



East Contra Costa Fire Protection District News Release

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Fire Protection District
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For Immediate Release

Passing of Oakley Volunteer Fire Captain Mark Ayers

Brentwood, CA — The East Contra Costa Fire Protection District is sad to announce the passing of retired Oakley and East Contra Costa Volunteer Fire Captain Mark Ayers.

Mark began serving the community of Oakley in March of 1978 as a volunteer firefighter with the Oakley Fire Protection District. For the next 30 years, he continued to make his community a safer place until his retirement in 2008 at the rank of Captain from the East Contra Costa Fire Protection District. Mark had a great impact on many firefighters as he took on the role of Oakley's Training Captain. His influence lives on in the lessons and mentorship of his firefighters, many whom still work in the fire service.

Mark was 64 years old.

We would like to offer our condolences to the Ayers family and to thank them for sharing Mark with us. His legacy will continue to be with us.

The Ayers family would like to request donations be given in lieu of flowers to a Veterans Organization of your choice.

A Celebration of Life is planned to be held in Oakley. Details will be released when available.



Obituary

Mark James Ayers

October 7, 1955-July 1, 2020

Mark James Ayers was born in Antioch, CA on October 7, 1955 and remained a resident of Oakley until 2016. He passed the afternoon of July 1, 2020 at his Sacramento home with his family by his side. He was preceded in death by his parents, Oliver "Bill" and Doris "Dorie" Ayers and his brother, Richard "Rick" Ayers. Mark is survived by his wife Lorraine "Rainy" (nee Senna), his daughter Devon Gambonini (Dan), stepson James Niccolson (Crystal), grandson Logan, and granddaughters Audrey and Abby. Mark was also "Papa Mark" to Joel Myers Jr. and Jake Myers.

Mark attended Liberty High School where he played drums as a part of the marching band. After his 1973 graduation, he went on to earn his Associates Degree in Fire Science at Los Medanos in Pittsburg, CA after which he joined KMART and JC Penney's in Antioch, CA as the head of their Loss Prevention teams. Mark officially joined the Oakley Fire Department as a volunteer in March 1978 where he remained until 2008 retiring with the rank of Captain. DOW Chemical hired Mark in June 1986 and he climbed the ranks until June 2016 when he retired in his final position as Fire Chief. During his longstanding career in the fire service, Mark served as a mentor for many firefighters, including his nephew Michael as well as his daughter.

In his younger years, Mark enjoyed hunting, fishing, and competing in fire musters. Mark was handy and could fix just about anything that needed fixing. After years of being a motorcycle fan and to increase his personal joy and fulfillment, Mark traded in his Honda for a brand-new Harley Davidson. This decision led to him joining and becoming a lifetime member of the Iron Warriors Motorcycle Club, which is comprised of law enforcement and fire service personnel. During his time in the Club, Mark enjoyed a steadfast brotherhood and comradery. He was affectionately

known by his Brothers as “Wilbur,” which dates to Mark’s one and only cycle accident on the street bearing the same name.

As much as Mark loved the fire department and motorcycle club, Mark’s true and deepest passion was his family. His biggest source of pride was his daughter and his grandchildren. Mark’s boisterous laugh and wicked sense of humor will be missed by all who knew him.

Mark’s final wish was not to have a funeral service, but rather a celebration of life or a “big ass party” as he preferred to laugh until you cry.

Although not a veteran himself, Mark spent time visiting with residents of the Veterans Home of California, Yountville and the family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be shared with a Veteran’s association of your choosing.

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ABOUT THE EAST CONTRA COSTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT:

The East Contra Costa Fire Protection District (ECCFPD) is a rural-funded fire district that currently operates 3 fire stations and has a 3-station deficit. The District protects a population of more than 128,000 across its 249 square-mile service area. ECCFPD provides firefighting personnel, emergency medical services (basic life support) and fire prevention to the residents and businesses of the cities of Brentwood and Oakley, and unincorporated communities of Discovery Bay, Bethel Island, Knightsen, Byron, Marsh Creek, and Morgan Territory. **Learn more** at www.eccfpd.org or social media via Facebook (East Contra Costa Fire Protection District), Instagram(@east_contra_costa_fire), Twitter (@ECCFPD) or our YouTube channel (East Contra Costa Fire Protection District).