



Jeronimo Diego Garza

March 31, 1957 - February 13, 2025

Jeronimo Diego Garza was born on March 31, 1957, at St. Catherine's Hospital in East Chicago, IN. He was the youngest child of Jeronimo and Dolores Garza and brother to Genny Fagan and Alice Basu.

Some of Jeronimo's greatest memories came from the times he spent with his cousins running through his house, where music blared, uncles gathered to tell stories, and his mother and Tias filled the kitchen preparing weekly family dinners. You didn't actually know Jeronimo if he hadn't told you about his mom's handmade tortillas.

Being the baby boy of a Mexican family shaped his character from birth. He was the little prince. And, while his older sisters willingly gave him that title, they later would realize just how much it became part of his personality. Like the time his sister Alice put him on the back of her bike and rolled them down a hill. Jeronimo fell off the back and broke his leg. While his parents took him to the emergency room, his older sisters climbed into bed, folded their hands, bowed their heads and prayed to God to let him live. They then spent the next couple of weeks rolling their eyes at one another while he milked every second of attention.

He attended Hammond High School where he met his wife, Mary Beth (Gilbert) during a school play where he was cast as an actual prince and she

was a fairy. This role involved a kissing scene between them that he regularly retold throughout his entire life. They have two children, Jeronimo and Michele.

As a young man, Jeronimo worked in auto body shops and was a pit crewmember for racecar drivers. He loved to ride his motorcycle to Chicago, often racing beside the South Shore Train. He loved to share his knowledge of cars, especially with strangers whose cars broke down on the side of the road. He stopped to offer his help, no matter the situation or how late he was running.

While Jeronimo was always hustling and juggling side jobs, the peak of his professional career was his time at La-Z-Boy where he managed the warehouse for all of the Chicagoland stores. He earned the respect of his staff with his gentle demeanor and his willingness to help wherever needed. The owner, Chuck Forsay, treated Jeronimo as a son and gave him unique opportunities, including the title of being his hot air balloon Crew Chief, a role that took him to meetups all over the country. Chuck rewarded Jeronimo with vacations, courtside Bulls tickets, and vehicles, among other generous expressions of his appreciation.

As he grew older and family gatherings transitioned from his parents' home to the homes of his nieces and nephews, Jeronimo took pride in his role as an uncle, never arriving empty-handed and eagerly passing down family stories to the next generation.

In his final years Jeronimo was part of an assisted living community. He was known as the "music guy," and the nurses referred to his room as the Boom Boom room. In his short time there he became a favorite among the staff because he was kind, never complained and always tried to make people laugh.

Jeronimo's two favorite roles in life were father and Papa to his grandchildren, Gabryella, Jeronimo, Madison, Harper and his honorary grandchildren, Robert, Kaylee and Evan. He strived to make core memories for them and show them their full potential and self-worth. He wanted them to know that there was a big world out there.

He liked adventure. He was always looking for something interesting to do. He loved going to arcades, taking walks in nature, and sitting on the beach. He loved museums, camping, concerts, and anything Chicago.

Jeronimo spent his life giving to other people. He gave his time, his energy, his jokes, his knowledge, his money, and most of all he gave his love. Burns Funeral Home & Crematory, Crown Point, IN, entrusted with arrangements. w
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