



Rudolph Iglesias

APR 10, 1924 - DEC 25, 2017



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Rudolph (Rudy) Iglesias (age 93), of San Diego, California passed away in his home on Tuesday, December 25, 2017 from natural causes.

Rudy, the youngest of 4 children was born in his home on April 10, 1924 in Mountain Home, Idaho to Spanish Basque parents, Rufina Nachiondo from Ispaster, Spain and Saturnino Iglesias, a shepherd from Ea, Spain.

Rudy spent his entire boyhood growing up in the tight knit Basque community in Mountain Home. As a youth he worked as a janitor in the Bengochea hotel, and in the summers worked with his father herding sheep or on ranches harvesting hay.

From an early age Rudy developed a fascination with airplanes from watching cropdusters and would spend time building homemade toy gliders and airplanes. Though Rudy did not speak any English when he entered school at the age of 6, he excelled at school and was the valedictorian of the Mountain Home High School class of 1942.

Lacking the money to attend college upon graduation from high school, Rudy took a job with U.S. Bureau of Reclamation as a surveyor.

Rudy enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in December, 1942 and was shipped to boot camp in San Diego. On his first liberty after boot camp he rode the street car to La Jolla and swam in the ocean for the first time of his life at La Jolla Cove beginning his life long love of the ocean.

Upon completing training, Rudy was shipped overseas to Melbourne, Australia where he was assigned to G company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Regiment of the 1st Marine Division as an infantryman. Rudy served in combat with the 1st Marine Division during the battles of New Britain, Peleliu and Okinawa. He was decorated with the silver star medal for his actions during the battle of Okinawa on May 11, 1945 when he led his platoon in an assault after his platoon leader and platoon sergeant had been wounded.



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Following the end of World War 2, Rudy attended the University of Idaho on the GI bill and studied engineering. While in college, Rudy worked during his summer breaks as a laborer on the Anderson Ranch dam near Mountain Home.

Proud of his Basque heritage, Rudy volunteered his time in 1949 to help in the construction of the Basque Center in Boise, Idaho. He was one of the charter members of Eskaldunak, Boise.

Shortly after Rudy graduated from the University of Idaho in 1950, the Korean War broke out and he was recalled to active duty with the U.S. Marine Corps. He served as a drill instructor at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego until October, 1951 when he was released from active duty.

Just after leaving the Marine Corps, Rudy was hired by the Convair Aircraft Corporation as a metallurgical engineer. He returned to Boise for the holidays prior to starting his new job in San Diego and met the love of his life Shirley Thomas. On their first date,

Rudy took Shirley to the Shepherder's Ball at the Basque Center in Boise. They discovered that they both would be moving to the San Diego area where Shirley had just been hired as a school teacher. Rudy and Shirley were married on June 7, 1952 in San Diego.

As newlyweds they enjoyed living near the ocean in the Mission Beach, Ocean Beach and Pacific Beach communities of San Diego where Rudy would spend some of his free time swimming and bodysurfing.

While working as a Metallurgical Engineer at General Dynamics-Convair's x-ray lab Rudy did work in the F-106 fighter, 880 jetliner and Atlas missile programs.

In 1963, Rudy was hired by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as Quality Assurance Engineer as was assigned to the Centaur missile production at the General Dynamics Kearny Mesa plant in San Diego. In his capacity with NASA, Rudy was involved with the launches of satellites on missions to Mars, Jupiter and other planets as well as communications satellites. Rudy retired from NASA in 1991.

Rudy loved the outdoors and lived an active lifestyle. He enjoyed volunteering his time to take his son's YMCA Indian Guides and daughter's Scout Explorer groups on hiking and camping trips. Rudy was a member of the San Diego Track club and a



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very competitive runner, frequently finishing in the top of his age group in races during his 40's 50's and 60's.

Rudy was a long time member of the La Jolla Cove Swim Club. In retirement he spent his mornings at La Jolla Cove taking his daily swim to the quarter mile buoy then hanging out and chatting with his fellow swim club members. He regularly participated in club events such as the La Jolla Roughwater swim and New Year's Day Polar bear swim. Rudy made his last New Year's day swim with the La Jolla Swim Club at the age of 91.

Rudy also participated with members of his former World War 2 Marine Corps company in the writing of a published book "Hold Your Head High Marine" chronicling their wartime experiences.

Rudy provided loving care at home to his wife Shirley during her struggle with pancreatic cancer prior to her death in 2013. More than anything Rudy enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren, being called "Aititia" the Basque word for grandfather, and regularly attending their sports events. It was not uncommon to see Rudy, while in his late 80's in his backyard throwing a football or playing badminton with his grandchildr

Rudy is survived by his son Michael Iglesias of San Diego, daughter Kristi Iglesias Schneider of Temecula, grandchildren, Rodolfo Iglesias, Daniel Iglesias, Michael Iglesias Jr., Joseph Iglesias, Timothy Schneider, Gabriel Schneider and great-grandchildren, Jaylin Iglesias and Sienna Iglesias.

His cheerfulness, unselfishness, modest self-deprecating sense of humor and his unconditional love and friendship he gave to others will be missed.

A Memorial Service will be held on February 16, 2018 at 11 AM at Clairemont Mortuary located at 4266 Mt. Abernathy Avenue San Diego, California. Burial Services will follow immediately afterwards at the Miramar National Cemetery located at 5795 Nobel Drive in San Diego. There will be a reception following the services at the Torrey Pines Hilton Hotel located at 10950 Torrey Pines Road in La Jolla California.

Donations in his name can be made to the Basque Museum and Cultural Center, 611



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Grove Street Boise, Idaho, Wounded Warrior Foundation or the 1st Marine Division Association.



Tribute Wall

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Carolina Iglesias posted:

Lit a candle in memory of Rudolph Iglesias

February 12 at 9:29 AM



Memories only last if you share them

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



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