



## Clifden G. Purcell

March 13, 1936 - June 21, 2019

Surrounded by his family, Clifden G. Purcell, husband, father, uncle, coach and friend, passed away peacefully on Friday, June 21, 2019. He was 83.

Born Friday, March 13, 1936 to Irish parents Madeleine (Egan) and Constantine Purcell, Cliff, a natural athlete and an exceptionally good putter on the golf course, had an uncanny ability to draw out the very best in people. He grew up in San Gabriel, CA idolizing his older brother Lionel and his beloved sister Violet. He attended Mark Kepple High School in Alhambra, CA, served as a U.S. Marine Reservist, and enjoyed a brief stint as a semi-pro football player for the Orange County Rhinos. He moved to Santa Barbara to attend college where he met the love of his life, Janet Bingham. Cliff, a Delta Tau Delta, graduated from UCSB in 1959 and earned Master's degrees from California Lutheran University and USC. He and Janet were married in 1961 and enjoyed nearly 58 years of marriage. They raised three beautiful daughters, Jeanie Purcell Hill (Brian Hill), Jennifer Purcell Deacon (Robert Deacon) and Elizabeth Purcell Otos (Kevin Otos). Cliff was actively engaged in his daughters' lives and embraced every opportunity to participate in the lives of his nine grandchildren (Jackie, Lexie, Brandt, Alex, Curtis, Scott, Michael, Hannah and Grace).

While Cliff had brief experiences as a stockbroker and as a commercial fisherman, it was as a counselor and a coach that he found his greatest joy. Cliff began his coaching career in 1958 as a varsity football assistant at Carpinteria High School. Ultimately, his life as a counselor and coach would span more than forty years and five sports and his guidance would positively impact the lives of thousands of young people. His motto in life and on the field – Never Give Up!

In 1976, Coach Purcell led the varsity boys' and girls' cross country and track teams at San Marcos High School. His girls team won the Channel League championship two years in a row. Beginning in 1959, all of the teams he coached in football, basketball and track, at both Carpinteria and San Marcos High Schools, enjoyed winning records. Not one to stand on the sidelines at practice, Cliff suited up to run, shoot hoops or golf right along with his athletes.

In the spring of 1991, Purcell took over a struggling San Marcos boys' golf team which had posted a 0-18 record the year before. Within three years, the San Marcos golf program

began a string of victories which resulted in six consecutive Channel League championships and a 75-1 League record. The Royals won the CIF championship in 1997 and were runners up that year in the Southern California Golf Association State Championship. In 1999 San Marcos, under Coach Purcell's direction, won the CIF and State Championships. During this period the Royals had a win-loss record of 233-36. Coach Purcell was selected as Channel League Coach of the Year twice and in 1999 was chosen by The California Coaches Association as The California State High School Golf Coach of the Year. In 2008 Cliff Purcell was inducted into the Santa Barbara Athletic Round Table Hall of Fame and in 2013 he received the first Lifetime Achievement Award from the San Marcos High School Golf Team. When asked about his proudest achievement, Coach said, "I am most proud of seeing the hundreds of young men and women, with whom I have had contact, go on to become successful and productive citizens of our community." In addition to his service in education Cliff was a member of the Carpinteria City Council, a founding member of The UCSB Foundation Board of Trustees and a past president of the American Heart Association.

In retirement Cliff remained an avid golfer, active chairman of the Vista del Monte Grounds Committee, loving grandfather, and beloved husband to Jan. The Purcell family is deeply grateful for the care Cliff received from the Ridley-Tree Cancer Center, Visiting Nurse & Hospice Care and especially the Vista del Monte community. A memorial service celebrating Cliff's life will be held Saturday, August 10 at 2:00 PM at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church in Montecito. In lieu of flowers, donations in Cliff's memory can be made to San Marcos High School Boys' Golf (Purcell Memorial), Vista del Monte Residents Assistance Fund, Visiting Nurse & Hospice Care of Santa Barbara or the Santa Barbara Athletic Round Table.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Mass

AUG **10**. 2:00 PM (PT)

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church  
1300 East Valley Rd.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93108  
(805) 969-6868  
<http://www.olmc-montecito.com>