

Long-Time Miramonte Fans Keep Cheering Over the Years

By Jennifer Wake

A group of gentlemen affectionately known as “the Miramonte Grandpas” have made a place for themselves in the stands and in the hearts of hundreds of players over the past 20-plus years at Miramonte High School sporting events.

After his wife passed away in 1982, Jim Stockton (also known as Grandpa Jim) began to attend the local sports events following an invitation from his neighbor, whose son played for the Mats.

“My neighbor Barney’s son was on the baseball team and invited me along,” Stockton said. “After that, I used to be active in everything. I was at sports events every day of the week, routing for the teams.”

As he continued to attend the events, Stockton built a group of regular supporters he

calls “the Grandfather Group,” which includes Al Simonsen (former MHS Parents’ Club president and Moraga Citizen of the Year), Ray Doorack (former MHS vice principal), John Mayer (who prefers to be called a Miramonte “father,” according to Stockton), and Paul Nordine.

Not only does the group follow girls’ basketball and other Mats sports, but they have become such a part of the teams that they are invited to pre-game pasta feeds and are allowed to go down on the court or onto the field to help the teams out.

Although he is very close to his own family, Stockton said he has “made a life of being ‘Grandpa Jim of Miramonte.’”

“We’re a pretty good group. I’ve gone through four principals and they’ve been

wonderful to me,” he said. “The coaches have been wonderful to me, too.”

Al Simonsen – one of the “Grandpas whose three children attended Miramonte and who has been involved in local sports for years, including running LMYA sports for years and coaching soccer – is a U.C. Berkeley alum, but he says he would rather see Miramonte win than Cal.

“The Miramonte games are more intimate,” said Simonsen, who is a retired airline captain and who occasionally substitute teaches at OIS, JM and Miramonte. “It’s fun to watch these kids grow up. They’re like an extended family.”

Stockton agrees. “I’ll keep it up as long as I can,” he said.



From left to right are John Mayer, Jim Stockton (MHS Snack Shack named in his honor), Al Simonsen (former MHS Parents' Club president), Paul Nordine