



Theodore Varela

December 20, 1932 - January 30, 2022

Theodore Varela, was 89 years old when he was called home to be with our Lord on January 30, 2022 in Visalia, California. Theodore was born to Felix Varela and Nestora Barbosa on December 20, 1932 in Long Beach, Ca. Glendale, Arizona was his hometown... his mom had come to California to visit family, but Ted couldn't wait so he was born in Long Beach. He started his education in Glendale, Arizona graduating from Jr high and then moving to California where he attended high school at Tulare Union. Ted, his mom, his married sister and her family moved to Tulare. When the girls saw him they immediately wanted him on the cheerleading squad. His size, strength and lean body, would make it no problem for lifting and tossing them in the air. They didn't have to twist his arm much to accept.

After graduation, he decided to join the Air Force so he could travel the world because he was an adventurer. He was assigned to an aircraft carrier as a radio technician. Ted was stationed in Germany for the duration of his military service. He would tell Carmen that his service assignment consisted of drinking beer and dating pretty German girls.

When he returned to the states he attended College Of The Sequoias where he received his Associates Degree in theater, history and drama. He acted in many plays at College of the Sequoias. Eventually he decided to get his Bachelor's Degree at Fresno State. In between his bachelors and his masters, he went to work for a grass roots poverty program called Neighborhood Youth Corps "Out of school youth project". He always wanted

to be of service to the people. One day he had an idea of directing youth in a play, so he and a friend went to Washington, DC and applied for a grant that allowed him to fund the project and employ youth from the barrio. The play was called West Side Story, and it was developed as a youth summer program that would teach kids how to become actors, set designers, lighting and sound technicians and the overall knowledge of theater. Ted even had the privilege of having one of Carmen's brothers Raymond participate in the play where he performed as "Pepe". His mother Elvira attended each performance in or out of town and was so proud to watch her son on stage. He continued to work with the agency on several other plays. About that time he met a cute, little red head, blue eyed woman named Sharon who had been performing with a backyard theater company. The theater company eventually made a deal with the City of Visalia to build a permanent theater site. Alas, the theater company had a home, "The Ice House" was founded. Ted was asked to direct the first production at the Ice House which was "Gypsy". The play was performed with one spotlight, Ted would say "the show must go on" and to this day the lights of the Ice House still burn bright in Visalia. Ted has won countless awards in acting and directing, he had found his true love.

At Fresno State he performed in a play called Zorba he not only played the part, he became Zorba. The character was larger than life and lived his life his way. He performed Zorba throughout many venues from Fresno State, The Ice House, Roger Rocka and other theater companies. People to this day still remember him dancing on stage with a table in his mouth.

Sharon and Ted loved to travel and they spent time doing just that. So much so, that Sharon's mom would have to send them money to bring them home. Eventually Ted and Sharon parted ways but remained good friends until the end. Sharon and her husband Clark, Ted and Carmen spent a lot of time together before losing Clark.

Ted decided to go back and get his Masters Degree at Fresno State. Shortly after graduation he returned to Visalia to help care for his mom. That was when he landed on our door steps at the Community Service Employment

Training Agency. When he came out of the interview with Carolyn, (Carmen's boss), Carolyn asked Carmen if she knew this man, Ted Varela? She asked because when Ted came out of the office he walked up to Carmen and gave her a big hug. Carmen told Carolyn 'I guess he thinks he knows me!' but somehow again life brought us together. It was chemistry from the beginning. During their courtship Carmen belonged to the League of Mexican American Women and she decided to use his theater talents to develop a theater project. It was called "The House of Bernarda Alba", this play and others were chosen so women would have the opportunity to act. Ted shared in Carmen's vision to help women be recognized for their talents. The grants were written as educational, cultural and self-improvement programs. This was all made possible because he was their teacher and their guide.

Their lives were made so full from their camping buddies and friends but most importantly family. Ted developed very close bonds with people and children. He was a teacher at Mt. Whitney High School, Exeter High School, College of the Sequoias and "life". He became a lector at Holy Family which gave him the opportunity to be in front of an audience and share the word of God, which he took so much pride in.

The first song in the video is Try to Remember, which is one of Carmen's favorite songs. Ted sang that to her on their very first date night. He sang it when he performed it in the play "Fantasticks" where he played El Gallo. The second song is "I did it my way" By Frank Sinatra, and we all know Ted lived life his way. The third song is "Hallelujah" by Rufus Wainwright, when Ted first heard it, he loved the words so much it left a lasting impression with him. Carmen says "I have learned so much from him, just look at all that I have gained, I was blessed to have this man walk into my life so long ago, his gift to me was "he let me be me."

It is not written somewhere how long we have in this world, cherish one another and tell each other how much you love them. Our time in this world is not promised, but it is the memories that we make that will surpass a lifetime.

We can take comfort in knowing that he is with our Almighty Father, his mother and grandmother, rejoicing. There is no more pain or suffering. The family has gained another guardian angel to watch over us. As Ted would say "The show must go on!" We know our star is shining brightly from above us, Til we see you again...We love you. AMEN

The song that we will be walking out to is OUR family song and it's the game of love by Santana and Michelle Branch.

Rosary will be held 11 AM Friday, February 11th, 2022 at Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel, 127 E. Caldwell Ave., Visalia. Memorial services will be held 10 AM - 12 PM Friday, February 11th, 2022 at Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel.

Services have been entrusted to Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel. Memorial Tributes and condolences may be offered by logging onto www.salseranddillard.com.

Previous Events

Memorial

FEB 11. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (PT)

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

Rosary

FEB 11. 11:00 AM (PT)

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

Tribute Wall



“ *Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel created a Webcast in memory of Theodore Varela*



Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel - February 11, 2022 at 10:38 AM



“ *Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Theodore Varela*



Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel - February 10, 2022 at 10:19 AM



“ *I remember this guy . . . its been such a long time . . . he was associated with R.A.Y.O. on the North Side . . he would take us to do puppet shows to elementary schools across tulare county to help children say no to drugs . . . THIS MAN HAD THE PATIENCE OF A FATHER . . . WE WERE HORRIBLE . . BUT FOR SOME REASON HE NEVER GAVE UP ON US . . IM GLAD I CAME ACROSS THIS . . THEY DONT MAKE PEOPLE LIKE THIS ANYMORE . . . SEE YOU WHEN YOU WAKE UP IN "OUR" KINGDOM . . .12 TRIBES ON THE WAKE-UP*

Anonymous Achyam - July 08, 2022 at 09:36 PM

“ Ted was my best friend. We met in the early 1960's in my native Visalia. I was the organizer he was the artist, that is, a superb artist, chef, and a lover of the arts.

Being community minded Ted and I organized a boy and girls club in North Visalia, El Barrio. What a terrific time it was, we combined athletic events (soft-boxing) with education. Reading and writing classes for the kids was part of the program led by our good friend Rita Solinas, a community activist who later earned her doctorate degree.

Ted was the Chef at Nella's Pizzeria many actors, musicians, intellectuals (I was one of them) would dine there, read poetry. Ted got me a job there as a dishwasher after working at this for awhile I complained and Ted recommended me to a new job. I was elevated to waiter, paid better, I got tips and at the end of the shift, a free glass of red wine. Maybe two.

Ted was always a good listener and advisor, young women were always chasing him, I suspect old ones too, (I hope Carmen is not reading this) as a matter of fact they chased me too. His favorite clothing attire was English a true romantic, the finest tweed, shoes to match, Scottish plaid and very European, that Ted was upper crust, a real high class guy. And let's not forget Ted drank the best Scotch, the brand: 'Oban' single malt whiskey. Scotland, the ancestral land of my wife.

Ted was also my best man at Glennnda's and I wedding so many years ago, 53 to be exact.

Ted was my best friend I will miss him, I leave him with my favorite saying, " The Greatest Joy of a Raindrop is when it Enters the River." Ted has now entered the River.

Adios Amigo

Louie Campos

Louie Campos - February 10, 2022 at 09:06 PM

LC

“ *Louie and Glenda Campos purchased the Blue Caribbean Bouquet for the family of Theodore Varela.*



Louie and Glenda Campos - February 10, 2022 at 02:22 PM



“ *Heart felt love, warm hugs and our deepest sympathy to the entire family and to his closest friends. An extra special hug and tons of love to his Soulmate and Bride Carmen. Thank you for sharing this precious man with us.*

D.W. Andres - February 10, 2022 at 11:15 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Theodore Varela.*



February 10, 2022 at 10:53 AM