

Here is a picture of my Uncle Mike when I last saw him, in February 2010. He died in April of that same year of pancreatic cancer. He left behind his wife Gerry, two children Mike and Michelle, and a brother, Nolan. His passing was felt throughout our entire family. He is missed at every family gathering. He was a man of tradition, integrity, and a kind spirit. On this Day of the Dead, I celebrate the life and spirit of my Uncle Mike Evola. Love you Uncle Mike.



**Ofrenda #1: A bottle of Old Spice Cologne** – Scientists say that, of the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell) that smell is the sense that we most closely associate with memory. Whenever I smell the scent of Old Spice, I always think of my Uncle Mike. He would wear it, religiously and exclusively, for as long as I can remember...

**Ofrenda #2 - First license plate:** My Uncle Mike really enjoyed collecting cars, or going through cars I guess, and he helped me get my first car: a 1974 white Mercedes Roadster convertible. A cat had torn up the interior, and the thing took diesel fuel, but I was so happy! We helped me get a personalized license plate, which I've always kept as a memento.

**Ofrenda #3 - Glen Miller CD** - I like jazz music, mostly because of my Dad and Uncle Mike. My Uncle Mike was a class act, always dressed well, well-groomed, and loved to listen to jazz. His favorites were Nat King Cole, Chet Baker, and Glen Miller. He introduced me to those guys, to their music. It was the music of his childhood.

**Ofrenda #4 - De La Salle pennant** - This is a big one. I didn't want to go to De La Salle. I wanted to go to Deer Valley, where all my close friends were headed. My parents insisted that I go, and I was prepared to boycott. My Uncle Mike sat me down around Easter and said that I should go, and that it would be a disrespect to the family if I didn't take advantage of that opportunity. I decided I would go, and it has become one of the most influential decisions of my life.

**Ofrenda #5 - Welcome home card** - My Uncle Mike and Aunt Gerry were there for everything, and I mean everything: birthday parties, soccer games, school function, Boy Scouts, football games, everything. They were my godparents. They were even there at the airport to greet me at San Francisco airport when I came home from my time abroad in South America. August 8th, 2008.