

Jim Castren

1926 - 2018 Obituary



Jim Castren

Ventura, CA

Jim Castren, a former Ventura College professor and longtime county resident, passed away at his home in Ventura on Dec. 6 at the age of 92.

Jim is survived by Rose, his second wife of 35 years; three sons from his first marriage - Blaise of Fremont, Calif., and Chad and Hans of Kalispell, Mont. - and six grandchildren.

Jim was born on Aug. 16, 1926, in Virginia, Minn., and graduated from Roosevelt High in 1944 as class valedictorian. One summer during high school he signed up for the Merchant Marines on the Great Lakes. Then after graduation, he joined the Navy, serving until 1946.

Shortly after his first marriage in 1951, Jim worked one year as a ranger at what was then called Mount McKinley National Park in Alaska. He attended the Universities of Montana, Minnesota, and Utah, attaining a Master's degree in 1961.

In 1957, he and his family moved to Ojai, where he taught science

at Nordhoff High for six years. He then joined the Ventura College staff in 1964, teaching zoology and anatomy and physiology for four decades.

Jim also worked more than 20 summers as a ranger naturalist in Montana's Glacier National Park. While there, he led tourists on hikes, gave evening programs, and passed on his love of the outdoors to his three sons.

He enjoyed traveling to Mexico during winter and spring breaks and taught himself Spanish well enough to be certified as a bilingual teacher.

After retirement, Jim remained active, windsurfing, kayaking, and volunteering at Channel Islands National Park.

He was inurned at Ivy Lawn Memorial Park in Ventura.

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