

James A. Russo

James, or as he is more affectionately known, Jim, is a native of Monterey. He was born at the Monterey Hospital on March 25, 1940 to Mr. and Mrs. Shedo "Buck" Russo. Jim has three brothers, Sal, Tom, Jack and a younger sister Carol Brooks.

Jim attended local schools. His elementary schools were San Carlos and Walter Colton Jr. High, and he finished his secondary education at Monterey High, graduating with honors in 1957.

After graduating he volunteered for military service in the U. S. Coast Guard in September of '57 at Alameda California. He was stationed at Fort Point Lifeboat Station in San Francisco for 1 year, then transferred to Curtis Bay, Maryland to commission a new Class C, 95 foot Coast Guard cutter and brought the ship through the Panama Canal to Sausalito, California as a search and rescue ship. He then continued his service with the Monterey Coast Guard Group. He was honorably discharged in September of 1961.

After being discharge from the Coast guard, Jim worked part time as a projectionist at all the local theaters on the Monterey Peninsula following in the family tradition for 7 years during off hours. His primary employment was with Seaboard Finance Company in Watsonville, Santa Cruz, Salinas and Monterey for 2 ½ years; changed to banking for Crocker National Bank in Seaside and became a Consumer Loan manager in Monterey until July 1968.

After six months of study in the insurance field, Jim was appointed as an Agent January 1, 1969 for State Farm Insurance Companies in Monterey. He is celebrating his 39th year with State Farm at his current location 439 Tyler Street, Monterey.

Jim and his wife, Rosemarie have been married 48 years. They have two married children; a son Jim Jr. who is married to Kathy and have two daughters Kristen and Jaymie; and a daughter JoAnn who is married to Mark Donangelo and have two sons, Mark Jr. and David.

Jim attended 2 years at Monterey Peninsula College majoring in Business Administration, 2 years at Northwest Missouri State University under a Associate Technology program in California; completed Life Underwriting Training Council under the National Association of Life Underwriters; completed 10 categories of Insurance through Sate Farm Education System; which is on going education program for Sate Farm agents; attended summer college at UCSC, Stanford University, and Sonoma State University. Currently Jim teaches insurance classes in the business division of Monterey Peninsula College.

Local Past & Current Affiliations

- * Monterey Morning Toastmaster charter member and past board member
- * Junior Achievement project coordinator
- * Monterey Council of Boy Scouts-Past Executive Board Member 4 years
- * Monterey Girls Softball league (past)
- * Monterey Little League (past)
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- * Monterey Kiwanis Club-Held office as Director and served as its' President in 1982-83;
helped organize and develop the Great Monterey Squid Festival raising funds for charitable organizations on the Monterey Peninsula; served as Lt Governor for Division
43 of Kiwanis (Monterey and San Benito Counties) in 1985-86; (past)
- * Bing Crosby National Pro-Am Chairman if the Annual Clambake for 800 volunteers
- * Old Monterey Council (OMBA) held offices as Director and served 3 terms as President from April 1980 to March 1983
- * Eskaton Monterey Hospital Member Board of Trustees 1981-1982
- * Monterey Peninsula Hospital-Member Advisory board 1982-1983
- * Community Hospital Foundation Chairman, Community Relations 1984-1985
- * Leadership Monterey Peninsula-Past Director, member of selection committee
- * Monterey History & Art Association Director 4 year term ending 1984, current member
- * Monterey Public Library League Vice President 1982-1984
- * Monterey Paisano Club, Past President, current Secretary & Treasurer
- * Compari Club of Monterey, current Secretary
- * Pacheco Club, served as Director and was President 1993-1994
- * Festa Italia board member 2 years
- * Member ICF Monterey Chapter
- * Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce & VCB served as Director and Vice President; Chairman, Chamber Hoe-Down Show-Down Auction 1990; Raised \$27,000
for the chamber capital improvement program
- * Prostate Cancer Support group of the Central Coast-1994; Steering committee (one of five gentlemen) grew from 8 to currently 650 members in the tri-county area.

Recipient of the Robert C. Littlefield Award 2004, given by the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce. This award included resolution from U. S. Congress, State Senate; County board of Supervisors; Cities of Marina, Monterey and Seaside.

Paisano Club of Monterey initiated a "Jim Russo, Sr. Award" that was presented to the member most deserving of giving of his time and energy to betterment the Paisano Club. This award is presented annually at the AT&T Paisano Dinner.

Jim certainly is a busy man, and yet he is always willing to lend a helping hand whenever he is asked. Jim, as a Monterey native, has more than "given back" to his hometown.