

Michel Plaa

March 27, 1929 – February 23, 2025



Michel Plaa passed away peacefully at home in Upland, California a month before his 96th birthday on Sunday, February 23, 2025. He was born on March 27, 1929 in Anhaux, France, located in the Basque Country to Arnaud and Marie Plaa.

When he was 24, Michel followed his older brother, Arnaud, to the United States immigrating in 1953. He quickly made his way to the Chino Valley and worked as a ranch hand and milker on his brother's dairy located on Sultana Avenue in Ontario. Having grown up on a family farm in France, Michel loved working with cows on the dairy, which led to a 60-plus year career as a successful and greatly admired dairyman.

Michel married the love of his life, Jeanne Errecalde, in Norwalk, California, on April 16, 1955, and they were married for nearly 62 years when Jeanne passed in March 2017.

Michel was an active member of the Basque community and played bugle in the Klika (Basque drum and bugle corp) at local Basque picnics for many years. He was also a devout Catholic and a parishioner of St. Anthony's Parish in Upland since 2001.

Michel was devoted to his family and will be remembered by all who knew and loved him as an outgoing, considerate and generous person with an amazing memory, uncanny ability to remember everyone's birthday, and a handshake you would remember for the rest of your life.

Michel is survived by his daughter Jeannine (Richard) Bockstahler, son John (Julie) Plaa and his sister Felicie Changala of France. He is also survived by grandsons Michael (Jillian) Bockstahler, Kevin (Sarah) Bockstahler, Brian Bockstahler (Justine Jones), great grandchildren Nathan, Grace, Adam, Maverick and Banks Bockstahler, sister-in-law Noeline Mocho, nieces Bernadette Quincey, Suzanne (Gary) Wahl, nephew Michel (Tammy) Plaa, great nephew Nicholas Quincey, great niece Alexandra Quincey, and many more nieces, nephews and friends in the U.S. and the Basque Country.

Michel was one of four children and was preceded in death by his father Arnaud, mother Marie, brother Arnaud, twin sister Alice, sister-in-law Marie Plaa, brothers-in-law Jean Mocho (business partner in Mocho & Plaa Dairy), Raymond Arrossagary, Jean Changala and nephew Benjamin Plaa.

Visitation will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, March 20, 2025 at Stone Funeral Home, 355 E. 9th Street, Upland, CA 91786, (909) 982-1369.

The Rosary, Catholic Mass and funeral service will begin at 10 a.m. on Friday, March 21, 2025 at St. Anthony's Catholic Church, 2110 N. San Antonio Ave. in Upland. Interment will follow at Bellevue Memorial Park, 1240 W. G Street in Ontario.

In lieu of flowers, kindly make a donation in Michel's name to the charity of your choice.