



## Juan Carlos Distefano

June 29, 1951 - October 2, 2024

Juan Carlos Distefano left behind a legacy of love, generosity and kindness on October 2nd, 2024, when he passed from this life in Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

Juan, who was 73, was born June 29, 1951, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, as the son of Juan Carlos Distefano and Zulema Isidora Orchessi. Influenced by his father and uncles – several of whom were tango musicians – he developed a love for all music, but especially Argentine tango and Brazilian forró and choro. He played in several rock bands in Buenos Aires before following that passion to Santa Cruz, Bolivia, where he continued playing music and entertaining people.

The trajectory of Juan's life changed forever when he went to a birthday party in Mesa, Arizona, for a young woman he had never met—but who happened to be his perfect match in every way. Karen Ririe and Juan were married on October 2, 1993, in Chandler, Arizona, and soon moved to Gainesville, Florida. In 1997, Karen and Juan moved to Karen's hometown of Bartlesville, Oklahoma, to be close to family. From that point forward, Juan declared Bartlesville to be the best place he had ever lived.

Juan introduced Karen—and anyone who would sit down with him to enjoy a huge paper sack of homemade caramel corn—to the passion and joy of

soccer, particularly Barcelona and the Argentine National Team. A true Argentine, Juan's favorite things remained soccer, music and pizza. The order of importance could change, depending on which teams were playing at any given moment.

Juan bravely fought and won his own battle with nasopharyngeal cancer, beginning in 2001. The experience gave him a profound awareness of others' suffering. He developed a deeply rooted desire to make the world a more peaceful, loving, and just place. He was known as a gentle, exceedingly generous man who would help any person in need, especially those who faced homelessness or cancer.

He was preceded in death by his beloved parents and his equally beloved younger sister, Susana Distefano. Juan is survived by his wife of 31 years, Karen Ririe Distefano; daughter Marcela de la Fuente, son-in-law German Simón and granddaughter, Uma; daughter Erica Distefano and grandson Lucio; son Ariel Distefano, daughter-in-law Marilyn Vásquez, and grandsons Juan Pedro, Felipe and Facundo.

Juan's survivors also include brother-in-law Horacio Fresco, as well as niece Sandra Fresco and her family, husband Daniel Luna, daughter Valentina and son Santiago.

Those wishing to honor Juan's joyous, undiminished memory are encouraged to have a slice of your favorite pizza, listen to your favorite song, and help someone in need. Specific bequests can be made to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, MD Anderson Cancer Center or Oak Park United Methodist Church in Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

A memorial service will be held at 10 a.m. Wednesday, October 9, 2024 at Oak Park United Methodist Church. Arrangements are under the direction of

Carter Davis and the Davis Family Funeral Home and Crematory Walker-Brown Chapel. Online condolences and remembrances may be shared at [www.DavisFamilyFuneralHome.com](http://www.DavisFamilyFuneralHome.com)

# Previous Events

## Service

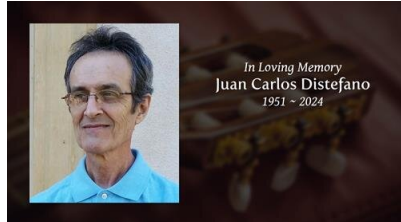
OCT 9. 10:00 AM (CT)

Oak Park United Methodist Church  
601 Brentwood Road  
Bartlesville, OK 74003

# Tribute Wall



“ *Davis Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Juan Carlos Distefano*



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**Davis Family Funeral Home** - October 08, 2024 at 02:55 PM

LM

“ *Karen and I were both grad students and TAs at ASU, and formed a lifelong friendship. We hosted Karen's Master's grad party. David and I were so tickled with how excited Juan was with celebrating her achievement and will never forget how worried he was at our state of home renovations. When he came to drop off party supplies that afternoon, there was still a (new, clean) toilet sitting near the dining room. His face told the story of his horror, but we assured him that it would be stored out of sight by that evening. Karen and Juan were devoted to each other from the first moment, a fun-loving and exemplary couple. We are so sorry for Karen's loss, and our hearts and prayers are with her.*

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**Lisa A. Martin** - October 10, 2024 at 02:14 PM



*I never heard the toilet story before!!*

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**Karen Ririe Distefano** - February 11, 2025 at 08:27 PM



“ Karen and I were in grad school together at ASU. I vividly remember when she met met Juan. From the beginning, it was obvious they were soulmates. Karen and family, I am so deeply sorry for your loss and will keep you in my prayers. Rosemary Gallo

Rosemary Gallo - October 09, 2024 at 11:59 AM



Thank you, friend!

Karen Ririe Distefano - February 11, 2025 at 08:28 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Juan Carlos Distefano.



October 08, 2024 at 03:00 PM



“ Todd, Kim, Rory, Nolynn & Gavyn Abshire. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Juan Carlos Distefano.

Todd, Kim, Rory, Nolynn & Gavyn Abshire. - October 08, 2024 at 03:00 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Juan Carlos Distefano.



October 08, 2024 at 06:56 AM

RA

“ Rory Abshire planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Juan Carlos Distefano.

Rory Abshire - October 08, 2024 at 06:56 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Juan Carlos Distefano.



October 07, 2024 at 10:31 PM

DM

“ Denise, Conrado, Daniel, and Matthew purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Juan Carlos Distefano.



Denise, Conrado, Daniel, and Matthew - October 07, 2024 at 10:08 PM

TC

“ Theresa C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Juan Carlos Distefano.

Theresa C. - October 07, 2024 at 07:17 PM

JA

“ Jeanie Abshire purchased the Fiery Lily and Rose for the family of Juan Carlos Distefano.



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**Jeanie Abshire** - October 07, 2024 at 06:29 PM

JA

“ Jeanie Abshire planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Juan Carlos Distefano.

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**Jeanie Abshire** - October 07, 2024 at 06:29 PM

JM

“ I met Juan under unfortunate circumstances... we bonded in the waiting room at MD Anderson as we both entered the same trial for our cancer diagnosis. He was my “radiation brother”. Over the years I was able to appreciate so much more, his beautiful life, family, musical abilities, humor and compassion for all. I will miss his random calls and messages but know I will see him again. God bless my friend



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**jaime moreno** - October 06, 2024 at 07:22 PM

RW

“ *Rev. Jim and Becky (Harrell) Wright purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Juan Carlos Distefano.*



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**Rev. Jim and Becky (Harrell) Wright** - October 05, 2024 at 03:04 PM

RW

“ *Rev. Jim and Becky (Harrell) Wright planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Juan Carlos Distefano.*

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**Rev. Jim and Becky (Harrell) Wright** - October 05, 2024 at 03:04 PM