
Gary Lee Woods

61, passed away February 18th, 2015 from a heart attack at his home in the Santa Ynez Valley. Gary was born in Santa Barbara, California on July 20th 1953 to parents Joe and Esther Woods. He attended McKinley and Hollister elementary schools, La Colina Junior High, and San Marcos High School, from which he graduated in 1971.

In high school he met his future wife of 25 years, Susan Gordon, and was a standout basketball and baseball player for coaches Maury Halleck and Joe Mueller.

Upon graduation from San Marcos, Gary attended Santa Barbara City College to play baseball for coach Rusty Fairly. In 1973 Gary signed with the Oakland Athletics as a free agent and started his professional career in Lewiston, Idaho playing for manager Rene Lacheman.

He made his major league debut with the A's on September 14, 1976 in a game against the Minnesota Twins and got his first big league hit off of Dave Goltz. He was then selected by Toronto in the 1977 expansion draft and went on to spend 14 years playing professional baseball with the Oakland A's, Toronto Blue Jays, Houston Astros, and Chicago Cubs. In Chicago, he was a member of the 1984 National League East Champions.

Upon his retirement from baseball, Gary earned an MBA from Pepperdine University and spent 15 years as an executive with GTE Mobilnet and [Maps.com](#) before returning to work in baseball in 2006.

In the last decade he combined his scouting responsibilities for the Chicago White Sox with being a member of the coaching staff for the five-time National Champion Santa Barbara Foresters, which allowed him to pursue his passion for developing young people on and off the field.

His passions outside of baseball included surfing at Hollister Ranch, hunting, and fly-fishing in the High Sierra. He is in the San Marcos High School Hall of Fame, and was also inducted into the Santa Barbara Athletic Roundtable Hall of Fame in 1994.

His beloved mother Esther, a younger brother Clancy, his former wife Susan, their three children, Ryan, Randy, and Katy, and three grandchildren survive Gary.

There will be a public memorial service on Saturday, February 28th at 1:30PM at Pershing Park, home of the SBCC Vaqueros, which is located at 100 Castillo Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93110.

In lieu of flowers, a Gary Woods Memorial Fund has been established at Montecito Bank and Trust.

Published in The Santa Barbara News-Press Online Edition from Feb. 25 to Mar. 1, 2015
