



Ralph A Garcia

November 14, 1942 - December 9, 2016

Ralph A. Garcia, 74, of Bluffton passed away on Friday morning, December 9, 2016 at Bluffton Regional Medical Center.

Ralph was born on November 14, 1942 in East Chicago, Indiana to Peter M. and Emma (Flores) Garcia. He attended East Chicago Washington High School and completed training at the University of Maryland, Purdue University and graduated from the University of North Carolina.

Ralph served our country in the United States Marines from 1959 to 1969 during the Vietnam Conflict, and was discharged as a staff sergeant. He worked as an intelligence officer with the Central Intelligence Agency for 32 years, retiring in 1993. Ralph moved to Bluffton from Washington D.C. in 1992.

He was currently serving as the chairman of the Wells County Republicans, a position which he assumed in March of 2011. He was a member of the First United Methodist Church, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 698, of which he was a founding member, VFW, American Legion Post 111 of Bluffton, M.C.C.A. (Marine Corps Cryptological Association), Bluffton Masonic Lodge, Scottish Rite, and the CIA Retirees Association. Ralph was a former member of the Optimist Club, founder and past chairman of the Wells Community Boys and Girls Club, past president of Citizens Against Drug Abuse of Wells

County, Community Corrections Board, past vice president of Indiana State V.V.A. Council and INSPi.

Indiana Governor Mike Pence recently selected Ralph to receive the Sagamore of the Wabash award. This is the highest and most respected civilian honor in Indiana.

Ralph assisted the courts and law enforcement with Spanish language translation services through his ACE Interpretations LLC, which he founded in 2001. He also was a private investigator, offering confidential investigation services as well as security and counterterrorism consulting services.

He was the author of an autobiography, "Harbor Knight" which detailed his early years growing up in the harbor areas of northwest Indiana as well as his years of service in the military and with the CIA.

On June 21, 1975 Ralph and Sandra (Vore) were married in Alexandria, Virginia.

Survivors include his wife Sandy of Bluffton, along with sons Rene A. (Randi) Garcia of Virginia, Robert J. (Dawna) Garcia of California, and a daughter, Jacquelyn M. Garcia of Indianapolis. He is also survived by his sisters Rachelle (John) Mucha of Texas and Yolanda (Hank) Kazmierczak.

Also surviving are grandchildren Chabree Martinez, Robby Garcia, Kandi Richardson, Kara Garcia, Joe Garcia, Bobby Garcia, Julie Garcia and Stormie Sloan. In addition, he is survived by 15 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents and a son, Ralph J. Garcia, a brother, Richard S. Garcia and a sister, Kathleen Ortiz.

A Patriotic Service to Celebrate Ralph's Life will be held at 10:30 on Saturday (December 17, 2016) at the First United Methodist Church in Bluffton. Pastors Steve Bard and Jerry Blevins will officiate. Calling hours will be held from 2 to 8 on Friday (December 16, 2016) at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. A Masonic Memorial Service will take place at 8 p.m. on Friday, at the conclusion of calling hours. Memorials may be made in Ralph's memory to the Wells Community Boys & Girls Club.

Ralph's arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home. Friends can send online condolences to the family at www.thomarich.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 16. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home
308 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN 46714
<http://www.thomarich.com>

MASONIC MEMORIAL SERVICE

DEC 16. 8:00 PM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home
308 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN 46714
<http://www.thomarich.com>

Celebration of Life Service

DEC 17. 10:30 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church
325 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN

Tribute Wall



“ *Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Ralph A Garcia*



Thoma/Rich,Lemler Funeral Home - December 16, 2016 at 03:41 PM

AN

Beautiful tribute to a wonderful man. It is so apparent how much he loved his family and his country! Thanks for sharing. Praying for you!

angie - December 16, 2016 at 10:57 PM

DG

What a wonderful tribute! His life was full of love, family, patriotism, helping others and laughter. He has touched many lives. His light will continue to shine through those who knew him. God be with you Sandy and your family. Love, Dorothy Grasso

Dorothy Grasso - December 17, 2016 at 05:53 AM

DD

A most fitting tribute to a man of service. My condolences to you Sandy and your family.

David Daugherty - December 17, 2016 at 02:15 PM

LS

Great tribute...will miss him lots!

Laura Sawyer - December 22, 2016 at 11:22 AM



“ *Ralph A Garcia*

September 08, 2022 at 08:26 PM



“ *Sandy, I was so sorry to learn of Ralph's passing. Please accept my condolences.*

Marilyn Creason

Marilyn Creason - January 02, 2017 at 03:10 PM



“ *Ralph was one of the first people to make us feel "welcome" when we moved to Bluffton 20 yrs. ago. His smile was so inviting and seemed to reach out to everyone. We are so sorry for this loss. Our sympathy goes to the family of Ralph Garcia. Sincerely, Jim and Joan Phelps.*

Joan Phelps - December 18, 2016 at 03:02 PM



“ *I met RAFA in Peru while serving as the Agent in Charge for DEA. RALPH was always a pleasure to be with. He served his country with honor. It was my honor to serve with him. I'll miss his sense of humor and his companionship. Rest in peace my friend. Semper Fi.*

Peter Rieff.

Peter Rieff - December 17, 2016 at 01:48 PM

FV

“ Nicole and I will never forget the wonderful times we had with Ralph and Sandy in Lima, Peru and Vienna, Virginia. We will always treasure those moments. Nicole, I and our family extend our condolences to Sandy and the rest of the Ralph's family, and pray that God will help them in this difficult time. Fred Villarreal

Fred Villarreal - December 17, 2016 at 10:06 AM

MO

“ My first memory of Ralph, happened to be at Hardee's during morning hours. There was a bench seat (dubbed The Liar's Bench by Dick Monroe; jokingly of course), and certain regulars gathered there to converse over coffee. Ralph became one of the gang and was loved and respected by all. Those who knew Ralph cannot but miss his presence....I will.



Max and Cathy Oswalt - December 16, 2016 at 12:57 PM

WB

“ Wally & Buddy purchased the Red & White Sympathy Basket for the family of Ralph A Garcia.



Wally & Buddy - December 15, 2016 at 12:14 PM

DD

“ I want to share a couple of stories about Ralph that make me smile. One day we were eating breakfast with Randy Harnish & Greg Starr. He wanted so badly to show us the East Chicago neighborhood where he grew up. " Just a day trip, you will love it." We never committed so he kept at it the next time we were together. We questioned how safe that would be going to places where other visitors don't go. "Oh, no worry, I know my way around." I finally said, "I'm not go'in if your not pack'in.....He looked at me with that serious look of his....."Douglas.....I'm always pack'in."

This fall he had a picture of his friend, Buddy, on facebook. They had served and worked together. Buddy lives in Florida but was vacationing in Afghanistan! I ask Ralph, "what in the world is Buddy doing in Afghanistan?" "I think I told you, I know I told you, Doug.....Buddies crazy Doug!"

I wish everyone could know the Ralph Garcia I knew. We went from being acquaintances to friends to best friends. I got to know him well, some of my friends got to know him well, my kids got to know him well. They pretty liberal, he pretty conservative. They respected and loved him. My daughter, Ti, who lives and works in the land of liberalism, Hollywood, still has the newspaper article announcing his book on her refrigerator. After she met Ralph she started attending Memorial Day services at Los Angeles National Cemetery. She does that every year and now takes friends with her. She does that to not only honor those who died but also to honor her friend, Ralph Garcia. He was proud of her for doing that, she, just as proud to do it. She was devastated at the news of his passing.....pretty amazing they would have that bond, so far apart, so different in age, so different in political views.

He was known for his military service, CIA work and also his leadership of a political party. He was less known for maybe his most important attribute.....an ability and a drive to help others which he did over and over, month after month, year after year. He saw kids in need so he took it upon himself to help start the local boys and girls club, not to make a name for himself in his new community but because he knew how much that would have meant to him if there had been one where he grew up. Vietnam veterans

deserving recognition and needing help....he stepped up and helped in starting the local Vietnam Veterans of America chapter. Hispanic families struggling and their kids in desperate need of a role model, needing encouragement to achieve more than they ever dreamed they could do. He told his story, a story like they were living, and, they could do it just like he did it. He changed lives. Those currently in the military got a care package from him because he knew how much that would have meant to him when he was serving in some lonely place on the other side of the world. For those who had experienced a loss or terrible tragedy, especially if they were military or had a military connection, he was there. A lot of people do this initially, but very few go back...he went back. He didn't forget and he made sure they knew he didn't forget. There will be those at his service who will know exactly what I am talking about because they experienced it firsthand.

He was a smart man, he knew how to get things done, he demanded answers, he offended some, he was caring, he helped so many.....and it all came from his heart. A patriot, a proud Marine who served in war, an honored CIA agent who served around the world.....in the end, all wrapped up in a red, white and blue package. I've never been prouder to know someone in my life. He was the real deal and one hell of a guy.

Doug Durr

Douglas Durr - December 15, 2016 at 11:48 AM

SG

He loved you, Doug, and treasured your friendship.

Sandy Garcia - December 16, 2016 at 08:51 AM

DL

What great memories, Doug. I'm lucky enough to know just what you're talking about. Debbie Lagomarsino

Debbie Lagomarsino - December 17, 2016 at 12:28 AM

CM

“ I am so blessed to be his granddaughter and to have him as my children's great grandfather.



Chabree (Garcia) Martinez - December 14, 2016 at 06:55 PM

SG

He was so proud of you and your family.

Sandy Garcia - December 15, 2016 at 10:49 AM

LG

“ Love, Michele & Julie Garcia purchased the Dish Garden with Fresh Cut Flowers for the family of Ralph A Garcia.



Love, Michele & Julie Garcia - December 14, 2016 at 01:48 PM

JB

“ A fallen hero and friend! So sad to hear of the passing of a classmate!



JoAnn Benda - December 14, 2016 at 12:40 PM

JA

Several years ago Ralph called me in Alaska. He knew I love to travel and suggested going to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Well Ralph---I did and you were correct--beautiful city.

JoAnn Benda (Rozow) from Valdez, Alaska - December 15, 2016 at 12:07 PM

JB

Travel to Mexico led to travels to Europe, Iceland, South America, Canada, Costa Rica---thank you Ralph for that phone call igniting my love to travel!

JoAnn (Rozow) Benda - January 10, 2017 at 08:33 PM

AC

“ *Garcia family,
We re so grateful for fine Americans like
Ralph who have given so much to our
country. May your memories of Ralph soothe
you, your friends comfort you, and your
family's strength help your hearts begin to heal. May the love you all
shared sustain you as you go through this time of sorrow. Our entire
membership sends our sympathy to the Garcia family. May Ralph
rest in peace.*



GOOD FRIENDS FROM INDIANA HARBOR
Ray Reyna, President
Andy Callas, Secretary

Andy Callas - December 14, 2016 at 06:00 AM

RM

“ I will miss my brother Ralph A. Garcia.
He will be gone but always remembered
By me.



Rachelle Garcia Mucha - December 13, 2016 at 06:18 PM



“ 103 files added to the album LifeTributes



Thoma/Rich,Lemler Funeral Home - December 13, 2016 at 03:01 PM



“ *Blue & White Sympathy Floor Basket was purchased for the family of Ralph A Garcia.*



December 13, 2016 at 12:28 PM



“ *Ralph and I served on the Congressional Academy Nominations Committee for many years. I always looked forward to seeing him on Interview Day each year. One of my favorite memories of Ralph occurred on an Interview Day a few years back. We were used to seeing Ralph arrive, dressed very smartly, in a sharp suit each year. One year, however, Ralph showed up wearing a very Christmasy hand-painted sweatshirt with a Christmas tree! He loved his shirt and was very proud to show it off. I believe he said it was made for him by a daughter or grandchild(???). Anyhow, as our very anxious young interview candidates walked in the door, the first person they saw was Ralph in his happy sweatshirt. You could actually see them physically relax as they met this nice man. He reminded them of a friendly grandfather. That interview year became known as the "Year of Ralph's Christmas Tree". It was one of our best because Ralph was so good at putting the kids at ease. I will miss Ralph very much, and send my deepest condolences to all of his families and friends. Ralph was a national treasure, and he will be so missed...
Amy Nan, USAFA Admission Liaison Officer*

Amy Nan - December 12, 2016 at 08:22 PM



Thank you so much for your memory, Amy. I had to smile as I read it.

Sandy Garcia - December 13, 2016 at 07:46 PM

CD

“ So sorry to hear of Ralph's passing. He was always a very good friend. He will be missed greatly! Thoughts and prayers are with you!

Gloria Gordon

Connie Brennan (Gloria's daughter) - December 12, 2016 at 05:09 PM

RM

“ Rick Michael lit a candle in memory of Ralph
A Garcia



Rick Michael - December 12, 2016 at 02:48 PM

ER

“ We served with Ralph in South America from 1970-1973 and our lives intertwined several times after that. Always full of energy, passionate about life, thankful for the positive turns he took, proudly served his country in both war and peace, and a successful survivor from humble beginnings and difficult surroundings. An American success story! Oh, deep sea fishing with he and his sons in South America was a hoot!! Ed Rohrbach

Ed Rohrbach - December 12, 2016 at 11:41 AM

BM

“ You will be missed by many my friend, we have a saying in law enforcement "good people" says it all about Ralph he was good people, all around. A good husband, father, grand father, brother, son and to Me a partner in law enforcement, when Ralph had your back you never had to worry, he would have given his life for me and I for him, I'm sure he was the same in his military career. We lost a good man, hard to take, especially in this word today when they are far and few in between. I salute you a job well done, Rest in Peace my friend!!!! Bill McGinn

Bill McGinn - December 12, 2016 at 08:21 AM



You have my deepest condolences, Sandy and family. What a legacy; hoping that your memories and love of him sustain you at this time

Nancy Halstead - December 12, 2016 at 04:23 PM

NM

“ I was shocked and saddened to hear of Ralph's passing. He always had a smile and a kind word and shared himself with the community. He will be greatly missed. Natalie Milholland

natalie milholland - December 12, 2016 at 06:10 AM

EF

“ ED. Ferguson lit a candle in memory of Ralph A Garcia



ED. Ferguson - December 11, 2016 at 11:06 PM

WL

“ To the family of Ralph Garcia, I send condolences from my family upon his passing!

We served together and shared a few experiences! Ralph, you've gone too soon, and your Watch is over! REST, my friend!



Wayne E. Lampkin - December 11, 2016 at 07:43 PM

RW

“ We first met in Caracas in the early 70's. Later we served together in Kinshasa. We played guitars together, laughed a lot and worked under stress. I loved his constant smile and bubbly personality. We send our condolences to Sandy and his kids, grandkids, and great grandkids. They will miss him; so shall we all.

Rod & Carol Ward

Rodney Ward - December 11, 2016 at 02:17 PM

SG

And your dog howled when the two of you played guitars.

Sandy Garcia - December 11, 2016 at 11:07 PM

BG

“ Sandy, so sorry to hear about your husband. Our thoughts are with you and your family during this difficult time. May God surround you with love and give you peace! Becky and Bob Gibson

Becky Gibson - December 11, 2016 at 01:36 PM

DF

“ *Ralph was more than a friend... he was an American hero. There will be a huge void in our lives and hearts as we miss him .
Dr. and Mrs. Robert Girod and family*

Dr. Robert Girod and family - December 11, 2016 at 12:19 PM

LD

“ *I wish I had been fortunate enough to know Ralph. He married my college roommate so that tells me he was a very special man.
Sincere sympathies Sandy and family. Linda Dawson*

linda dawson - December 11, 2016 at 11:54 AM

VJ

“ *Sandy and family, Thinking of you. God bless. The Dwight Wilson family (Doris Ann, Valerie and Stan)*

Valerie Wilson Jackson - December 11, 2016 at 11:34 AM

DP

“ *Dan And Peg Paxson lit a candle in memory of Ralph A Garcia*



Dan and Peg Paxson - December 11, 2016 at 10:09 AM

LP

“ Love forever, Bob and Donna Padgett purchased the Healing Tears - All White for the family of Ralph A Garcia.



Love forever, Bob and Donna Padgett - December 11, 2016 at 09:17 AM

JG

“ RALPH WAS A MAN TO BE ADMIRERD ...WISH THERE WERE MORE LIKE HIM. GOD BLESS YOU, SANDY AND FAMILY.

JOAN GARRISON - December 10, 2016 at 10:57 AM

JA

“ Ralph will be missed by so many people who will all have something special that stands out. Ralph as most know was a little ornery at times and liked to tell a good story. Mine begins with him telling me about a boy who had a name of Joe Fartenhouser and he decided he wanted to change his name. He went to the Judge for this to happen. The Judge wanted to know his name and after telling him the Judge said I understand, but what do you want to change it to? The boy replied "Willey" which blindsided the Judge. Why would you want to change it to Willey he asked. Because every time anyone sees me they always ask "Hey Joe what do you know?" Every time Ralph would see me it was always "Hey Joe what do you know?" It was a lame story but I looked forward to hearing it from him. Thanks for your service to our country Ralph!

Joe Ayers - December 09, 2016 at 03:35 PM

HW

Extending our deepest sympathy to you, Sandy & family in the loss of Ralph.

*The Wilson Family
Cousins of Ruby Vore*

Holly Wilson - December 11, 2016 at 11:57 AM

SG

Joe, he loved telling that story.

Sandy Garcia - December 15, 2016 at 10:52 AM