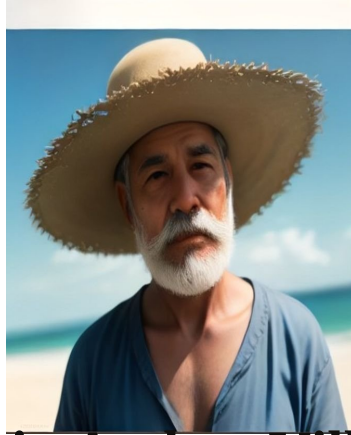




Refugio Andres Villarreal

December 6, 1950 - August 25, 2026

Corpus Christi, Texas

Refugio Andres Villarreal died in Corpus Christi on August 25, 2026. He was seventy-five. Born there on December 6, 1950, he grew up knowing the harbor as a weekday neighbor long before it became a postcard. His father worked a crane. Refugio learned that a coupling is a promise: it holds, or the whole story comes apart in the dark.

For twenty-seven years he was a longshoreman, first catching lines, later the man who would write up a cracked spreader even when the ship was already called. He arrived early. He did not advertise. He charged a fair hour and a smaller one when a church van needed a lift more than a sermon. He kept a notebook of ships, not clients. The notebook had salt on the edges.

He married Teresa Villarreal in 1974. They raised three children in a frame house that needed a new porch every twenty years. Teresa kept the garden and the choir. Refugio grilled on Sundays and considered a plate of smoked fish a seasonal obligation. After his knees quit the worst pits he still came out for a favorite string of boxes, moving slower, doing the same honest work.

Friends remember a man who left a dock cleaner than he found it, who could stand in a noise without making it a personality, and who treated a payday loan as a rumor he would not repeat. He loved the harbor at evening, a glass of tea he did not finish, and the sound of a ship that had decided to live. He died in Corpus Christi, in the city whose cranes had written his calendar. The gantry still works. Someone else will hear the knock that means trouble.

Services

A gathering in Corpus Christi, then a simple service. A gift to a longshore hardship fund or a neighborhood pantry is welcome.

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