

John Samuel "Jay" Amestoy Obituary

May 8, 1948 - November 16, 2017 John "Jay" Amestoy passed away peacefully on November 16, 2017 at Mayo Clinic Hospital, Saint Mary's Campus in Rochester, Minnesota. He was surrounded by family and friends in person and in spirit around the world. He had fought a number of courageous health battles during the past nine years, always with dignity and strength. Jay was born in Santa Monica, California on May 8, 1948 and raised in Los Angeles and Tustin. He was a fifth-generation Angelino and a member of one of Southern California's founding families. He was proud of his French Basque heritage and the role his family played in Los Angeles' beginnings. He would happily share details of the family ranch, Los Encinos, now a state park, and the Amestoy building in Los Angeles that featured the first elevator in the city. A graduate of Foothill High School, Jay attended Orange Coast College (OCC) and University of Southern California where he majored in journalism. He laid the foundation for his career in journalism and public relations working on school newspapers and yearbooks and interning at Road & Track Magazine. His passion and support of the Orange Coast College crew program ran deep. Jay was a proud member of the undefeated 1968 Orange Coast College crew and his team went on to be inducted into the OCC Athletics Hall of Fame. Jay had a lifelong love affair with cars. After Road and Track Magazine, Jay worked for a number of automotive publications before joining Volkswagen of America where he served for 10 years as Public Relations Manager for the Volkswagen brand in the U.S. Following VW, he was senior vice president for two global automotive public relations agencies and an automotive supplier before joining Mazda's U.S. operations as Vice President Public and Government Relations in 1991. He retired from Mazda in 2012 after 22 years of service and was the longest serving corporate officer in Mazda's history and one of the longest serving corporate public relations executives in the entire U.S. automotive industry. Jay was an avid motorsports enthusiast and a Formula 1 aficionado, and served as a member of the Governing Committee of the Rolex Monterey Motor Sports Reunion at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. He traveled to race tracks around the world, sharing his passion for all types of motorsports racing with friends and colleagues. Formula 1 Sundays were sacrosanct. Jay's viewing parties extended from his living room to wherever he

could commandeer a television on the road. Jay was happiest with his family and friends and was frequently on the road spending time with them. Luckily his travel bug and love for exploring other cultures was shared by his wife Erica and they made many trips together and created beautiful memories from their travels. Jay will be remembered as the ultimate host. One of his very favorite things was sharing his home with those he loved. He enjoyed good food and fine wine and was passionate about helping people find the perfect car - whatever the brand. His heart melted around animals. He had a love for skiing, sailing, waterskiing, spending time at his mountain retreat in Lake Arrowhead and attending events at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. He was a gentleman and a mentor for those who worked for him in the automotive industry, and highly respected by automotive executives and journalists from around the world. If his life could be summed up into one thing, it would be Jay's overwhelming desire to make people feel at ease and find pleasure in their surroundings be it in his home, at a new job, or visiting a new destination. He will be missed so very much. Preceded in death by his parents, John and Betty, Jay is survived by his wife of 24 years, Erica Venzke Amestoy; siblings, Greg Amestoy (Debbie) and Beth Amestoy Roberts (Ron); niece Ashley Amestoy Voelkl and her children (Alysa, Nicholas and Haley); niece Tori Roberts Johnson (Troy); nephews Paul Amestoy and Brad Amestoy; and first cousins Marshall Harris, Kami Amestoy Lee, Margot Amestoy Antinoja (Ron), Denise Harris, Jeff Amestoy (Susan), Jim Stangier, Melisse Harris, Jan Stangier Carey (Steve), Celeste Harris, Julie Evans Schmiesing (Jim), Lynn Evans Martin, and Jay Evans. A celebration of life will be held at Casa Romantica on Sunday, December 10 from 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Jay's name to the City of Hope National Medical Center, Attn: Gift Administration, 1500 E. Duarte Road, Duarte, CA 91010 or to the family's local animal rescue, The Ark of San Juan, P.O. Box 117, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92693.



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