



Justo Rivera

May 26, 1948 - June 9, 2025

Justo Rivera, a beloved father, grandfather, brother, and friend, passed away peacefully on June 9, 2025, at the age of 77. Born on May 26, 1948, in Chicago, Illinois, Justo led a life enriched by adventure, service, and the great outdoors.

After a brief stint working at Owen Illinois Glass Company, Justo answered the call to serve his country, by enlisting in the US Navy. His service took him to remarkable places, including Hawaii, where he fell in love with nature, always recounting fond memories of Waikiki Beach and his experiences aboard a nuclear submarine.

With a heart full of stories and a spirit bound to the open air, Justo's post-military years were spent embracing every opportunity to experience the world outside. He was an avid gardener, a devoted camper who found peace in the desert's solitude, and a passionate marathon runner.

Justo lived over four decades in sunny California before moving to Georgia. There, amidst the warmth he so cherished, he transitioned from being a Dodgers fan to proudly supporting the Atlanta Braves while enjoying walks with his devoted dog, Leo. His love for sports extended to all corners of the TV screen, whether it was baseball, football, WNBA, horse racing, or NASCAR.

Justo is preceded in death by his parents, Joe and Lucille Rivera, and his brothers, Victor and Steve Rivera. His legacy of love and laughter continues through his beloved daughter, Melissa Phillips, and his treasured granddaughters, Kaitlyn Murdock and Ava Grace Phillips. He is also survived by his brothers, Joe "Junior" Rivera, Dean (Patricia) Rivera, Henry (Kathy) Rivera, and David Rivera; several nieces and nephews, along with his faithful canine companion, Leo.

His journey through life was one marked by devotion to family, country, and the beauty of the world around him. Justo's memory will forever inspire those who knew him to embrace life's adventures and cherish the simple joys of nature.

An inurnment will be held at Georgia National Cemetery with military honors on Friday, June 13, 2025 at 9:30 am.

The family will hold a Celebration of Life on Saturday, June 14, 2025 from 1 o'clock until 3 o'clock at 310 Lexington Village, Peachtree City, GA 30269. If you plan on attending, please park at OneLife Fitness Center or behind Rock Salt Milk Bar.

The family will also hold a Celebration of Life in California on Wednesday, July 2, 2025 at 1 o'clock at Rancho Vista Golf Club, 3905 Club Rancho Dr., Palmdale, CA 93551.

Previous Events

Inurnment

JUN 13. 9:30 AM (ET)

Georgia National Cemetery
2025 Mount Carmel Church Lane
Canton, GA 30114

A Celebration Of Life

JUN 14. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Melissa Phillips
310 Lexington Village
Peachtree City, GA 30269

Celebration Service

JUL 2. 1:00 PM (PT)

Rancho Vista Golf Club
3905 Club Rancho Dr.
Palmdale, CA 93551

Tribute Wall

MR

“ *Justo graciously allowed me and my daughter Heather to stay with him and Nani while we got our bearings after moving from the Cook Islands in 1996. I believe he is at peace now in eternity with Jesus*

marsha rivera - October 19, 2025 at 12:37 PM

“ It’s with a heavy heart that I write my thoughts of my brother Justo, we learned to pronounce it “oostoe”. From Mom Lucille and Dad Joe Rivera. I always got along well with Justo as with most my brothers but Justo always watched out for all his brothers and was quick to point you in the right direction if he could.

I remember growing up in New Orleans and visiting his place of work at the bottle making factory where they made Tabasco sauce bottles as well as many other well known brands bottles.

I don’t know all the details of his marriage but just that he was deeply hurt when separated and at the same time overjoyed to have his daughter Melissa. I remember when we saw him, he would always talk about Melissa and we could see he was a very proud dad.

My other thoughts of Justo that come to mind is when he joined the service. Assigned to a nuclear powered submarine while in the Navy. It was one of the few in service at the time, well that’s what we heard as we didn’t hear from Justo since his duty was top secret. Mom would get a letter every couple of months from his commanding officer saying he was doing well. All we knew was he was stationed in Hawaii.

After the service we. Saw more of Justo and eventually most of the family migrated to California since dad left Boeing after many years of moving the family about every two to three years from state to state and he took a stable job with Lockheed, which he would have for over ten years eventually working for other aerospace companies in the Southern California area as well .

At some point Justo got into X-rays repair with his brother Jose whom we all called Junior. He then later started his own x-ray repair business repairing hospital x-ray machines when they broke down.

Justo lived in Palmdale, California and took care of Mom for her

remaining life after Dad passed, she lived to be 94. All the brothers were grateful he did this on his own, not ever asking for help or money. That was the kinda person Justo was. He just got things done when it needed to get done and didn't "beat around the bush".

Golf was a game Justo liked. One day when visiting Justo some of the brothers planned to play 9 holes at the course nearby his house in Palmdale, the same golf course where his "celebration of life" as some call it will take place in July. I believe it will be more of a remembrance of his life by his friends and family. Ok, I never played golf much before and apparently neither had Justo, Steve was very good at golf and played a lot. David played some but was like me just played occasionally. Justo surprised me when just hit the ball straight as an arrow flies. He was a natural, Steve told me he noticed this too. I asked Justo how he learned how to hit the ball so straight. He said something to this effect...he figured it was better to hit it straight than to have to spend time finding the golf ball in the bushes or trees all the time. Sounded good to me, if only it was that easy.

I think we all wish we could spend more time with all our brothers but realize that in the end, we can just be grateful for the time and memories we have of them.

Thankfully some of us have kids and family to help us in time of need. I will always remember Justo and all my brothers that have passed in the last several years because we are brothers for life. David, Henry, Junior cherish the time we have left.

I trust that Justo is now in a peaceful place with His Mom and Dad, brothers James, Steve, and Victor and others he loved.

Dean

Dean - June 27, 2025 at 01:50 PM

RB

“ *What can I say, being a part of the Rivera family since December 1969 it is hard for me to think of any of us as anything but young and carefree. It is also hard for me t think of three of the brothers now having passed on including the best friend that I ever had, Justo little brother Steve ("Rivets"). Justo always had such a sweet, gentle and quiet way about him. I remember playing group board games with him and he was the only one that never got flustered nor too competitive , he was always a gentleman, a gentle man! Rest in peace until we meet again. Rey*

Rey Bustos - June 23, 2025 at 08:39 PM



“ *Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses was purchased for the family of Justo Rivera.*



June 12, 2025 at 04:32 PM

CG

“ *Melissa; Sending my deepest condolences for the loss of your dad! Please know you and the family are in my prayers! Hugs!!!*

Cathy Garger (Lisa's friend)

Cathy Garger - June 11, 2025 at 10:14 PM

EW

“ *Melissa, our prayers for you Kaitlyn and Ava will continue during these tender days. The time you were able to spend together these last few years were surely a blessing and I hope those special memories will bring you peace as you miss your Dad. We are so very sorry for your loss.*

*In friendship and sympathy -
Prentiss and Elizabeth Wehman and Family*

elizabeth wehman - June 11, 2025 at 06:44 PM