



John Anthony Merino

June 20, 1963 - April 16, 2022

John Anthony Merino, 58, of Harlingen, Texas passed away on Saturday April 16th, 2022. He was a beloved husband, father, son, brother, uncle, and teacher.

John was born in Silver City, New Mexico on June 20, 1963. He spent his early years growing up in New Mexico, Utah, and Guadalajara, Mexico. He graduated from high school in Bountiful, Utah in 1981. After high school, he was employed for several years on the assembly lines of Cutie Pies Corporation and Rockwell International Corporation. In 2000, he found his way to the Rio Grande Valley where he worked as a legal assistant while earning his college degree. In 2003, he met the love of his life, Ginger, and they became husband and wife in 2010. In 2009, John graduated from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley with a B.S. in Biology and a teaching credential. He then began his dream career as a science teacher, starting at Santa Rosa High School and most recently at Harlingen High School where he taught physics.

His love for nature was innate and endless. His lifelong love of the outdoors stemmed from his early days exploring all that nature had to offer. As a child he enjoyed wandering the woods on his grandfather's ranch, studying the fauna, geology, insects and small animals. He later backpacked and fished in the mountains of New Mexico and Utah, always keeping an eye towards all

forms of plant and animal life along the way. Here in the Valley, he was a weekend fisherman, amateur herpetologist, and most recently, an avid bird watcher. He became a Texas Master Naturalist in 2016 and was always happy to share his knowledge with other naturalists.

His favorite activity was spending time with his dear wife Ginger—his true partner in life. Together, they visited the outdoors and browsed the local flea markets on the weekends. They recently purchased their first home, where they enjoyed spending time together, hosting family, and taking care of their many pets including an assortment of snakes, tortoises, and fish. He also loved his entire family and sought to maintain familial and cultural traditions whenever possible, often saying, “it's up to us to keep it going.” In the spirit of maintaining traditions and family history, John often reached out to relatives otherwise distanced by time and geography.

John's happiness in life was evident to all and he loved sharing it with those close to him. He enjoyed making us all laugh with his outlandish humor and offbeat sensibilities. He would just call up family to philosophize and discuss current events. In his professional life, John had a passion to inspire curiosity and unlock potential in all of his students. With great pride and effort, he was recently awarded a Teacher Innovation Grant, the first one received by Harlingen High School in [10-15] years, to improve classroom resources and enhance learning and innovation.

John's inquisitiveness and passion for learning passed onto his son, Juan Carlos, who is now an educator in Kingsville. John and Juan Carlos shared a love of good food and metal music. John was exceptionally proud of his son for his many accomplishments, including Juan Carlos' deployment in the Iraq War. Recently, John eagerly anticipated the birth of Juan Carlos' son, John's first grandchild.

John is survived by his wife, Ginger Merino of Harlingen, TX; his son Juan Carlos Merino (Roxana) of Kingsville, TX; his parents Reynaldo Q. and Margaret Merino of McAllen, TX, his brother Reynaldo M. Merino (Patricia) of McAllen, TX; sister Catherine Matlock (Chad) of The Woodlands, TX; sister Cristina Hinton (Oliver) of Edmond, OK; mother in law Melba Valdez of Michigan; sister in law Rose Briones (Carlos) of Edinburg, TX; brother in law Jesse Valdez of Edinburg, TX, and all of his dear nieces and nephews who adored their Uncle John. He is predeceased by his sister Catherine Rose.

A private memorial service to honor and celebrate John's life will be held on Saturday April 23, 2022.

PLEASE NOTE

In lieu of sending flowers, it is encouraged that you offer support and condolences by making a donation via the link below. Thank you for your kindness and generosity.

https://www.gofundme.com/f/raising-funds-for-widow-of-beloved-husband?utm_source=customer&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_campaign=p_cf+share-flow-1

Tribute Wall

WR

“*Rey, on the off chance you see this, I'm sending so many hugs. Guadalajara wouldn't have been the same without you and John there. I've sent a hug up to John as well. Sounds like he was a pretty fantastic human being. Wendy Coe Ratcliffe*

Wendy Coe Ratcliffe - February 07, 2024 at 03:20 PM

AE

“*I didn't think my last goodbye would actually be my last one , I'm lost at words my heart hurts so much I feel for each and everyone that is hurting from this. Mr.Merino this was so random I never thought I'd get a call hearing this tragic news from the very first day I meet you I knew you were far from different then most people , you had many amazing ideas and such a good heart so patient with everyone & always had a new nice thing to say everyday , not a day that went by you were absent always showed up to class and would be at your door waiting for us with a big smile with fun and creative projects , he said we kept him going and he loved what he did & I believe that because there was nothing but love with sir. School not the same no more I know everything happens for a reason but I just wish we had more time with you I miss our everyday talks you will be missed so much and I will never forget you sir rip.*

Ashley Estrada - April 22, 2022 at 01:12 PM