



Geronimo "Cesar" Gatbunton

SEP 30, 1941 - FEB 12, 2023



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Geronimo "Cesar" Gatbunton

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Geronimo "Cesar" Gatbunton passed away peacefully in University Place on February 12, 2023.

Born on September 30, 1941, the second of five children to Saturnino and Emiliana Gatbunton in Pasig Rizal, Philippines. The family moved to Okinawa, Japan, then New York where Cesar graduated from Curtis High School. After high school, while attending business school Cesar met, fell in love with, and married Martha Fernandez Fondeur of Santo Domingo, DR. The two moved to Washington to build a home, raise their family, and be near Cesar's parents and siblings who had settled there already.

Cesar is preceded in death by the love of his life, Martha, his parents and Kuya, eldest brother, Fort (Cora). He is survived by his children, Rita (Phillip), Paula (Jim), and Cesar (Leah); his grandchildren, Matthew, Rachel, Alexandra, Samantha, Hannah, and Bryce; siblings Benny (Jeannie), Terry (Rennie), and Roy (Janette), and numerous nieces and nephews.

We can't talk about Dad without first sharing the love story between him and Mom. The two dated while students in New York, when Mom returned home to the Dominican Republic, Dad followed her there to ask for her hand and the two were married. One of Dad's predominant characteristics was his devotion and love for Mom, he truly adored her. The two shared a marriage of 50 years, rooted in faith. Their dreams fulfilled with loving children and grandchildren, a welcoming home, service to the Catholic Church, family gatherings, fulfilling careers, potlucks, bowling leagues, road trips, cruises, and getaways to various time share locations. Dad's dedication to mom never wavered; he truly loved her through thick and thin, in sickness and in health.

Dad put his business school training into practice at Pay n' Save. Working his entire professional career with the company, he managed multiple stores over the years and



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people genuinely loved working with and for him.

While Dad worked hard, he loved to play as well. A true Gatbunton, Dad had a love for music that ran deep in his soul. He was an accomplished musician playing multiple instruments in school and with his brothers, Fort & Benny in their band, The Mystics; and in his last years he took great pleasure in listening to music while singing and clapping along.

Playing cards was also a staple in his life. For more years than can be counted Dad had FNP (Friday Night Poker). The men around that table became family as for years Dad attended that card game as religiously on Friday as church on Sunday.

Anyone who knew Dad knew his sense of humor. He told Dad jokes before they were called Dad jokes. His quick way of being "punny" was one of his many endearing qualities and he could always be counted on for a story or joke to make you laugh or chuckle (or groan...).

One thing Dad did not joke about was his pride in every accomplishment by his children and grandchildren. He would proudly don school colors, display accolades earned, and really loved opportunities to watch them in action.

This pride and affection reached well beyond the family tree. Dad was unselfish with his love and many looked up to him as a beloved father figure, Ninong, and Padrino. These relationships were equally cherished by Dad and he happily embraced the part he could play in others' lives.

Dad truly found joy in simple things: being Papa, time with family, hosting happy hour, delicious food on the table, a drink with his Compadres, a great Seahawks or Mariners win. To the end of his days, people fondly described him as easy going, grateful, and genuinely full of joy.

Dad was truly blessed and thankful beyond measure for all of the incredible individuals who cared for him on his journey. Words cannot express the depths of our gratitude.

Dad's passing is a tremendous loss. He modeled for us the importance of working hard, being dedicated to family, and being thankful every day. His deeply loving marriage, respect



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for his parents, close bonds with his siblings, and steadfast faith are examples of things we can all hope for and are lessons that will live on in each of us.

A memorial gathering will be held at Mountain View Funeral Home, Celebration of Life Center on Thursday, March 2, 2023, 3:00pm Viewing, 4:30pm Rosary followed by remembrances. Funeral Mass will be celebrated on Friday, March 3, 2023 at St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church in Lakewood, 11:00am, followed by interment and reception at Mountain View. Music was such a important part of Dad's life. Donations may be made in his name to Ted Brown Music Outreach www.tbmoutreach.org.



Events

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Visitation

Thursday, March 2, 2023

3:00 PM - 8:00 PM PT

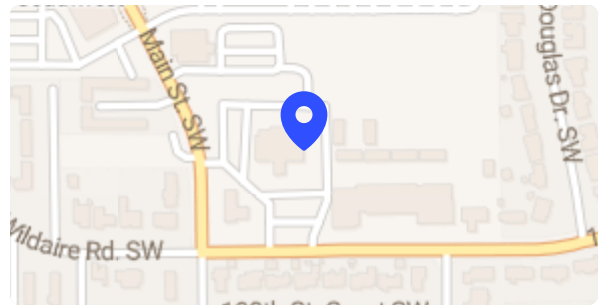
Mountain View Funeral Home & Memorial Park
4100 Steilacoom Blvd SW, Lakewood WA 98499

Funeral Mass

Friday, March 3, 2023

11:00 AM PT

St Frances Cabrini Catholic Church
5707 108th St SW, Lakewood WA 98499

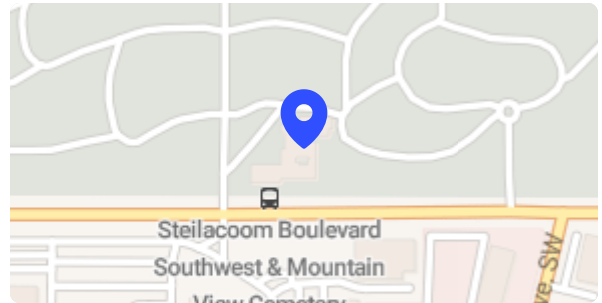


Graveside Service

Friday, March 3, 2023

12:30 PM PT

Mountain View Memorial Park
4100 Steilacoom Blvd. SW, Lakewood WA 98499

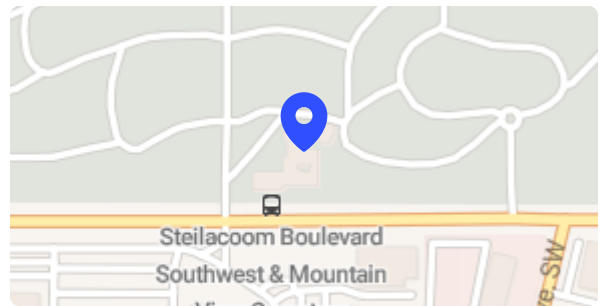


Reception

Friday, March 3, 2023

12:30 PM - 3:30 PM PT

Willow Room - Celebration of Life Building on the grounds of Mountain View Memorial Park
4100 Steilacoom Blvd SW, LAKEWOOD WA 98499





Tribute Wall

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Anonymous sent an Arrive in Style to the Gatbunton family.

March 1 at 1:42 PM



Anonymous sent an Ocean Breeze Spray to the Gatbunton family.

February 28 at 11:33 AM



Anonymous sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Gatbunton family.

February 27 at 6:16 PM



TH

Tina Hardwick posted:

Prayers and Blessings to your family. From your friends at the Hardwick house. You will be missed.

February 26 at 2:38 PM



Anonymous sent a Love's Journey to the Gatbunton family.

February 24 at 9:58 AM



Anonymous sent a Country Basket Blooms to the Gatbunton family.

February 23 at 3:23 PM





Tribute Wall

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Anonymous sent a Divine Peace Bouquet to the Gatbunton family.



February 22 at 6:09 AM



Anonymous sent a Serene Retreat to the Gatbunton family.



February 22 at 5:19 AM



Ritaemilia shared a photo to the **Cesar Gatbunton** album.



February 20 at 11:09 AM



Susan Kaelin March 4 at 6:45 PM

Jim Makula, who lived at Brookdale in Tacoma for a while, remembers Cesar as they lived on the same floor and shared the same table for meals. Cesar was such a nice man, loved his sports, and always took care in his appearance. I didn't know he had worked for the Pay'n Save company! I regularly shopped at their stores back in the 1970s. Rite Aid, which took over their sites, was just not the same... May God comfort you with all of the wonderful memories you have of your father/grandfather, brother, and friend.



Barb Rogers February 23 at 8:12 AM

I was care taker for Martha up until her passing, then took care of Cesar until I moved to Montana. They both were a joy to care for and will miss them both. Peace be with and you rejoice with your family in heaven.



Carmen Fructuoso-Canter February 22 at 7:22 AM

I remember Tito Cesar from when I was in Tacoma with my mom when I was 9 or 10 years old. The whole family were warm and welcoming. Rest in peace Tito Cesar.



Media

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Ritaemilia shared a photo to the **Cesar Gatbunton** album.

February 20 at 11:09 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Geronimo by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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