

Obituary – Jack Bieda, Emeryville, CA

March 15, 1942 – September 21, 2020

“Jack” (John Charles) Bieda was born March 15, 1942 in Lockport, New York and moved at age 6 to Miami/Key Biscayne, FL. He enjoyed both; the freedom of living on the ocean and the annual summer stays at his Uncle and Aunt’s farm in Wilson, NY where he helped work and to which he attributed much of his work ethic. His interest in business started at a young age with paper routes, tree trimming businesses, working on the farm, and interning at his father in law’s television station. He studied at the University of Miami earning a BS and MBA; and received his PhD at UCLA in Marketing. He was honored and impacted by receiving an around the world trip scholarship to study comparative economic systems in 1970. He was married in 1964 to Diane (Patricia) Topmiller and they had two children Janet and John. His career included research and international travel at Proctor & Gamble, RJ Reynolds and Del Monte, rising to VP of Marketing Services at Del Monte before starting his own market research company, PinPoint Research in 1987. Based in Emeryville CA, the company develops state of the art systems to automate phone research which are widely adopted by the industry and many large companies. His innovation and creativeness came across in much of his work and it has had a positive impact on product development and customer experience building.

Feeling a nascent love of the sea, Jack and his former wife bought a 40’ sailboat in 1985 and rightfully named it Trial Run to see if he and his family would like sailing. They did. They first began cruising and entertaining, became members of the Berkeley Yacht Club, taught guests the “ropes” and “windup things”, all the while introducing the many friends and families to the excitement of sailing on the San Francisco Bay. Cruising evolved to ocean racing which included 3 races in the Pacific Cup as Captain from the San Francisco Bay to Hawaii. On the third attempt as Co-Captain they won first in class on a Santa Cruz 52 through “good strategy, teammanship and a bit of luck”.

Eventually, Jack bought a 72’ powerboat, Black Gold where he lived and entertained. He often treated 50 or so friends and family to catered holiday parties and cruises, including ring-side seats to 4th of July fireworks, Fleet Week’s roaring jets and America’s Cup races. For many, these trips with Captain Jack and his crew were memories of a lifetime.

Jack was a committed contributor and leader in his community as well. He was President of the Pacific Park Plaza Condo Association, acted as Commodore of the Berkeley Yacht Club, twice, and served as VP of the American Marketing Association’s research division. He also enjoyed memberships at the Claremont Club in Berkeley, Thames Royal Yacht Club in London, and Encinal Yacht Club in Alameda. His interests were varied and vast, always learning and engaging whether it be season tickets to the SF 49ers or the San Francisco Symphony. He went all in and enjoyed tennis, music, arts, theater, travel, food, family, friends and his beloved cats.

Always, in life and in business, as in sailing and friendship, Jack was a gentleman’s gentleman, a partner’s partner and a friend’s friend, all the while thoroughly enjoying life to it’s fullest.

After a satisfying and rewarding life, Jack passed away at his home in Emeryville, CA at age 78 and is survived by his life partner Jennie Hurley, daughter Janet Stark, son John Bieda, sister Kathryn Bieda, granddaughters Morgan and Tatyana Stark, two nieces; Ashley Herendeen and Sayre Corbin, two grandnieces; Harper Herendeen and Emaline Corbin, and niece and nephews: Julie, Robert and Kenneth

Cheatham. Jack was preceded in death by his sister Jennifer Taylor (Joan Bieda), and his parents John R Bieda and Margaret Reid Bieda. He is thankful for his family and the many long-time friendships and business associates who were an integral part of his life. A special thanks goes to the PinPoint Team and to Gentle Hands Homecare Companion for the outstanding care they provided.

Jack will forever be missed and everyone who knew him will remember his wonderful smile, generous spirit and joy for life.

Sail on Captain Jack! We'll be with you.