



## Jose Gonzalo Balladares

November 6, 1943 - December 16, 2023

Jose Gonzalo Balladares, age 80, of Sterling, Virginia entered eternal life on December 16, 2023, after a brave battle with cancer. He was reunited in Heaven with his daughter, Karen Long, and his son, Samuel Balladares, who preceded him in death along with his sister Maria Eugenia and his parents Gonzalo Valladares Rivas and Lastenia Reyes Obregon. He is survived by his wife, Aura Elba, his children Dahlia Carolina (John) Wright, Janeth (Michael) Herman, David (Francis) Balladares-Bittar, Moises Balladares-Bittar, and Raquel (Larry) Decker, his grandchildren Samuel, Isabella, John Michael, Lily, Evelyn, Gabriel, David Jr., Mareane, Sean, and Michael, and his great-grandson Thanus.

Raised in Quepos, Costa Rica and Managua, Nicaragua, Jose was a student of electrical engineering and received his bachelor's degree from the Universidad Federal de Minas-Gerais, School of Engineering in Belo Horizonte, Brazil in 1967, where he fell in love with the Brazilian culture and language. He returned to Nicaragua to serve as a military officer where he had the opportunity to travel throughout Central America, Japan, and the United States. In 1973, Jose met the love of his life, Aura and they pursued the American dream landing in Virginia in 1980 with their three daughters and later joined by the birth of their son Samuel. Jose and Aura rebuilt their lives in Virginia and Jose happily continued his passion for travel working in India, Venezuela, Thailand, England, Peru and Hungary. Jose retired as a contractor

for the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. where he was loved by so many of his coworkers and earned the title Pentagon Mayor for his kindness and friendliness.

Jose was a passionate fan of soccer and could often be found enjoying numerous games on the weekend cheering on his favorite teams. His love for action-packed movies began in his childhood and lasted throughout his entire life. He loved Star Wars, Indiana Jones, James Bond-007, The Godfather, Ghost, and Short Circuit where he lovingly received his nickname "Johnny 5." Outside of the movie theater, he loved watching his favorite shows with his "Viejita" where they enjoyed Exatlon, El Sultan, and telenovelas. He loved his Viejitas cooking foregoing any restaurant as he was already in a five-star establishment at home. Jose loved Costco and would spend countless hours going down each aisle making sure he didn't miss a free tasting station and talking with his favorite employees who became friends over the years. Despite his love of earthly entertainment, his true passion was his love for Christ. Jose could be found daily at his desk delving deep into the Bible through scripture and reflection. He loved faith-based movies such as The Ten Commandments, The Passion of the Christ, and Ben-Hur. His Bible was well worn from his life-long devotion to the word. Jose committed his life to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints where he served as a Bishop for six years. He loved the Book of Mormon and served his congregants with kindness, compassion, and humility.

As a father, Jose was a disciplinarian who loved his children and sprinkled them with his military style despite their grumbling. He would often demand his children write book reports during summer break and they spend every daylight hour playing outside. Every summer had at least one trip to Kings Dominion where the family enjoyed classic rides such as the Rebel Yell and the Shockwave followed by funnel cake. The family enjoyed picnics at Algonkian Park along the Potomac River where they would spend all day

eating carne-asada and nacatamales, playing games, and fishing along the banks. He spent countless hours driving a station wagon to vacation destinations in Florida, Canada, and Alabama this included dragging his children through the Hall of Presidents, being drenched on the Maid of the Mist in Niagara Falls and cheering on the Alabama Crimson Tide at the University of Alabama. Before every meal, Jose insisted on a monologue prayer that often felt like an eternity and sent his kids into a stream of giggles and then fighting over the microwave. As a grandfather, where he was known as Tito, he loved hearing about his grandchildren's adventures, eating banana splits, and passing along his love of chess.

Jose will be deeply missed and his impact on this Earth will continue to ripple through his wife, children, grandchildren, friends, and everyone who he impacted.

A celebration of his life will begin on Thursday December 28th with visitation from 6:00pm – 8:00pm at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints located at 1515 Poplar Grove Drive, Reston, Virginia. Funeral services will be on Friday December 29th at 11:00am at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints located at 2719 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton, Virginia followed by a 1:00pm burial at National Memorial Park located at 7482 Lee Highway, Falls Church, Virginia.

In lieu of flowers the family is requesting donations be made to The Childrens Inn at the National Institute of Health where Jose received treatment and fell in love with the mission of providing a home away from home to children dealing with childhood cancer. Click here (<https://give.childrensinn.org/give/329874/#!/donation/checkout>) to make an online donation.

# Cemetery Details

## National Memorial Park

7482 Lee Highway  
Falls Church, VA 22042

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 28. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
1515 Poplar Grove Drive  
Reston, VA 20194

## Service

DEC 29. 11:00 AM (ET)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
2719 Hunter Mill Road  
Oakton, VA

# Tribute Wall

AR

“ *Tengo en mi corazón recuerdos maravillosos de mi Tío José que se quedarán para siempre en mi memoria y le agradezco a Dios haberme permitido compartir lindos momentos con él en familia. Tía Lucrecia, Carolina y Janet son afortunadas de haber tenido cerca a una persona tan especial. Abrazos* ❤️

**Arelys Rios** - December 28, 2023 at 07:42 PM

MB

“ *My memories of my Tio are very fond. I remember him always have a joke to say, just to put a smile on someone's face. He treated my Tia like a complete, and total Queen. He had a huge heart, and he will be missed dearly. May God bless, and comfort my Tia, my cousin, and our entire family as we grieve. I love you Tio, rest in peace, you are missed*

**Maria Gabriella Baca** - December 28, 2023 at 05:25 PM

JH

“ *Our memories of Jose are those of a man whose love and pride of family and strong faith were on constant display in his daily life. His special qualities and character will continue to live on in the hearts of Aura Elba and their cherished children, grandchildren and great grandchild. Jose's many accomplishments and his zest for life are admired by Wanda and I. We feel blessed to have had him touch our lives and be a part of his wonderful family.*



**John Herman** - December 27, 2023 at 01:35 PM

SB

*“ Had the pleasure of working with Jose at the Pentagon. He always had kind words and a smile on his face. Thank you for being a wonderful person with a beautiful soul. Rest in peace.*



---

**Stephanie Boyden** - December 27, 2023 at 07:27 AM



*“ I have worked with Jose at the Pentagon as part of the Army IPT team for over 15 years. No matter where we went during the course of a work day, whomever Jose had encountered from janitor to General, he would make acquaintances and developed many friendships. It is because of this that our team would endearingly refer to him as the "Mayor of the Pentagon".*

---

**James Richardson** - December 26, 2023 at 05:34 PM

CJ

*“ My Friend Jose we worked together many years at the Pentagon. Such a kind soul I never saw him angry or upset ever. May Jose R.I.P.*

---

**Charl Jones** - December 26, 2023 at 08:06 AM