

FRED VAN KIRK

Fred Van Kirk was raised primarily in Indiana and graduated from Purdue University in the early 1950's with a degree in civil engineering. He started his career at Chicago Pump Company and then joined the national consulting firm of Consoer, Townsend and Associates (CTA) in Chicago, Illinois. He was involved in the design and construction of numerous wastewater treatment facilities in the Midwest and was promoted to partner in the firm. In the early 1960s he moved with his family to San Jose to where he was in charge of design and oversaw construction of a massive expansion and upgrade of the San Jose Santa Clara Wastewater Treatment Plant. He moved back to Chicago after completion of that project and then returned in 1971 as partner in charge of the firm's operations on the West Coast. Under his leadership the office in San Jose grew from a small branch to one of the most significant and respected firms in the design and construction management of wastewater treatment facilities. This included major projects for the cities of San Jose, Pacifica, Watsonville, Santa Cruz County, the East Bay Municipal Utilities District and other agencies in Northern California. He also opened a branch office in Tacoma, Washington serving major wastewater projects his staff designed for the city and Pierce County.

The key to the firm's success in the West was Fred's dynamic leadership and the respect he received from both his staff and clients. He always had the best interests of both at heart and it was reflected in the relationships he maintained throughout his career and in his retirement. When he elected to leave the firm in 1981 all his staff and partners from across the country joined together to celebrate and thank him for his friendship and all that he had done for them over the years.

After leaving the firm, Fred became an independent engineering consultant with an office in his hometown of Los Altos. He continued to consult on projects for both clients that he had worked with previously and developed new opportunities for his expertise.

Fred was an active member for many decades of the American Consulting Engineering Companies (ACEC) of California, Santa Clara County Chapter, and American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), San Jose/Silicon Valley Chapter.

Fred joined Branch 5 of the Sons In Retirement (SIR) in 2004. He was actively involved in the leadership of that group and served as Big SIR in 2008. He served on many committees and enjoyed playing golf and bocce with his fellow members. As in his career, he was well respected and appreciated for his service and friendship.

Fred passed away peacefully on June 12, 2019 at a young 92 years of age. He is survived by daughters Baba and Mimi, and two granddaughters and one grandson.

A service is scheduled on Wednesday, June 19, 2019 at 1:00PM at the Union Presbyterian Church, 858 University Avenue, Los Altos, CA 94024.

Reception following at the family's home.

All are invited to attend and celebrate Fred's life and accomplishments.

By: Gay Lawrence Pang and Gary Hornberger

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