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**Harry Arnold Higgins Sr.(1934 - 2015)**

Harry Arnold Higgins Sr.  
Apr. 28, 1934 - Dec. 23, 2015  
Walnut Creek

Harry passed away on Wednesday. He touched many lives with his outgoing, generous personality and his love of all music, mainly the banjo. Harry was born in Terre Haute, Indiana, and moved to San Francisco in 1946. He graduated from Mission High School in 1952 and is a member of the Mission High School Baseball Hall of Fame. Following high school, Harry played professional baseball in the Pacific Coast League and was signed by the White Sox. He played professional baseball for two years. Harry and his wife, Elinor (also known as Ellie or Red), were married on September 10, 1955 and recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Following his baseball career, Harry was the banjo band leader at the famous Red Garter Nightclub in San Francisco for 17 years. He was a self taught, four-string plectrum banjo player and was the longest running bandleader, sitting in one chair at one nightclub in San Francisco history. During this time, he performed in numerous events for people including Governor Ronald Reagan, Senator Ted Kennedy, Frank Sinatra, Gregory Peck, Tennessee Ernie Ford, the Smothers Brothers, Gordon MacRae and countless others. The Red Garter Band was the exclusive San Francisco 49er Football Team band from 1969-1972 and they played at all San Francisco Giants weekend baseball games from 1962-1976. Harry's banjo career culminated into the induction to the National Four-String Banjo Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City, OK on April 25, 2008. Harry also had a 20 year career with the US Postal Service in Walnut Creek, retiring in April, 1996. In Harry's retirement, he was a well-respected golf instructor at Heather Farms in Walnut Creek and was an associate member of the United States Golf Teachers Federation. More recently, Harry enjoyed playing his banjo with his friends Tony and Chris outside the local Peet's Coffee and Tea on a daily basis. Harry is survived by his loving wife, Elinor; devoted children, Harry Higgins Jr. (Buck) of Grass Valley, Michael Higgins of El Dorado Hills, Kasey Torres of Concord and grandchildren, Jenice, Keith, Damian, Rachel, Mariah, Jared, Naomi and Danielle. He is also survived by his brother Max Higgins of Tracy, California and his sister, Hazel Schalberg, of Terre Haute, Indiana.

All friends and family are invited to Harry's service and reception on Wednesday, December 30, 2015 at 1:00pm at Oak Park Christian Center, 2073 Oak Park Blvd, Pleasant Hill. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the American Banjo Museum, 9 E. Sheridan Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73104. 405-604-2793.

Oak Park Hills Chapel  
925-934-6500

*[View the online memorial for Harry Arnold Higgins Sr.](#)*

**Funeral Home****Oak Park Hills Chapel**

3111 North Main Street Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
(925) 934-6500

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