



## Edward Ronald Acosta

March 1, 1947 - July 1, 2025

Edward Ronald Acosta Obituary San Antonio, TX – Honoring a Legacy of Service, Family, and Community

San Antonio, TX — Edward Ronald Acosta, a beloved father, veteran, man of faith, entrepreneur, and generous community leader, passed away on July 1, 2025, in San Antonio, Texas. He was 78 years old at the time of his passing. Born on March 1, 1947, in Los Angeles, California, Ron was the cherished son of Gerard Acosta and Ruth Gardea. He lived a full life filled with hard work, dedication to excellence, faith, family, and an unwavering passion to serve others. He was the only boy and fearlessly handled three sisters, Sandra Acosta, Marcia Acosta, and Christine Acosta-Fogarty.

Ron was a proud graduate of Garfield High School (where “Stand and Deliver” was filmed) and he was ranked second in the entire state of California for Math. His early brilliance would inevitably lead him to a life of discipline, service, and success. While in high school, Ron also enjoyed being on the tennis team which won city champion, in a competitive and large Los Angeles. From serving in the Navy to launching iconic restaurants like Las Palapas, and from feeding downtown workers to supporting students in need, Ron's legacy has touched countless lives.

A Proud Garfield High Bulldog

Ron Acosta's journey began at Garfield High School in Los Angeles, where he not only shined academically but developed the discipline that guided him through life. His ranking as second-best in Math statewide was only one of his

early accomplishments. He was also accepted into the Los Angeles Fire Department, after passing rigorous tests.

Garfield High would remain close to his heart for the rest of his life. In later years, Ron gave back immensely—supporting students, athletes, and cultural programs.

#### Dedicated Military Service

In 1966, Ron was drafted into the United States Navy during the Vietnam War. Though first selected for elite submarine duty, he opted to become a radioman aboard the USS Oklahoma City after realizing submarine life didn't suit him—he missed the daily showers! Fortunately, for his dedication to hygiene, his mathematical mind landed him a critical position in the decoding/radio room on the Admirals Ship in the Vietnam conflict.

After finishing boot camp in San Diego, he surprised his family at home in Montebello. His sister, Christy, recalled the joy of seeing him at the door in his Navy blues, smiling wide, with a duffel bag on his shoulder. His mother cried with joy—Ron loved to surprise people!

#### From Hot Truck to Restaurant Empire

After his Navy service, Ron began with a simple bare-bones hot food truck. He drove it through downtown Los Angeles, making sure to reach workers all over town during their breaks. He was able to secure several large business accounts that were highly sought after and this was the beginning of his restaurant success.

In November of 1979, he moved to San Antonio with his wife Gloria Martinez Cuellar and his uncle, Jack Gardea. Together, Ron and Jack opened a small restaurant on S Flores. Shortly after, he opened King Taco on the West Side of San Antonio. This was only the beginning.

In 1981, the first Las Palapas opened in Central Park Mall alongside the Fish Net and New York Deli. This was truly a family affair, and all hands were on deck to help get this restaurant off the ground. A small Winchell's Donuts became the first location outside of the mall. Many of Ron's longtime employees and respected friends originated from this location and original

stomping ground of an establishment. It later moved to the iconic Churchill location across from Churchill High School. From there, Ron, with help from his family, built the Las Palapas restaurant empire.

#### Las Palapas and Beyond

By the 35th Anniversary of Las Palapas, Ron had grown Las Palapas into more than ten locations in San Antonio. The restaurant became known for its authentic Mexican food (namely, the Okie Burrito) and heartfelt service.

Ron also opened Ruthie's Mexican Restaurant—named after his mother, Ruth. The famous "Mama Ruth's Flauta Special" at Las Palapas remains a fan favorite. He sold this location to one of his most loyal and favored cooks.

Ron was a "wheeler and dealer," and found himself investing and helping with the establishments of other successful businesses, namely Max and Louie's New York Diner and Blue Prime Steakhouse.

#### Giving Through the Jireh Foundation

In 2002, alongside his late wife Elssy Esther Acosta, Ron launched the Jireh Foundation. This charitable organization was dedicated to helping widows and children in need.

The foundation raised and distributed significant funds to support struggling families. Ron and Elssy expanded the charitable reach of Las Palapas, and Ron's children later followed his example, forming nonprofits focused on community service.

#### Ron's Commitment to his Friends, Faith, Fun, and Philanthropy

Some of Ron's favorite past-times included photography, playing golf with his buddies, like Jack Parker, playing with and buying old cars, trying the best new restaurants with Jeanie Leonard, traveling the country (especially visiting his old stomping grounds in East L.A.) and studying the bible with Ron Rivas and Pastor Rudy Ramirez. His favorite scriptures can be remembered and read below.

One of his biggest areas of passion was helping others, including strangers. Whether it be someone he helped on the street or making fast friends and

offering a helping hand, or a word of encouragement. His impact was felt from East Los Angeles to Central America, to the Middle East, and beyond.

To memorialize his commitment to helping those in need and supporting a cause close to his heart, Ron helped establish the Acosta-Gardea Center for Community Resilience located at Ariel University located in the heart of Israel. The center serves as a hub for interdisciplinary collaborations, professional trainings, community outreach coordination and the development of innovative tools to enhance the national preparedness and recovery efforts in times of crisis.

Ron was raised with a love of God from an early age. He accepted Jesus as his Lord and savior, in 1989. Shortly after, all of his restaurants began to “Close on Sundays for Family and Worship’. Those closest to him, began to see changes he was making in his life, that would eventually lead him to the man we all knew before he passed away. He loved studying the Bible with friends and would regularly send out scriptures of encouragement to his family and loved ones. John 11:25-26, John 3:16

Supporting the Garfield High Community

In 2014, Ron established a scholarship program for graduating seniors at Garfield High School. This initiative was designed to help students pursue their academic goals and attend college—many of whom might not have had the opportunity without this support.

Ron’s passion for athletics led him to serve as a key benefactor to Garfield's athletic department. He donated vital sports equipment including uniforms, team equipment, ice machines, and sponsored team championship rings. His contributions ensured that the Bulldogs teams had the tools necessary to train and compete at their highest level.

The gift of the first mariachi uniforms for Garfield High School helped celebrate the school’s rich cultural heritage and provided students with a sense of pride and identity while performing and representing Garfield in the community to this day.

Whenever Garfield faced budget limitations, Ron stepped forward to bridge

the gap—consistently supporting projects and programs that lacked funding. His generosity was driven not by recognition, but by a deep and personal connection to the school and a desire to give back to the school that molded his youth.

In a tribute to those who served, Ron also played a leading role in helping to establish the first memorial wall at a Los Angeles Unified School. Located on the Garfield campus, this wall honors many service members, which proudly includes Ron's name as a Vietnam War veteran. It stands as a powerful symbol of remembrance and respect for those who served their country. Beyond his philanthropic efforts, Ron has been honored by the school community in several meaningful ways. He was invited to serve as the honorary team captain for the annual Garfield vs. Roosevelt football game—widely recognized as the largest high school rivalry west of the Mississippi. He was also selected as the keynote speaker at a Garfield High School graduation, where he addressed students with words of inspiration and pride.

#### Honored and Celebrated by His Alma Mater

As Garfield High School prepares to celebrate its 100th anniversary on September 6, 2025, Mr. Ron Acosta will be formally recognized for his extraordinary generosity and lifelong support.

His close friend, and former head football coach, and current athletic director at Garfield- Coach Lorenzo-stated that Ron will be celebrated not just for his gifts, but for his unwavering love and loyalty to Garfield High School community.

#### Beloved Father and Family Man

Edward Ronald Acosta is preceded in death by his parents, his loving wife Elssy Esther Acosta and his beloved sister Marcia Ruiz. He is survived by his loving children Aaron Christopher Acosta, Matthew Christian Acosta, Joshua Ronald Acosta, and Ashlynn Rose Acosta.

He also leaves behind his grandchildren Samantha Martinez, Jeremy Acosta, Zachary Acosta, Aliyah Acosta, Serena Acosta, Lucas Acosta, and great-grandchildren Madeline Martinez and Rowan Acosta, and soon-to-be great

grandchild Benjamin Martinez. He is survived by his sisters Sandra Acosta and Christine Acosta-Fogarty.

Ron's life was filled with deep love for his family. His legacy of kindness and dedication will live on in all who knew him.

Celebrate Ron's Life with Flowers and Words of Faith

To honor Edward Ronald Acosta's life, you can send flowers to his family through trusted online flower delivery services.

His memory will never fade—his love, vision, and strength live on through his family, community, and the many lives he changed.

“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.”

Numbers 6: 24-26 NIV

“The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him.”

Proverbs 20:7

“I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.”

Jeremiah 17:10 NIV

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”

Matthew 5:8 NIV

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God,, believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”

John 14:1-3 NIV

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my

life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.” Psalm 23 KJV

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUL 16. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels Dominion  
20900 IH 10 West  
San Antonio, TX 78257  
(210) 698-5252

## Funeral Service

JUL 17. 10:00 AM (CT)

Cornerstone Church  
18755 Stone Oak Pkwy  
San Antonio, TX 78258  
(210) 490-1600

# Tribute Wall



“ Irene Gardea & girls Elaine and Carolyn purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.



Irene Gardea & girls Elaine and Carolyn - July 17, 2025 at 09:56 AM



“ Las Palapas Churchill purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.



Las Palapas Churchill - July 16, 2025 at 02:44 PM



“ Adriana & Mariana Lumbreras purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.



Adriana & Mariana Lumbreras - July 16, 2025 at 02:38 PM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.



July 16, 2025 at 01:41 PM

TS

“ *The Children's Shelter purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.*



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**The Children's Shelter** - July 16, 2025 at 09:24 AM

KC

“ *Kim Troup & Shmuel Junger - CFOIC purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.*



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**Kim Troup & Shmuel Junger - CFOIC** - July 15, 2025 at 05:15 PM

KT

“ *I will miss hearing Ron's voice, his love for God, his dedication to bless Israel, and his genuine soul. He was truly a godly man with an incredible witness and testimony. He was always positive and encouraging, even when he was not feeling well or facing a challenge. Thank you Ron for standing with and supporting Israel with all your heart.*

*Kim Troup  
Christian Friends of Israeli Communities*

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**Kim Troup** - July 15, 2025 at 05:06 PM

FA

“ All strength to the Acosta family in this difficult period. May the good memories warm your hearts. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

*Marlon & Faroshia Ashley, The Netherlands.*

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**Faroshia Ashley** - July 15, 2025 at 12:54 PM

LL

“ *Lucy Londono purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.*



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**Lucy Londono** - July 15, 2025 at 09:23 AM

PF

“ *Ron, You will be missed. Your sense of humour always made me smile.*

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**Paul Fogarty** - July 14, 2025 at 09:15 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.*



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July 14, 2025 at 03:12 PM

SM

“ My deepest condolences to Christy and all of the Acosta family. Ron was so well respected by family, friends and business associates. He will be missed. 💜

Sandy Maasoe (Houston)

Sandy Maasoe - July 14, 2025 at 02:55 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.



July 14, 2025 at 01:16 PM

BM

“ Bill and Lisa McCallick purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.



Bill and Lisa McCallick - July 14, 2025 at 12:50 PM

RB

“ Raymond and Janie Braun purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.



Raymond and Janie Braun - July 14, 2025 at 11:44 AM

DJ

“ *Darlene Johnson purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.*



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**Darlene Johnson** - July 13, 2025 at 08:35 PM

RF

“ *Deepest condolences and sympathy to Christy and and the extended Acosta Family  
Rest in peace Ron you are an example of a life well lived.*

*Roy and Paula Fogarty (Ireland)*

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**Roy Fogarty** - July 13, 2025 at 06:54 AM

AH

“ *Deepest condolences to Christy and all the Acosta family . You are in our thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.  
Alan and Alice Hynes  
Ireland*

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**alice hynes** - July 12, 2025 at 03:30 PM

AA

“ *Love you dad*

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**Ashlynn Rose Acosta** - July 12, 2025 at 11:31 AM



“ *Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.*



July 11, 2025 at 02:06 PM



“ *Our prayers are with the family. Mary & Joseph Padron*



maryjane.zavala-padron - July 09, 2025 at 05:01 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.*



July 08, 2025 at 01:42 PM



“ *Anything for You was purchased for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.*



July 08, 2025 at 10:51 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Edward Ronald Acosta.



July 08, 2025 at 09:24 AM



“ Robert Martinez lit a candle in memory of Edward Ronald Acosta



Robert Martinez - July 07, 2025 at 10:52 AM



Awee .. Miss u Already Bro, at Church, seeing u on Sunday s....Deepest Condolences to the Immediate family and closest loved ones..

EW - July 09, 2025 at 10:51 PM



The Pici family sends blessings and condolences to all who love Ron. May God bless his memory and his legacy. ❤️

Sybel Pici - July 13, 2025 at 12:32 AM



When Ron was a teenager , all of us cousins would get together for a birthday party and then we would dance and I remember Ron doing the mashed potatoes to Chubby Checker and he was good. Love Eunice

Eunice Palmer - July 16, 2025 at 11:28 AM