

Joel Matthew Verutti



It is with great sadness that we announce the peaceful passing of Joel on February 5, 2011, after a 13 month challenge with a malignant glioblastoma brain tumor. He was 56 years old.

Born in Hollister, CA, on November 2, 1954, to Valance and Jessie Verutti he was raised as a 4th generation native in San Juan Bautista, CA.

He attended local schools until Palma Junior High in Salinas. He graduated from Palma High School where he was an exceptional baseball player and football quarterback. He earned a partial baseball scholarship to Fresno State University, but did not attend due to family

financial struggles.

He spent nearly 35 years in construction. The first several years he helped build homes in the North Shore area of Lake Tahoe. In 1983, he moved back to San Juan Bautista to help build a large adobe down near the Pinnacles. In 1986, he joined Granite Rock Company, where he worked for 23 years. Unfortunately, due to the economic slowdown in May he was laid off. He worked for a few short months with his nail bags on again until the severe headaches caused a trip to the doctor and an MRI just before Christmas of 2009.

While living in Tahoe his passion for sailing began. He sailed on 505's with his brother Mark and then had the opportunity to sail on a Moore 24. Oh, he was hooked! He loved those boats and sailed every opportunity that came his way.

In May of 1983, he purchased his own Moore 24 sailboat. Hull # 55, already named Mercedes, would leave Lake Tahoe and come down with Joel to San Juan Bautista. With no lakes nearby the Santa Cruz Harbor became its new home. He was folding a sail on the ballpark grass when a guy stopped his car and said, "I can help you with that". That started the friendship with Leonardo Santana. They sailed Wednesday night races, and started finding crew for the boat; both gals and guys. One of those gals would be invited to go for a Wednesday night sail by Leonard but she had to work late in the engineering department of Seagate. She still joined the large group of at least a dozen that went to Manuel's for dinner following the race. She was at one end of the long table and Joel was at the other end. When she left that night she asked Leonard, "Who is that guy at the end of the table?" When Joel left that night, he asked "Who was the girl at the end of the table?" Yes, this began the nearly 28 year romance of Tina Badeaux and Joel in June of 1983. One official date, and a year later he proposed at Jardine's in San Juan Bautista. A year later they were married at the Mission in San Juan and lived in San Juan Bautista until 1994 when they moved to Corralitos to be closer to the harbor. In 2006, they moved to Aptos, even closer to the harbor.

Joel's passion for sailing continued. He was always one of the first to welcome new boat owners and crew to the Moore 24 Family. He was President of the fleet at two different times and helped

every year to put on regattas and promote the fleet. The boat travelled to Lake Tahoe, Whiskeytown Lake, Huntington Lake, Hood River Oregon, the Seattle area and San Francisco Bay when not sailing in Santa Cruz. This passion was passed on to his daughter Josselyn from birth. She has grown up around these boats and now takes part in the Junior Sailing program in the El Toro fleet.

Joel is survived by his loving and compassionate wife of 25 years, Tina and his daughter that he adored, Josselyn, age 11. He is also survived by his brother Mark Verutti and wife Ann, his sister Valerie Verutti, his brother-in-law Jon Badeaux and wife Jane. In addition he is survived by nephews Michael Kahne, Dominic and Samuel Verutti and nieces Elizabeth Mansfield and Juliet Kahne and several cousins. He was particularly close to cousin Charlie Verutti and wife Kerry. He had many very dear friends that are too numerous to name that gave their time and support to Joel throughout these last 13 months.

Joel is preceded in death by his daughter Lauren in 1990, and son Neil in 1992, along with his parents Valance and Jessie Verutti.

Thank you to Susan, Theresa, Dione and Veda of Hospice of Santa Cruz County for your gentle care these last two months.

A gathering to celebrate and share his 56 years of joy, friendship and love will take place at the Santa Cruz Yacht Club on Saturday, March 12 at 11 AM. Afterwards a light lunch will be followed with a sail out of the harbor and around a buoy or two for those interested. His ashes will be scattered as he wished at Huntington Lake later this summer.

A fund has been established to assist Tina and Josselyn with current and future financial needs. Donations may be made to the Joel Verutti Memorial Fund, Acct # 051002517, Santa Cruz County Bank 7775 Soquel Dr. Aptos, CA 95003 831-662-6000 attn: Alexandria Gonzalez, Service Manager. Please visit www.pacificgardenschapel.com to sign the online guest book.