

Dear Rotary Family,

We recently received a letter from Vic Maria's daughter, Regina Saliba (1900 Cowper St, Palo Alto, CA 9430), letting us know that Vic passed away on Thursday, January 15. He was resting peacefully at the time of his passing.

Victor Maria was born on July 31, 1928 in Portland, Maine. He was the youngest of four children. His primary passion was sports. He was an avid basketball and football player. After high school, he was drafted for the Korean War where he was a sergeant training on amphibian tanks. Upon his discharge, he enrolled at the University of Arizona. In 1961, he married Norma J. Jabbour. They were married in Paris, France and celebrated their wedding day dining at the Eiffel Tower Restaurant.

Victor opened the Paris office for the DEA. In his career, he had many exciting experiences, including being smuggled out of Panama when Noriega got word of his operation, and having his cover blown in the desert of Turkey. Over the years with the DEA, Vic became the Director of the Middle East drug policy. He was forever arguing with Washington that we (the U.S.) could not tell foreign governments that their people could not grow various crops used for drugs without first offering them the opportunity to grow alternative crops. He felt strongly that the farmers were, in most cases, poor and that not only did we need to provide them with an alternative crop, but we also had to help find a viable market for that crop.

Vic retired at the age of 55 in Clear Lake, Texas. After retiring, he became involved in philanthropy. Over the years, he was involved with Meals on Wheels and Bay Area Turning Point. He also organized the delivery of hundreds of bikes and scooters with helmets for those in need at Christmas. Vic and his wife Norma were involved with the residents at Hope Village. Vic helped bring Palestinian burn victims to the U.S. for treatment. He collected and refurbished bikes to donate to the local El Salvadoran Church so that low-income people could have transportation to work. He became involved with the Juvenile School for "Delinquent" Youth. Vic ushered and served communion at church.

Vic took care of his wife Norma until the end. She had Alzheimer's and he insisted on keeping her at home and attending to her needs personally. He was a kind man with a big heart who touched many people's lives.

He will be missed.

Vic Maria will be laid to rest July 9 at 11:15 a.m. in the Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery.