

Provided by Schwab Matthews Mortuary

Jean (John) Baptiste Carricaburu

July 7, 1941 ~ June 15, 2023 (age 81)



Jean Baptiste (John) Carricaburu died on June 15, 2023, in Montpelier, Idaho, at age 81 following a valiant and prolonged battle with congestive heart failure. As his health deteriorated in recent weeks, he vowed to live until June 15, the 60th anniversary of his marriage to his devoted wife, Patricia. John kept his promise, ensuring that Pat received 60 red roses and a diamond pendant in his final hours.

John was born on July 7, 1941, in Montpelier, the oldest son and third of seven children of Marie Larre and Gaston Carricaburu. He was among the first generation of children born to the hundreds of immigrants from the Basque region of southern France and northern Spain who built the sheep industry in the Intermountain West starting in the late 19th century. He realized the dream his parents had for their children when they made the difficult decision to leave their home for America. Smart, resourceful, and extremely hard working, John was a respected corporate executive before retiring in 1997 and returning to the family ranch near Cokeville, Wyoming, which he fiercely loved. He spent countless hours restoring existing structures and building on to the ranch. He took great pride in being a steward of the beautiful and unique place his parents built.

John graduated from The Abbey School in Canon City, Colorado, in 1960. He briefly attended Colorado School of Mines on a scholarship before returning to Wyoming to work as an underground surveyor at FMC Corp., where he met Pat. They married in 1963, building a home in Green River and later Rock Springs, Wyoming, where John went to work as a land surveyor for Mountain Fuel Supply Co., later Questar Corp., now Dominion Energy. He earned a surveyor license and rose steadily through the ranks for the next 30-plus years, eventually transferring to Salt Lake City in 1976. He was vice president of federal regulatory affairs and later vice president and general manager of Questar Gas Management Corp.

This background would likely surprise those who knew John in recent decades. After his retirement at age 56, he farmed alfalfa and barley, and bred and raised registered quarter horses that were sold and competed at an international level. A true horse whisperer, John adored horses and was an expert horseman. He competed in gymkhana equestrian events while at The Abbey School and helped pay for his room and board by caring for and training the school's horses. He also spent many years competing in Intermountain Reining Horse Association (IRHA) events, winning numerous trophies and ribbons. He was president of the IRHA, and in 2011, its members inducted him and Pat into the IRHA Hall of Fame. John's daughters often joked that his horses, Jaci and Flash, were his favorite children.

In truth, neither his daughters nor anyone in his family ever doubted his intense love for them. He was never happier than when surrounded by his family, fishing, cooking, making the cured ham and garlic sausage his father taught him to make, reading, watching Utah Jazz games, traveling abroad, and celebrating his Basque heritage as a longtime member of the Utah Basque Club.

He was a quiet, stable, presence and an unwavering source of counsel, wisdom, strength, and wit to his family, friends, and neighbors. John left an indelible mark on many. He will be profoundly missed.

John is survived by his wife, Patricia, and three daughters, Lisa (Robert Maxfield) Carricaburu, Kathleen (Chris Newton) Carricaburu, and Josette (Marc) Gaztambide, all of Salt Lake City, along with five grandchildren, Marcel (Bria) and Danielle Gaztambide, Amanda and Patrick Maxfield, and Amaia Horyna. He is also survived by two of his siblings, Catherine (Mike) Foxhoven, and Dr. Pierre (Maria) Carricaburu, and dozens of nieces and nephews and grand nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Julie Horyna, and his grandson, Michael Maxfield, along with his parents and siblings, Elizabeth Bertagnolli, Josephine Jauregui, Robert Carricaburu, and Mary Anne Matassa.

A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated on Monday, June 26, 2023, at 11 a.m. at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, 1375 Spring Lane, Holladay. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations in John's name be made to the Bear Lake Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, c/o Lott Crockett, Bear Lake Memorial Hospital, 164 South Fifth Street, Montpelier, Idaho, 83254.