



## Ralph Avalos Diaz

May 16, 1949 - November 5, 2015

NAME: Ralph Avalos Diaz AGE: 66

RESIDENT OF: Visalia DATE OF DEATH: 11-05-2015

OCCUPATION: Peace Officer PLACE OF DEATH: Visalia

Start story here

Ralph Avalos Diaz was born May 16, 1949, in Exeter, California to Gabriela and Antonio Diaz.

He grew up in Redbanks until the age of 13, when his family moved to Woodlake. He graduated from Woodlake High School in 1967. Ralph was drafted, to the US Army during the Vietnam War, in 1969, and served his Country honorably.

Ralph's bravery during the Vietnam War earned him the Bronze Star Medal, awarded for heroic or meritorious service. He was a member of the 1st Battalion 506th Infantry of the 101st Airborne Division "Screaming Eagles". He was a Radio Teletype Operator, during Vietnam, which entailed calling-in Air Strikes and additional support while also fighting alongside infantrymen. He was honorably discharged from the US Army, as an E4, in 1971.

After being honorably discharged, he returned to Woodlake and attended College of the Sequoias earning his AA Degree. He became a Police Officer, with the Woodlake Police Department, in 1974 and stayed until 1977, earning the rank of Sergeant.

In 1977, he joined the Tulare County Sheriff's Office and stayed until 1996, again attaining the rank of Sergeant. While at the Sheriff's Office, he was assigned to the Violent Crimes Unit and began to form his well-known reputation as a Homicide Detective. He was best known for devoting every ounce of effort into each investigation and doing so in his charismatic personality.

In 1996 he joined the Tulare County District Attorney's Office and retired in 2004, earning the rank of Assistant Chief. He was a great investigator, mentor, teacher, and loyal friend.

After a short retirement in 2004, Ralph returned to the Tulare County Sheriff's Office as a Homicide Detective assigned to the Cold Case Unit until 2014. He has been responsible for investigating and sending several murders to Death Row. He traveled extensively in Mexico, and all over the United States, investigating numerous homicides.

He joined multiple organizations. He and Bob Wiley were the first officers to join the National Latino Peace Officers Assoc. (NLPOA). He was one of the founders of the Latino Peace Officers Association (LPOA) in Tulare County. He was presented the 1998 Lifetime Supporting Members by the NLPOA by, then Texas Governor, George Bush. He was president of the Central Valley Gang Task Force. He was president of the Tulare County Sheriff's Association. He was a lifetime member of the AMVETS and the Central Valley Vietnam Veterans Club.

Ralph passed away on November 5, 2015, at home, with his family by his side.

Ralph is survived by his wife Mirtha Diaz, son Ralph Diaz Jr., wife Maria Diaz, daughter Delilah Martinez, husband Manuel Martinez, and son Andrew Diaz. Grandchildren: Audriana, Vincent, Manny Jr., and Leah, and great-grandchildren: Gabriela and Isabela. Brothers: Art, Lupe, Manuel, Simon Diaz, and sister Francis Torres. Numerous nieces and nephews and many, many friends.

Ralph was preceded in death by his parents: Gabriela and Antonio Diaz,

sisters: Carmen Alva, Mary Helen Florez, Mary Garcia, Connie Diaz, and  
brothers: Joe Diaz and Antonio (Tony) Diaz Jr.

Visitation will be held at 4 PM until 8 PM on Thursday, November 12, 2015, at  
Salser and Dillard Funeral Chapel. A rosary will be prayed at 6 PM on  
Thursday, November 12, 2015 at Salser and Dillard Funeral Chapel. A mass  
of Christian burial will be held at 9 AM on Friday, November 13, 2015 at St.  
Mary's Catholic Church in Visalia. Burial will be at Woodlake District  
Cemetery.

SURVIVED BY;

PRECEDED IN DEATH BY;

# Cemetery Details

## Woodlake Public Cemetery

165 N. Cypress St.  
Woodlake, CA 93286

# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV 12. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (PT)

Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel  
127 E. Caldwell Ave  
Visalia, CA 93277  
(559) 635-1144  
info@salseranddillard.com  
<https://www.salseranddillard.com>

## Rosary

NOV 12. 6:00 PM (PT)

Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel  
127 E. Caldwell Ave  
Visalia, CA 93277  
(559) 635-1144  
info@salseranddillard.com  
<https://www.salseranddillard.com>

## Funeral Mass

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NOV 13. 9:00 AM (PT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church- Visalia, CA  
608 N. Church Street  
Visalia, CA 93291  
<http://tccov.org/st-marys/>

# Tribute Wall

RV

“ I just found out about Ralph's passing. What a big loss to the world. Ralph is a great person. I say is because I know Ralph is in Heaven helping others, that's how I remember Ralph. Always reaching out to help others. I was lucky to have known Ralph, I just wished I could have seen him before the Lord called him. Love you my Friend.

*Bob and Mary Vargas - Visalia*

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**Robert Vargas** - February 25, 2016 at 03:52 PM

RC

“ Mirtha - I am very sad to hear of Ralph's passing. My thoughts are with you.

*Renee Schwab - Cain*

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**Renee Schwab Cain** - November 15, 2015 at 04:06 PM

PF

“ My prayers to the Diaz family for Ralph's passing. It was always a pleasure helping Ralph and Jay Salazar when they came into the Coroner's Office to research old cases. They always left a smile on my face! Paul Frederick, Coroner Detective from 3-98 to 6-10. (ret.)

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**paul frederick** - November 12, 2015 at 03:45 PM

DF

“ Very sorry to hear of Ralph's passing. He was a great man who I considered a mentor. He would call me "Mijo" on several occasions and I was proud to have known him..



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**Daniel Fernandez** - November 12, 2015 at 12:39 PM



“ *Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Ralph Avalos Diaz.*



November 11, 2015 at 10:16 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Ralph Avalos Diaz.*



November 11, 2015 at 10:02 PM



“ *Mirtha, I was saddened with the passing of Ralph. May you find comfort in your precious memories with Ralph. My condolences to you and your family, my friend. And many blessings Mirtha.*



**Teresa Garcia** - November 11, 2015 at 07:56 PM



“ *JOSE Y PETRA FUENTES purchased the Crysta I Cross Bouquet for the family of Ralph Avalos Diaz.*



**JOSE Y PETRA FUENTES** - November 10, 2015 at 10:37 PM

MI

“ *Mirtha, my heart aches for you, I pray for you both...with love God Bless ...Minnie*

minnie - November 10, 2015 at 08:46 PM

DL

“ *RALPH~a buddy to so many, a master of so much! With a unique style of pride in family, military & community service and professional accomplishments, he influenced us all. In both work and play, he filled our hearts with admiration and gratitude for his faithful friendship. Deepest condolences to his family. May he rejoice in PEACE.*

*David Lopez and Family*

David Lopez - November 09, 2015 at 05:03 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Ralph Avalos Diaz.*



November 07, 2015 at 02:09 PM