

# Local students among top competitors in design contest

Press staff report

Three Mountain House students were among the 14 winners in the most recent competition of Rrooar Coding & Robotics Academy of Mountain House.

The Game Design Competition on March 6, with the theme of "A Hero's Journey," challenged the young participants to use their coding and game design skills create their own heroes and a series of challenges for them to face, including conflicts and obstacles, and recorded their wins and losses.

Ishaan Bhardwaj, a fifth-grader at Wicklund Elementary School in Mountain House, placed first in Group 2, and also received the special



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award of Creative Game Maker.

Award winners also included Elliott Stafford, a fifth-grader at Bethany Elementary School, gaining second place in Group 2; and Jared Mensah, a second-grader at Hansen Elementary School, earning second place in Group 1.

The panel of judges for the con-

test included Renu Bhatia, Vice President of Partnerships and Business Development for NVIDIA; Inderjeet Singh, Vice President for Engineering at KeepTruckin, Marilyn McDonald, Senior Vice President at Mastercard; and game developer Tim Fox. Millicent DePerio, was the emcee for the event and Chris Rosana was the coding coach.

Through the competition the judges

served as mentors, offering their own vision and wisdom as they guided the participants through the process. In addition to their technical skills, students in grades 1 to 12 from around the Bay Area and Central Valley were required to apply critical thinking and problem solving skills during the competition.

■ Contact the Tracy Press at [tpnews@tracy-press.com](mailto:tpnews@tracy-press.com) or 209-835-3030.

## Manuel Joaquin Costa, Jr.

April 6, 1951 ~ March 16, 2021

*Manuel Costa, 69, passed away peacefully at his home on Tuesday, March 16, surrounded by his wife of 49 years, daughters, sons-in-law, grandchildren and great grandson. Manuel will be greatly missed and remembered by his loving family, friends, his former football players and students.*

*Manuel was born and raised in Tracy. He graduated from Tracy High School in 1969 and was a defensive lineman for the Tracy High Bulldogs during his four years there. After high school he continued to play football at Humboldt State and then at Hayward College. He was a faithful fan of the San Francisco 49ers and enjoyed working on his house or in his yard.*

*After receiving his Bachelor of Science Degree in Physical Education and his teaching credential in Special Education, he returned to the Tracy Unified School District as a middle school teacher. In 1977, he returned to Tracy High School coaching the defensive line alongside his former coach, Wayne Schneider. In 1995, he took over as head coach of the Varsity Bulldogs and was the Athletic Director at Tracy High for a short time. He also enjoyed coaching Track and Field at Tracy High for many years. Manuel not only influenced many athletes and students during his time at Tracy High School but felt that many of the athletes and students also impacted his life. He held many fond memories of his days at Tracy High School. To say he bleed green and gold would be an understatement.*

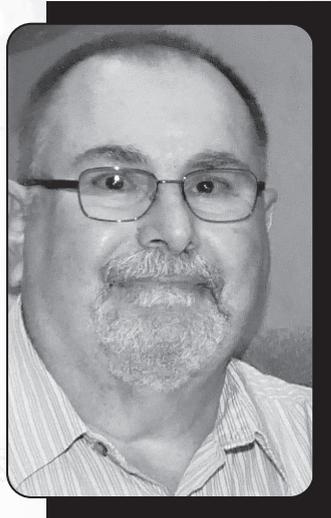
*In 2002, he earned his Master's Degree in Education at California State University of Stanislaus. After receiving his Master's, he coached briefly at Modesto Junior College (1999 – 2003).*

*In 1971, he married, Patricia Bender, the love of his life. They have three beautiful daughters, Stephanie (Scott) Crawford, Robin (Bobby) Costa, and Amanda Costa all of Tracy. Together they have eight grandchildren and one great grandson.*

*He was preceded in death by his parents Manuel and Mary F. Costa, who owned Costa and Fernandes Dairy and his mother-in-law, Katherine Ramsey all of Tracy and two brother-in-laws, Charles Bender of Lodi and James Ramsey of Tracy.*

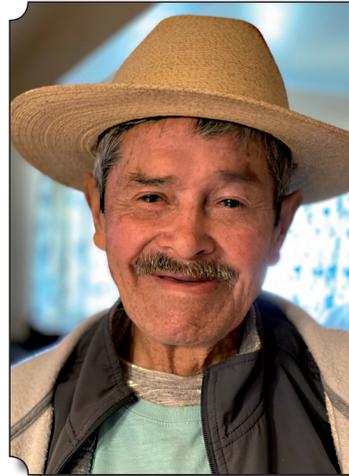
*Visitation will be from 2-9 p.m. and a Rosary will begin at 6 p.m. at Fry's Mortuary on Central Avenue in Tracy. Tuesday's funeral will begin at 11 a.m. at St. Bernard's Catholic Church, Eaton Avenue in Tracy. Burial at Tracy Public Cemetery will be private.*

*In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations kindly be made in Manuel's name to St. Bernard's Catholic Church or to St. Jude's Hospital.*



## July 13, 1934 ~ March 21, 2021

### Mariano Rodriguez Villasenor



Mariano Villasenor, 86, passed away peacefully at his home on Sunday, March 21, 2021. Mariano was born on July 13, 1934, to Tomas and Maria (Rodriguez) Villasenor, in Poruas, Michoacan, Mexico, the third of twelve children. He was baptized at La Familia Sagrada Catholic Church in Villa Madero, Mexico on July 26, 1934. Like so many immigrants, Mariano came to the U.S. in search of opportunity to help support his family. From his home town in Villa Madero, Mexico, he answered the call for the Bracero guest worker program at age 25, entering the U.S. for the first time in 1959. Like he had done since he was 7 years old, he worked hard throughout California on various fruit and

vegetable farms until he retired at age 75, although he continued to work mowing lawns for a few years more. Mariano married his lovely and sunny wife Anastasia Perez on March 1, 1973 in Villa Madero, Mexico and she moved to the U.S. later that year. While Mariano had minimal opportunity for any formal education, his daughter would go on to earn a Master's degree in Business and has a career in banking. Mariano was the hardest working man anyone knew, but always had a smile on his face. There was no job or task he wouldn't volunteer for. After his father passed away when Mariano was 28 years old, he took it upon himself to help support his mother and siblings living in Mexico as best he could for the rest of his life. He was a devout Catholic and prayed deeply for his family every morning and night. He was a generous man, always handing out coins or dollar bills, whatever he could, to kids and those in need. He loved animals his whole life and his beloved dogs Guaje and Katrina will miss him greatly. While Mariano was family man, he also was an independent man who liked to cook and care for himself. In his retirement, he never slowed down and always looked for ways to keep busy. He loved his music and had a passion for singing and dancing, and sips of his favorite drink, mezcal.

Mariano is survived by his wife, Anastasia Villasenor, Patterson, and daughter Maribel Villasenor (Andres), Pasadena; five nieces and nephews he loved as if they were his own children, Art Villasenor (Sandra), Patterson, Silvia De Leon (Israel), Manteca, Maria Villasenor, Manteca, Manuel Villasenor (Monica), Patterson, and Lucy Villasenor, Tracy; ten honorary grandchildren, Israel, Jr., Melina, Tommy, Isela, Marcos, Miranda, Isabel, Taylor, Gabby, and Belinda; two sisters, Saluca Villasenor Hernandez and Carmen Villasenor Lopez, both of Villa Madero, Mexico, three brothers, Fortino Villasenor, Villa Madero, Mexico, Leon Villasenor, Palmdale, and Gabriel Villasenor, Villa Madero, Mexico; sister-in-law Emilia Villasenor, Patterson, and countless nieces, nephews, relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, six brothers, Jesus, Antonio, Jose-Maria (Chemo), Bulmaro, Alfonso, and Rafael Villasenor.

Mariano was a wonderful storyteller, always making people laugh with his fantastical stories. No matter what was going on with him, he always had a way to make people smile and laugh. His cackling laughter was infectious. Even as he battled cancer the last four years, he rarely complained and always maintained a positive and hopeful attitude. He was beloved by everyone who knew him. His passing has impacted so many people's lives because he was in many ways an anchor for so many other families, not just his own immediate family. This is a great loss for everyone who loved him.

A Rosary and Mass will be held on Monday, March 29th at 11:30 am. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Patterson followed by interment at Tracy Public Cemetery.