



John Thomas Nichelson

March 29, 1923 - January 1, 2020

Our beloved John Thomas Nichelson passed away on Wednesday, January 1, 2020, at the age of 96.

John was born on March 29, 1923 to Harold Nichelson and Charlotte Woodings. The oldest of two boys and two girls, John was born and raised in Los Angeles and attended John Marshall High School where he lettered in basketball. In his spare time, he delivered newspapers. He eventually worked his way into a spot at Rogers Drive-In Market on Los Feliz Blvd.

In May 1941, John took a job as a central office equipment installer at Western Electric and was planning to work long enough to get himself started in college. He was playing football with some friends on the morning of December 7, 1941, when his future plans changed forever. Though he could have been deferred, John chose to join the Navy. Following basic training, he was assigned to a new ship in Seattle, the USS Hailey (DD 556), that he would call home for the next year and a half.

While on leave, John went on a blind date with Elaine Telfer and soon after they became engaged. They were married on December 2, 1943 while John was on a one week leave from the Navy. They had two daughters, Dianna and Linda. Today their family includes four grandchildren, seven great grandsons and two great-great granddaughters.

John served three years in World War II and then later re-enlisted for another two years during the Korean War. Following his discharge, John went back to work as a telephone equipment installer for 13 years and then was promoted to management and served as a supervisor for the next 28 years. By the time John retired in 1982, he had a total of 41 years of service at Western Electric.

A resident of Gardena and a member of the Kiwanis Club of Gardena Valley since 1968, John devoted his life to Kiwanis and community service. He was named Kiwanian of the Year in 1969-70, served as Distinguished Club President in 1972-73, as Division 19 Lt.

Governor in 1976-77, as Key Club District Administrator in 1989-90, as Circle K District Administrator, on the Kiwanis Governor's Cabinet in 1997-98 and as the District's Resolutions Chairman from 1999-2001. He was a true supporter of the Kiwanis Service Leadership Programs and dedicated all his years as a Kiwanian to being the advisor to his Club's youth organizations – the CSUDH Circle K and the Gardena High School and CAMS High School Key Clubs. The recipient of numerous other district and international awards, John was most proud of the two bestowed upon him by the youth he served – the Kiwanis International Hixson Award and the CNH District Dunlap Award. In 2006, John was selected as the recipient of Circle K International's highest honor, the Circle of Service award. In 2018, the CNH Circle K District named the Kiwanis Advisor of the Year award in his name, becoming forever more the John Nicholson Kiwanis Advisor of the Year award. Over the years, John has advised and mentored thousands of youth, providing them with leadership training and encouraging their participation in community service.

John loved and adored his wife, Elaine, and this past December 2nd they celebrated their 76th wedding anniversary. They enjoyed going on cruises, watching Dodger baseball and spending time with their family. John also enjoyed playing and watching golf. John is survived by his wife, Elaine; his daughter, Linda; grandson Mike (Kim); granddaughters, Cyndi, Lisa and Kristin; great grandsons Marc, Justin, Zach, Joshua, Cade, Ty and Lance; great-great granddaughters Kerli and Jessi; and nephews, niece and in-laws. John was preceded in death by his parents, brother, both sisters and his daughter, Dianna.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the Kiwanis Cal-Nev-Ha Foundation's scholarship fund for Circle K in John's name, at 8360 Red Oak St., Suite 201, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730 or online at <https://www.cnhfoundation.org/make-a-donation/> and then choose the Service Leadership Program (SLP) Scholarships button.

Cemetery

Green Hills Memorial Park

27501 S. Western Ave.

Rancho Palos Verdes, CA,

90275

Events

JAN **Visitation** 11:00AM - 01:00PM

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Malaga Suite

27501 S. Western Ave, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA,

US, 90275

JAN **Funeral Ceremony** 02:00PM - 03:00PM

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Green Hills Memorial Chapel

27501 S Western Ave., Rancho Palos Verde, CA, US,

90275