

Johnny P. Anteola Jr.

August 22, 1948 - January 24, 2024

An hour before his wife's funeral services were about to begin, Johnny Anteola pulled out his cellphone and listened to a voice message that was delivered late.

For some reason, the message was received a few days after wife Azucena "Zeny" Anteola's passing.

"Hey Hon," Zeny said in the saved voicemail played on speakerphone. "I'm just here, waiting for you. Let me know when you're ready to come home."

Johnny laughed a bit and smiled.

"Can you believe that?" Johnny said to one of his children. "Why am I getting this now? You think your Mom is telling me something?"

One month and three days after Azucena R. Anteola left this world, Johnny P. Anteola Jr. passed, too.

Johnny, a devoted family man and an Air Force veteran and civil servant for 42 years, drew his last breath Jan. 24, 2024.

He was 75 years old.

Though Johnny had increased health issues over the past few months and endured dialysis treatment, it is of his children's belief that Dad ultimately died from a broken heart.

A heart that sorely missed the love of his life.

Johnny and Zeny, who were married for 50 years, were together again.

In Heaven and happy, by the grace of the "Good Lord."

That's how Johnny often referred to God as he pondered the future and reminisced of his past.

Together, they raised three children - Veronica Senia, Bryant-Jon Anteola and Christopher Anteola.

In their safe and loving household, family dinners almost always were eaten together, and everyone had fun watching football or family sitcoms, or playing cards or board games.

And as their children got older and married and had kids of their own, Johnny's and Zeny's love for their family grew stronger.

Johnny, in particular, enjoyed addressing his children and grandchildren as "Sweetheart."

Johnny was not the most expressive or talkative person.

But when it came to his grandchildren - Carina Senia, Matteo Anteola, Leopold Anteola and Lenya Anteola - he became outgoing.

"Just a little bit of lovin'," Johnny would sing for his grandchildren, reciting lyrics he wrote years ago when his own children were very young. "Just a little bit of love. Just a little bit of lovin', my darling.

"Just a little bit of love."

For one birthday party for oldest grandkid Carina, Johnny dressed as a genie, wearing bright yellow pants and a tall teal hat.

Johnny learned early in life the true meaning of family, as well as the importance of having fun together, thanks to his parents Dolores and Johnny Anteola Sr., who together raised five children and often held celebrations at their home in Browns Mills, New Jersey.

As the middle child, Johnny was blessed to form a strong bond with both his older siblings, Billy and Helen, as well as his younger brothers, Henry and Tony.

Johnny enlisted in the U.S. Air Force shortly after graduating from Pemberton Township High School in 1967.

He spent 20 years in the Air Force, doing administration and information management and achieving the high rank of Master Sergeant. He then worked in the civil service for 22 years, providing services in postal work, security, foreign disclosure and logistics.

Though he was proud of his time with the Air Force, Johnny never made his career a primary focus.

He had many other interests and dreams.

He loved songwriting and singing.

He enjoyed planting, landscaping, drawing and deejaying.

Johnny also was known for being tough to beat in bowling and at the pool table.

And he was always excited to play bingo and go to the casinos.

But his ultimate passion came from being a protector and a provider and a fun-loving personality for his family.

Like coaching little league baseball.

Taking his family to church on Sundays and serving as an usher and an active member of the Knights of Columbus.

Or driving his kids all around for piano recitals, band concerts and sports practices.

In the kids' college years, Johnny would drive 400 miles in one day to see his children at Baylor University for just a few hours.

In his later years when wife Zeny became ill, Johnny did all he could to take care of her - even when in a frail state of health himself.

"Your Dad takes care of me," Zeny would say to her son B.J. during telephone conversations.

Johnny met Zeny while stationed in Vandenberg AFB in Lompoc, California.

It was nearly love at first sight for Johnny, stunned by her natural beauty upon noticing Zeny at the base education office.

"I was attracted by her smile, her sweet voice, everything about her ... her humor and sense of kindness and caring," Johnny wrote in a Facebook comment. "I told her I loved her and wanted to marry her.

"With her soft, spoken voice, she responded, 'But you don't even know me, my family and all.' And I said 'Whatever it is, we'll do it together.' "

Johnny and Zeny got married Oct. 10, 1973, followed by a full-on wedding ceremony and reception for family and friends in New Jersey a couple of years later.

Johnny never had issues following his wife's lead when it came to Air Force assignments.

After California, the couple was assigned to Thailand, then Arizona, the Philippines, New Jersey and Texas. They also lived in Oklahoma during their time in civil service.

When it came to raising their children, Johnny again had no issue often following his wife's lead.

To him, Zeny was the star of the family, with an ambition, an intelligence and beauty and personality that he hoped his children would replicate.

But for the spotlight to properly shine on the star, there needs to be that person holding and controlling the light.

That was Johnny.

Behind the scenes and comfortable receiving little praise or credit.

He did not have a big ego.

Just a big heart.

For his friends and his furry animals.

And a large, tender heart especially for his family.

"We have changed, we have grown, we are blessed," Johnny wrote on social media a few years ago. "Couldn't ask for anything more. Thank you Lord for watching over my family."

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the American Kidney Fund (www.kidneyfund.org).

Cemetery Details

Resurrection at Cordi - Marian Cemetery

11624 Culebra Road
San Antonio, TX 78253

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 5. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels North Cherry Ridge
3401 Cherry Ridge Drive
San Antonio, TX 78230

Rosary

FEB 5. 6:00 PM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels North Cherry Ridge
3401 Cherry Ridge Drive
San Antonio, TX 78230

Mass of Resurrection

FEB 6. 10:00 AM (CT)

Prince of Peace Catholic Church
7893 Grissom Rd
San Antonio, TX

Tribute Wall

AS

“ Aunt Marsha and Uncle Steve planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..

Aunt Marsha and Uncle Steve - February 05, 2024 at 12:24 PM

PC

“ We were saddened with the news of our good friend Johnny's passing. We have known Johnny and his wife Zeny since 1975 when we were stationed together at DMAFB in Tucson Arizona. In honor of Johnny's memory we have made a donation to the American Kidney Foundation. We will miss you deeply, rest in peace Johnny. Pete and Liana Cano.

Pete and Liana Cano - February 05, 2024 at 11:43 AM

IA

“ Isadora A. planted a grove of 5 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..

Isadora A. - February 03, 2024 at 04:36 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..



February 03, 2024 at 03:40 PM

UT

“ *Uncles Doug and Terry planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..*

Uncles Doug and Terry - February 03, 2024 at 03:40 PM

LT

“ *Loyd and Josie Troy purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..*



Loyd and Josie Troy - February 03, 2024 at 12:42 PM

HF

“ *Haskins Abang Family purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..*



Haskins Abang Family - February 03, 2024 at 11:12 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..*



February 03, 2024 at 02:44 AM

WD

“ With love, Dalena, Aslan, & Devon planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..

With love, Dalena, Aslan, & Devon - February 03, 2024 at 02:44 AM

AS

“ Annette, Scott, and Kathryn Senia purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..



Annette, Scott, and Kathryn Senia - February 02, 2024 at 05:50 PM

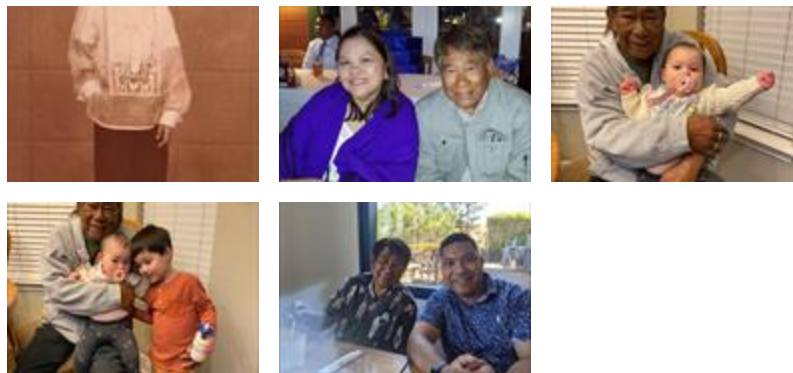
AS

“ Annette, Scott, and Kathryn Senia planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..

Annette, Scott, and Kathryn Senia - February 02, 2024 at 05:50 PM

BA

“ 75 files added to the album *The Life of Johnny*



B.J. Anteola - February 02, 2024 at 04:35 AM

AA

“ I will really miss Uncle Johnny. He was always my biggest supporter. Prayers to my 1st Cousins and the family as it has been such a painful and sad start to 2024. - Love, AJ, Ria, Jared and Aidan

AJ Almanzor - February 01, 2024 at 02:06 PM



“ Serenity Wreath was purchased for the family of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..



February 01, 2024 at 01:00 PM

TF

“ The Tonnesen Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Johnny P. Anteola Jr..

The Tonnesen Family - February 01, 2024 at 01:00 PM