

## Former Apple Valley Mayor Rob Turner 'Definitely Left a Legacy'

By Rene Ray De La Cruz  
Staff Writer

APPLE VALLEY - A community leader who poured his life into several organizations and helped navigate one High Desert municipality after its incorporation has died.

Rob Turner, a former Town of Apple Valley mayor who also served on the St. Joseph Health, St Mary and the Apple Valley Unified School District boards, died Saturday at the age of 81, according to his family.

The former president of the Rotary Club of Apple Valley and principal of Apple Valley Middle School was a positive force to be reckoned with, according to friends and family.

"We are a family of faith so we know he's with our Lord," Turner's daughter, Sandy Robinson, told the Daily Press. "My father loved his community and he served it with all he had."

Robinson said her father, who died at St. Joseph Health, St Mary in Apple Valley, never fully recovered after he underwent surgery in December.

Turner's wife, Barbara, said her husband attended California State University, Northridge and loved teaching in the Apple Valley Unified and Victor Valley Union High School districts.

"He loved education, but he was also a lover of nature and animals," Barbara Turner said. "He had a beautiful rose garden that he loved to care for. He was quite the horticulturist."

Robinson said her father also served on the Victor Valley Services Council, the Family Assistance Program and Neighbors United, adding that he recently "recommitted himself to his faith" and began serving as a deacon at Jess Ranch Community Church.

Deborah Turner told the Daily Press her father was a "strong and opinionated leader" who loved the High Desert. She said "he was a perfect fit for a growing community and found his place" when he moved to Apple Valley.

"Rob was one of those guys that you either liked or you didn't," said Joseph W. Brady, president of the The Bradco Companies. "With Rob, you always knew where you stood with him. He was very tough and very clear."

Brady praised Turner for his leadership as he helped Apple Valley after its incorporation in 1988, working with commercial brokers and developers who had "challenges with the Town" during its early years.

According to Brady, Turner "held his own and was very clear about the growth of Apple Valley during a heated meeting" when Turner met with about 40 developers.

"He was a man of principle and I always enjoyed dealing with him and watching him deal with others," Brady said. "He never deviated and was very opinionated. He's another great leader that's we've lost. He definitely left a legacy."

In an earlier interview, Turner said a man with a gun at an Apple Valley school put the urge in his mind to see the incorporation of the town become reality.

"We shared one deputy sheriff with Hesperia and Lucerne Valley back then," said Turner in a 2013 interview. "One day, there was a man with a rifle on a school campus and a deputy drove up to the school about 45 minutes later. That right there - the need for protection - got my 'yes' vote."

Former Apple Valley Fire Protection District Chief Doug Qualls said Turner was good friend, with the duo spending much time in Carpinteria where they walked their dogs on the beach, "enjoyed good conversation, drank wine and ate good food."

Qualls said Turner served as "Fine Master" for the Rotary Club where he held the distinction of recording the most contributions - "somewhere north of \$40,000" - for the nonprofit which serves locally and globally.

"He was a big personality in his private and public life," Qualls said. "He was very community-oriented and a good friend who will be missed by many."

Services for Rob Turner are scheduled for 11 a.m. Feb. 25 at Jess Ranch Community Church, 11537 Apple Valley Road, Apple Valley.

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