



## Santos Franco Ruiz, Jr

July 14, 1945 - March 25, 2024

In loving memory of Santos Franco Ruiz Jr., age 78, passed away on March 25, 2024. Santos was born on July 14, 1945, in Robstown Texas where he lived until he and his mother and siblings moved to California.

Santos was a loving husband to Suzanne Ruiz, father to Rebecca Espino and husband Manuel Espino, Bryan Ruiz and wife Cristina Ruiz, grandfather to Chelsea Jaime, Manuel Espino Jr, Bryanna Ruiz, Isabella Ruiz, and a great grandfather to Adrian and Elena Jaime.

Santos was a loving son and brother to eleven brothers and sisters and preceded in death by Mother Jesusa Ruiz and siblings: Lorenzo Torrez, Joe Torrez, Nicolasa Torrez, Alicia Kena Ruiz, Angelita Ruiz Villegas, Evangelina Ruiz, and Robert Ruiz

The remaining siblings Daniel Torrez, Lucio Ruiz, Juanita Ruiz Cunha, Fernando Ruiz, and the family remain closeknit.

Santos and Suzanne were married on September 27, 1997, expanding the family to include Suzanne's daughters Cathy Chittenden, Christy Kaplan, and granddaughter Morgan Burgener. Later, Christy married Dr. Kenny Kaplan and gave birth to their son Vance. Also, part of the family was Suzanne's sister Roberta and her husband Guy Mettepenningen.

Santos worked hard and played harder. Hard work started at a young age as he worked in the cotton fields to help his mother care for their large family.

Santos and his older siblings were the catalysts to help transition the family from Texas to California in hopes of a better life.

Santos' hard work contributed to many successes including owning his own business followed by becoming an administrator for two large property management companies. His greatest professional achievement was serving as an administrator for the renowned Hispanic Farmwork advocate Ceasar Chavez's housing initiative that contributed to securing housing for many families.

Santos' years of hard work allowed him to play hard and no matter the sport, he excelled. Santos ran like the wind which made him a force to be reckoned with on the softball field. His hand-eye coordination were off the charts which contributed to his ability to master bowling, and the bowling alley is where he met his beautiful wife, Suzanne.

Although a master at many sports, his passion was golf, spending most daylight hours on the golf course, practicing for hours, competing in numerous golf matches, sometimes playing thirty-six holes of golf in one day, and traveling to the most beautiful golf courses in California. He left his legacy of loving golf to his grandson Manuel Jr. who also spends hours on the golf course.

As Santos' disease began to take a toll, he fought to retain his independence by giving his caregivers a run for their money while also charming them with his great sense of humor.

Santos will be remembered and missed by all who knew and loved him.

Memorial Service will be held Friday, April 19, 2024 at 11:00 AM at Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel, 127 E. Caldwell Ave., Visalia, CA 93277. Graveside "time of remembrance" will be held at Smith Mountain Cemetery 42088 Rd 100 Dinuba, on April 26, at 11:00 AM.

Services have been entrusted to Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel. Memorial Tributes and condolences may be offered by logging onto [www.salseranddillard.com](http://www.salseranddillard.com).

# Previous Events

## Memorial

APR **19**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (PT)

Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel  
127 E. Caldwell Ave.  
Visalia, CA 93277

## Graveside

APR **26**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (PT)

Smith Mountain Cemetery  
42088 Rd. 100  
Dinuba, CA 93618

# Tribute Wall



“ *Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Santos Franco Ruiz, Jr*



---

**Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel** - April 17, 2024 at 05:06 PM