

Alexander Munson(1931 - 2017)



Alexander Lee Munson

Alexander Lee Munson, a former treasurer, business consultant, San Francisco Civil Service Commissioner and Library Commissioner, died in his sleep on July 9, 2017. He was 85 years old. Mr. Munson was born on August 22, 1931 in Hempstead, NY, the eldest son of Alexander Lawrence Munson and Bertha Louise Gear. He attended Port Washington High School in Port Washington, NY where he was known for his twisty serve on the tennis team. He went on to Amherst College where he was editor of the humor magazine before receiving his bachelor's degree in 1953.

After a brief stint at Mellon Bank, he joined the U.S. Coast Guard. While he was a lieutenant on the Coast Guard Cutter Avoyel in Eureka, CA, he met Betty Shideler, whom he married in 1957. They settled in Alameda, CA before moving to Boston, MA for graduate school. In 1960, he received a Master's in Business Administration from Harvard University and went to work for Cresap, McCormick & Paget as a management consultant in New York. He subsequently joined Mobil Oil in its treasury division in New York, specializing in international finance and special projects, spending a year in Melbourne, Australia before ultimately becoming Treasurer for Mobil Latin America Inc. In 1971, he and his family moved west to Portola Valley, CA when he took the treasurer's job at Fairchild Camera. A year later, he became VP/Treasurer of Crown Zellerbach, where he worked for a decade. He subsequently opened his own management consultant business, A.L. Munson & Company, specializing in finding financial solutions for troubled companies. Later on, he taught finance as an adjunct professor at Ageno School of Business at Golden Gate University, passing on his extensive knowledge to future generations.

Giving back to the community was important to him. In 1976, he was awarded the Small Business Administration Advocate award for his volunteer work with a grocery store in East Palo Alto. After his divorce, he moved to San Francisco and got involved in a variety of civic activities. He was a member of the Mayor's Fiscal Advisory Committee from 1976 - 2007, serving as a member of the Executive committee from 1982 - 2007. In addition, he was appointed to the San Francisco Civil Service Commission in 1984, serving for sixteen years, several as vice-president and president. He was proud of his 8 years as a member of the San Francisco Library Commission where he helped oversee major renovations of the libraries in the city.

In 1998, he married author and philanthropist, Merla Zellerbach, at the home of close friends Sen. Dianne Feinstein and Dick Blum.

He loved to sing and ballroom dance, frequently entering dancing competitions. He traveled all over the world. He had a keen interest in his Norwegian roots, traveling to Bergen to look up old church records and inspiring other family members to do the same. He was an avid photographer and loved to fish. He loved games, particularly charades, and was notorious for playing elaborate pranks on family and friends. Nicknamed "Mr. Stylish" by the staff at Rhoda Goldman Plaza, where he lived the last three years of his life, he always had a song in his heart and a twinkle in his eye.

He is survived by his children, Eric L. Munson (Kathy Shea) of Pelham Manor, NY, Genevieve "Gigi" Munson Monterrosa (Juan Monterrosa) of Alameda, CA, Anna Munson Woods (Tiffany Woods) of Morgan Hill, CA, and three grandsons, Tom Munson, Riley Munson, and Austin Woods. He is also survived by his stepson, Gary Zellerbach, his wife, Linda Zellerbach, and their children, Laura and Randy Zellerbach. In addition, he is survived by his brother, Larry Munson, sisters, Claire Toasperm, Jeannie Lulloff, Karen Hubbard, and their spouses along with many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his wife, Merla Zellerbach, and his sister, Andrea Munson. A celebration of his life will be held on Saturday, August 5, 2017 at Calvary Presbyterian Church, 2515 Fillmore Street, San Francisco, CA 94115. Gifts in his name can be made to the Alzheimer's Association or the American Diabetes Association.

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