

# THE DRINK TANK PRESENTS JOHN PAUL GARCIA

## 1955-2006

On May 12th, 2006, my Pops took his last breath. That was it. I was there, despite not wanting to be there when he actually died, and so were three of my Dad's cousins, all of whom worked for the City of San Jose. It was a simple thing. He just stopped breathing as I was going to get the swab to moisten his mouth. He died and the family stayed around and did what Garcias do: we talked like there wasn't even a dead guy in the room. Dad would have laughed at that, much like I did.

But this isn't about my Pops kicking the breathing habit, it's more about Dad being alive and the guy he was. I'm not gonna lie, Dad had his issues, but he was also a guy who was unwilling to believe the worst in people until they damn well proved it. This bit him pretty often, when he'd take someone in and they'd rip him off, sometimes even stealing his furniture and fanzines. That was the rough part of Dad's existence: he trusted everyone, even when folks told him not to, and he would always help people. Even when he had nothing, the times when he was living in places like The Julian Street Inn, he'd do volunteer work with groups like various Ministries and CityTeam. That was Dad.

Pops was also a carnny. After he and my Mom broke up he did some time touring with the games and rides around the Western USA. He told me the various stories of the time there, how there were drugs and crime and fighting and strangeness. I loved being able to say that my



Dad was a carnny. I did see Dad when he was working the games, and he was pretty good.

Dad got hit by a car in 1988. He almost died, was in a coma for a week and had pins put in his leg. He suffered brain damage from the accident and that kinda haunted him for years.

When he got hit, his girlfriend was pregnant with my sister Bailey. Dad and Grandma got in a huge fight that lasted for a couple of years over

Bailey. She came around and Bails was a grandkid like the rest of us. I think it helped that I always treated her like my real sister when I was with her and since I'm the favorite, it helped things.

There's a lot about Dad, and the photos in this issue were found around his house, including the Bill Murray photo taken at Pebble Beach. That



is Chris Jesus Ferguson that Dad's with at Cache Creek. Dad used to be a security guard at the Paul Masson Winery and he got to know Sarah Vaughn, who remembered him when I met her.

And of course, Dad was a fan. Pops took me to my first conventions. He gave me my first fanzines. He showed me science fiction movies, Masked Wrestler movies, introduced me to MZB, BJo, and Frank Kelly Freas. He made me a very happy child and he was very happy to see me get back into fandom.

And now he's dead.

That's the simple part. It's not easy, but Dad was a guy who lived life deeper than most. He avoided the trouble that his brothers and sisters had to deal with, he had a son who was the first in family history to graduate from High School and then from College. He managed to change people's lives, sometimes in little ways that they didn't realise until years later. I loved the big guy, and I'll miss him.

Thanks to all for your prayers and wishes.

