



JENSEN, Jerry J. SBVP 9/12/21

Jerry J. Jensen died in Santa Barbara on August 24, 2021 in Maravilla. He was born in Cozad, Nebraska, the only child of Alva and Hazel Jensen, on December 11, 1933. He attended school there until entering the University of Lincoln from which he graduated in 1955.

He was the only one of 26 cousins from Danish immigrant grandparents to attend and graduate from college right out of high school. His parents strongly supported his academic interests and trusted his good judgment as evidenced by giving him a checkbook and told to spend whatever he thought necessary while in college.

In 1956, as a newly commissioned army lieutenant, he served a year and a half on active military duty in Germany and Italy. There he sampled European culture - food, wine, art and travel - unlike anything he had experienced in agricultural Nebraska. He never returned there except to visit relatives.

While in the Army he befriended a Harvard Business School graduate who encouraged him to apply there. He was accepted and earned his MBA in 1961. As a first college graduate in his extended family he was also the first with a graduate degree.

From Harvard, Jerry was recruited to join the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica, CA, the nation's premier public policy research organization. He worked at RAND for 27 years in business management, voluntarily retiring early in 1989. A generous legacy from his mother made the early retirement possible.

During his working years he married Ann L. Untener. Their only child, Jay, was born in 1970. He became a major source of pride for his father. After graduating from UCLA and earning an advanced degree at Colorado State, Jay's professional work was in forestry. He rose ultimately to become Deputy Under Secretary in the Department of Agriculture where he headed the U.S. Forest Service in Washington, D.C. Later he was recruited to join the White House staff working for the President on environmental policy matters. Jay and his wife Shawna (Friedman) survive Jerry along with three grandchildren, Kayden, Connor and Garrett.

After his own early retirement from RAND Jerry moved to Solvang in Santa Barbara County, worked in an antiques hobby job there and experienced a late-in-life divorce from Ann. After that, he moved to Santa Barbara where he became affiliated with the Newcomers Club which offered him an ample and varied social life. He also became a docent at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art where he thrived for 16 years learning about and talking about world class art to Museum visitors. In addition, he was on the board of the Museum Collectors Council which organized group visits to major private art collections in the city. The Newcomers Club and Museum contacts provided him with social opportunities to associate with a wide range of very accomplished people.

While living in beautiful coastal Santa Barbara, he met widow, Nancy Lieberman, another city newcomer, who said "yes" to becoming his wife. She survives him. Together they spent many loving years enjoying diverse travel destinations - from Istanbul to Paris to Buenos Aires, Tokyo, London and Beijing. They focused on good art and good food wherever they went.

In addition, they bought and improved attractive Santa Barbara homes where they enjoyed entertaining large groups of friends made through their Museum and Newcomer affiliations.

No funeral or religious ceremonies are planned to mark Jerry's passing after his ashes have been interred at Santa Barbara Cemetery near the plot established by his wife, Nancy. Commemorative gifts in his name may be made to the Santa Barbara Museum of Art Docent Council.