



John Towata JR

JUN 17, 1947 - JUL 30, 2020



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Funeral, Cemetery
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Towata, Jr., John S., in San Leandro, July 30, 2020.

Beloved father of Allison Van Voorhis, Lindsey Fukasawa, Amanda Melsby, Jonathan Towata, Philip Knezevich and Anna Towata. Loving grandfather of Zoey and Zachary Fukasawa. Father-in-law of Paul Van Voorhis, Jeff Fukasawa, Brad Melsby, Malia Knezevich and Meagan Towata. Nephew of Virginia “Ginger” Masuoka and many loving cousins and their families. Former husband to Lily Kvitky and Christine Port.

A native of Alameda, aged 73 years, John passed peacefully on Thursday, July 30, 2020. His son Jonathan and daughter Anna were at his side.

John, known as Junior to friends and family, was born on June 17, 1947 in Alameda, CA. He was the son of long-time Alameda residents John Towata, Sr. and Georgianna “Anna” Towata. A proud graduate of Alameda High School, class of 1965, and the University of California, Berkeley in 1970, where he graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration. During his time at Cal he took time off to enlist in the Marine Corps Reserve and was trained as a jet mechanic. He remained active in the Reserves until being honorably discharged. In 1971, he went into the family flower business with his father and opened the second John S.Towata Flowers in Oakland, California. John worked at both the Oakland and Alameda flower shops until his retirement in 2009.

John inherited his mother’s keen sense of humor and his parents’ strong sense of family and community--all of which he would carry throughout his life. John was a loving and proud father and grandfather. He was known to family and friends alike for his generosity, quick (and sometimes mischievous) sense of humor, and good-hearted stubbornness. Throughout his life, John was active in many Alameda organizations including the Alameda Oakland Athletic Club (AOAC), Buena Vista Methodist Church, Alameda Buddhist Temple, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), Kiwanis Club, the Alameda Chamber of Commerce and Jaycees, as well



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as the Piedmont Avenue Merchants Association in Oakland, the American Red Cross, and he served as an officer of Florists' Transworld Delivery (FTD).

Funeral services will be privately held with John's immediate family due to COVID-19 restrictions, with a larger memorial for all friends and family being planned for next year Thursday, June 17, 2021 on what would be his 74th birthday to celebrate John's life.

To ensure the health and safety of our community, we are following all guidelines set by local, state and CDC officials. If you are planning on attending a service, please contact the funeral home in advance, so that we can plan accordingly.



Tribute Wall

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Christy Begley posted:

I was a friend of the family and I remember how loved Mr. Towata was by his children and the community. I'm so sorry to hear of his passing. Christy Begley

January 2 at 9:42 PM



Janet Schreiber Peterson posted:

I just walked into the old Towata Flower Shop on Santa Clara Ave (now a new flower business) and found out about Jr. I'm heartbroken. I have fond memories of working with Jr. and Dennis back in the late 60's and early 70's. Johnny, Anna and Dorothy were so kind to me. I remember sitting at the table for lunch and Jr. and Chuck Mudge would try and out do each other on the hottest pepper stuff they could find. Crazy! Every work table in the place in the back had cigarette burns from Johnny. So many memories.

May 1 at 11:43 AM



Michelle Morimoto Johnson posted:

I am so grateful to Lily and Jr.! In the mid 1980's, Lily suggested I help sweep the floors at the shop but I ended up learning so much more. The shop was an important part of my growing up. I learned how to talk to customers, make bows and arrangements and so much more! It was my first job in 8th grade and I worked thru HS and during summer breaks in college. I met so many WONDERFUL people!! I have so many great pictures and great memories of all the fun we had. Jr. will always have a special place in my heart!

August 12 at 3:35 PM



Love, Judy, Lauren And Kelly Miyamoto sent an Enduring Grace to the Towata family.

August 10 at 3:58 AM



Anonymous sent a Sentiments of Serenity Spray to the Towata family.

August 9 at 5:34 AM





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Anonymous sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Towata family.



August 6 at 2:04 PM



Evelyn Nakano Glenn posted:

My family's relationship with the Towata Family go back more than a century, John Junior's father and my father grew up in the tight-knit Japanese American community of Alameda, California and were life-long friends. John Junior's parents, Anna and John Towata and my parents were lifelong friends. The Flower Shop of John Towata was famous in Alameda and the East Bay, and John Junior carried on the family legacy after he graduated from U.C. Berkeley, not only running flower shops, but also taking leadership roles in the trade organization, Florists' Transworld Delivery. Many local families called on John Junior to create floral arrangement for important occasions such as weddings, anniversaries, and funerals. His artistry and generosity were legendary. In addition, John Junior was a loving son, providing day-to day care for his mother for many years., We will sorely miss your cheerful presence at church and temple events. Rest in Peace, Dear Friend. Evelyn Nakano Glenn

August 5 at 12:13 PM



Kandice Crusat December 21 at 7:40 AM

I am so saddened to find this news which is already a year and a half old. My heart goes out to his family. I worked at John's Piedmont Avenue flower shop for one year in 1973-74, right after graduating from High School. Since then I have had a life long love of flower arranging. The whole Towata family was so sweet and treated me like one of the family. I worked at the Alameda shop sometimes too. Anna was so sweet. They brought huge lunches and invited everyone to eat with them. It was how I learned to eat with chopsticks. I have thought of the family ever since then and have missed them. I used to go to visit the Piedmont shop whenever I was visiting my parents. John was always there working hard. Once he took me to the early morning flower market in San Francisco at 5:00 am I think. That was an amazing experience I'll never forget. And I'll never forget the Towata family and their kindness.



Anna "Annie" Towata August 6 at 12:57 PM

Thank you so much for sharing those kind words about Dad.



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Anonymous sent a With Our Deepest Sympathy Gift Basket to the Towata family.

August 3 at 8:25 AM



Sara Jotoku posted:

John Junior (always "Junior" to friends and family :o) was a dear friend, who really was a part of the Nakano family in Alameda. Junior was always there for our important family events, including the memorial service for my grandmother, when he gave us a beautiful orchid which lived for years and was a constant reminder of both my grandmother and Junior's generosity. I also remember arriving at the Alameda Buddhist Temple bazaar each year and scanning the crowds for Junior - I could always catch his kind, smiling face from among the sea of people. Rest in peace Junior, you were loved and will be missed.

August 3 at 8:16 AM



Anna "Annie" Towata August 6 at 12:59 PM

Thank you so much for sharing. Dad always loved the bazaars and seeing everyone.



Evelyn Nakano Glenn August 5 at 11:53 AM

Our family has ties with John Towata Junior that stretch back more than a century. His father and my father grew up as part of the Japanese American community in Alameda and were lifelong friends. John, John Junior, and Anna were dear friends. John Junior carried on his family legacy in the floral industry. He provided beautiful floral arrangements for countless community and family events, whether for happy occasions such as birthdays, anniversaries and weddings or for sad occasions such as the passing of a loved one. We will miss his comforting presence. Rest in peace, dear friend.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring John by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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