



# Donald Lee Matthews

NOV 8, 1928 - MAR 14, 2016



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OAKLAND

Funeral, Cemetery  
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## **Donald Lee Matthews**

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**D**onald L. Matthews, Oakland Fire Dept. Assistant Chief (retired)  
1928-2016

Born to Frederick and Estelle Matthews on November 8, 1928, Don Matthews was a fourth-generation San Franciscan. He grew up in San Francisco, moved to Oakland while in grammar school, and graduated from Piedmont High School in 1946. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from UC Berkeley in 1950, and later that year the Korean War drew him into the U.S. Army. He was sent to Korea as a Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) officer as a sergeant attached to the 1st Division of the U.S. Marines, where he worked with South Korean translators to locate and interrogate spies. He was honorably discharged in December 1952 when his father passed away back home.

Despite his college degree in business, Don followed his heart and joined the Oakland Fire Department in September 1953 as a hoseman. He served through all fire department ranks over the span of his career, including additional service as the city's Water Supply Officer. He retired as Assistant Chief of OFD in December 1993, after 40 years of service to a career that he loved and where he dedicated himself to helping other fellow firemen train and advance.

Don is survived by his wife of 52 years, Beverley Matthews, and their two children, Scott Matthews and Susan Lane, and their families, including four grandchildren and one great-grandson. Scott's family includes his wife, Janine, son Mitchell, daughter Katie and grandson Landon. Susan's family includes her husband, Patrick Lane, and two daughters, Tabitha and Tori.

Don met his wife, Beverley, in 1962 on a blind date arranged by mutual friends. Bev was a registered nurse (RN) living in San Francisco. She had a strict two-date-limit policy, while Don was a confirmed bachelor – thus a perfect match. They married in Bev's Wyoming hometown in May 1964. After 52 years together, they parted on



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March 14, 2016, holding hands when Don passed away peacefully at home with his wife and children. He died from respiratory complications related to occupational hazards and advanced age.

Don was an honorary member of the Phoenix Society of San Francisco – the lone professional firefighter allowed to join this exclusive association for firefighting enthusiasts. He was a life Member of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). He also held memberships in the Veteran Firemen’s Association of Alameda County and the Bay Area Fire Protection Forum. He and his family were members of Park Blvd Presbyterian Church in Oakland, and they joined the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church in 1981-present, where Don and Bev have contributed to the growth and success of the church and its community.

An additional memorial service will be at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church on Friday, April 15, 2016.



## Tribute Wall

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TF

**The Bill Bowman Family** posted:

A BEAUTIFUL FAMILY, AN INCREDIBLE WORKER AND GREAT CHRISTIANS: THANKS YOU FOR ALL YOU DID TO KEEP OUR OAKLAND FIRE FROM MORE HARM.LOVE, T HE BOWMAN'S & SON'S STEVE AND MIKE

March 26 at 6:30 AM

SM

**Susan Mccabe** posted:

Such a beautiful remembrance of him and your time with him.Thanks so for sharing this..

March 25 at 3:18 AM

JL

**John Lighty** posted:

I always enjoyed the discussions I had with Don whenever he came to Wyoming to visit George and Leona. I also enjoyed when Becky and I came out to San Francisco and Bev and Don took us to Sonoma Valley, The Redwood trees, the pier (with no sea lions), and a fancy 5 course restaurant. But my favorite memory is on that vacation Don took me to his Men's Group at his church. We had a discussion about current issues that some members were having and it was a very open and honest discussion with a group of Christian men. The verse for that meeting was Psalm 1:3 "He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers." That trip was over 25 years ago and I still remember it and have talked about it many times over the years. That is how much Don meant to me.John Lighty

March 20 at 11:40 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Donald by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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