



Juan Sosa

December 5, 1934 - November 20, 2025

Juan Archuleta Sosa was born on December 5, 1934, from humble beginnings in a dirt-floor shack in Big Spring, Texas, at the height of the Great Depression. The son of Eduardo and Josefina (Archuleta) Sosa, Juan entered the world with little more than grit, faith in possibility, and a quiet determination that carried him through ninety remarkable years. On November 20, 2025, he passed peacefully at Quincy Place Senior Living in Holland, Michigan, surrounded by the love he spent a lifetime giving away.

He was the last torchbearer of his generation, now reunited with his parents and his brothers Martin, Bonee, Pete Rodriguez, Eduardo Jr., and Joe Sosa, as well as his sisters Nina Fierro, Josie Schadalee, Lilia Vasquez, and Sofia Mascarro.

Juan leaves behind a legacy woven into the hearts of his daughter and her husband, Patricia and Ken Verduin, and his son and wife, Jason and Jiana Sosa. He lives on in his five grandchildren, Ken and Joe Verduin, and Jaden, Maddox, and Harrison Sosa, along with extended family and countless friends who were drawn to his warmth, his humor, and the unmistakable kindness in his eyes.

A pioneer in every sense, Juan worked Texas farms in the 1950s under a punishing sun, but his vision stretched far beyond the fields. He became the one who led his family north to West Michigan, planting new roots in richer soil so those who came after him could grow in ways he never had the chance to. He taught himself English by watching John Wayne movies, borrowing the

spirit of the American cowboy to carve out his own path.

Despite years of tireless study, dyslexia kept the written word distant, but it never kept him small. Juan built his life through intuition, courage, and work ethic. "They weren't made by gods," he'd say whenever he fixed something no one else could. He was a farmer, a sheep medic, a long-haul trucker, a nightclub bouncer, an antique dealer, a salon owner, a real-estate investor, and a restaurateur. As the owner of Sosa's Restaurant on 8th Street from 1980 to 1995, he became part of the community's heartbeat. Almost anything he touched, he invested his entire being into, and eventually he mastered. His generosity was legendary. Once, after buying a piece of land in northern Michigan, the seller realized he had made a huge pricing mistake, caused by the same inability to read that Juan himself knew all too well. Rather than take advantage, Juan handed the property back. He remembered what it felt like to be vulnerable. He chose dignity over profit. He held these values until his last day.

Juan also carried a sense of humor that could dissolve tension in an instant. He was known to ride his youngest grandson's tiny tricycle just to make the kids laugh, or vacuum the top of his head while cutting his own hair, delighting in the absurdity of life.

As a father, he showed love through presence. A flat tire, a move, a rough day, or a simple call for tacos or caldo, he was there. Mexican food became one of the great bonds between him and his children, a shared ritual that required nothing more than a booth, a plate, and time together. He taught his kids the same lesson he lived by: you can do anything you set your mind to. Juan carried an old-world grit, but he never lost his childlike wonder. The smallest things brought him joy, a smile from a child, the sound of a bird, the rustle of leaves on a sunny day. He moved through life grateful for what most people overlook. In his final years, he remained generous, gentle, and deeply present, giving whatever he had whenever someone asked.

Spiritually, he attended church but walked his own path. He didn't fit neatly into labels. He simply loved others as himself, and in doing so, he lived out a

faith that was authentic, beautiful, and unmistakably his own. He lived as a servant, listening as though you were the only soul on earth, offering wisdom to strangers that felt heaven-sent, drawing tears and trust from people he'd only just met. His kindness was magnetic, his humor disarming, his stubborn streak the good kind that refused to let loved ones settle for less than their dreams.

He valued three things above all: freedom, authenticity, and honor. He embodied them in every season of his life and instilled these values in his children.

Juan Sosa was a man born in a dirt-floor shack, a self-made patriarch whose hands carried hard work and whose eyes carried compassion. He succeeded in business despite his limitations, but most importantly proved that courage and love can move mountains and move families from Texas fields to the shores of opportunity for generations to come.

Rest gently, the world is better because you were in it, and your story will echo long after the last page is turned. Your legacy is forever in the people you helped shape.

A private celebration of his life and memory will be held in spring of 2026.


Tribute Wall

AB

“ I had the pleasure of helping Jon when he was still living at home. Every word of his obituary rings so true to me recalling our time that we spent together. The stories that he would tell would bring me to tears, the lessons in life that he told touched me and helped me grow in my own. I was there by request of Jon’s family to help him when an actuality I think he helped me more than I did him. I’m truly sorry for your loss. My deepest condolences. I will think of him often sincerely, Amanda Becksvoort

Amanda Becksvoort - November 28, 2025 at 07:23 PM

FA

“ Everytime we talked he'd always joke about something and make me laugh. Always greeted me with a hug and smile. And if anyone came up to him while we were talking he'd always say"this is my cousin' . I loved how he always knew who I was.....la sangria llama....to all my Sosa relatives may you all find comfort,.....prayers


Frances Falcon de Arriola - November 22, 2025 at 08:38 PM

JH

Hi . I only met Johnny a few times. My dad was his first cousin. I loved hearing about who he was and how he lived his life. I feel similar to him. Good people ate always missed. May God continue to bless all of his family. Sincerely, Janet Martinez (Hilton)

janet Hilton - November 23, 2025 at 03:09 PM

RV

“ I remember my Tio Juan always making me focus on the positive. Much Love abd Respect to all my Sosa family.

Rosalinda S Vasquez - November 21, 2025 at 08:24 PM

CA

Yes. Great mentor. Selabrate. Another great life lived. ...carlos

Carlos - November 22, 2025 at 02:23 PM

AW

I don't remember how they first met, but my late husband, Herb, enjoyed many times of conversation and probaby coffee or lunch together with Mr. Juan. My sympathy to you, Pat, and your family. Ann Weller

Ann Weller - November 22, 2025 at 07:49 PM