memorial Tree in honor of John.

December 12 at 1:56 PM



Al And Carol Aburto sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the Baca family.

December 12 at 10:59 AM





Tribute Wall

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Al And Carol Aburto planted a Memorial Tree in honor of John.



December 12 at 10:59 AM



Anonymous sent a Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet to the Baca family.



December 8 at 4:20 PM



Tony, Blair, Sienna And Wyatt sent a Sacred Duty Spray to the Baca family.



December 5 at 8:53 PM



Memories only last if you share them

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



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