



Mayrene Bates

January 6, 2023

Beloved local educational legend Mayrene Bates passed from this world to the next on January 6, 2023. She was a teacher at Fairview Elementary, librarian at Grange Intermediate, Vice Principal at Fairfield High, Principal at both Crystal Middle School and K.I. Jones Elementary School, Assistant Superintendent of the Solano County Office of Education, and a Trustee on the Solano County Board of Education.

Bates was also a rock-steady wife and mother, a dear friend, a compassionate and creative colleague, and a mentor and role model to many.

To say that Mayrene Bates came from humble beginnings is an understatement.. She was born on April 15, 1934, to Ernest and Pauline Beasley in the tiny town of Liberty, Tennessee. She attended a segregated school from first grade to 8th grade in a one-room schoolhouse that served as the church on Sundays. When she went to high school, she had a 32-mile bus ride as she was not allowed to attend a school 16 miles from her home.

After high school, she received a scholarship to Atlanta University Library School where she earned a master's degree in library science. In 1955 she met and married a career Air Force man, James Bates, and as military families often do, they moved frequently and came to Fairfield in 1970.

Through her long educational career, Mayrene Bates was a powerful force for good in the local community. For her tireless efforts, she was honored with numerous state, county, and local awards. Among them are serving as the grand marshal of Fairfield's Fourth of July Parade, being named honorary commander of Travis Air Force Base, and having a street named after her, Mayrene Bates Lane, which opened in 2003 in the Gold Ridge subdivision off of Peabody Road.

Though she was a very busy woman juggling the demands of a career and home, she always made time for random acts of kindness. Many locals treasure her thoughtful thank you notes or words of encouragement usually accentuated with a cartoon that tickled her fancy that she wanted to share.

The poor girl from Tennessee who attended segregated schools eventually visited all seven continents. In a 2020 newspaper column about her remarkable life, Bates exhibited her attitude of gratitude for those who helped her navigate her life path.

"We don't do anything alone. There is always someone who gives us a hand or encourages us. I have had lots of people like that over the years and I'm very grateful. I've had such a wonderful life."

Mayrene Bates is survived by her husband Retired Lt. Colonel James Bates, her son David Bates (Laura), and grandchildren James and Jazmyn. She is preceded in death by her son Mark Bates and her siblings Joann Floyd, Betty Sue Beasley, James Beasley, and Kenneth Beasley.

MEMORIAL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS, FEB. 23, 2023:

The Order of Service (open to the public) will begin at 10:00 AM at Solano Community College, 4000 Suisun Valley Rd., Building 1400, with an "Omega

Omega” Service performed by the Solano Valley Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, followed immediately with the Memorial Service at 10:30 AM. Parking is free in Lot 2. The processional will depart at 11:30 AM for the 1:00 PM Interment at the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery, 5810 Midway Road, Dixon CA 95620. A Reception will be held at the County Event Center, 601 Texas St., Fairfield, CA 94533 from 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations in Mayrene Bates name to the United Negro College Fund (<https://uncf.org/ways-to-donate>) or a local high school educational scholarship fund.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

FEB 23. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (PT)

Solano Community College
4000 Suisun Valley Rd
Fairfield, CA 94534

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Interment Service

FEB 23. 1:00 PM (PT)

Sacramento Valley National Cemetery
5810 Midway Road
Dixon, CA 95620

Tribute Wall

TB

“ I met Mayrene when i join the Rotary club she was a member of. She always had a warm smile and welcomed all who joined us for breakfast! My condolences to her family.

Tina Blythe - January 19, 2023 at 12:00 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Kathy Link - January 18, 2023 at 05:49 PM



“ I first met Mayrene when she was the principal at K.I. Jones and my sons were enrolled there. She was a lady in everything she did, and had a heart of gold. She was a gracious, intelligent, and kind human being, and I will miss her always.

Kathy Link - January 18, 2023 at 05:45 PM

JH

“ I first met Mayrene Bates in the early 1980's when I was hired as a 6th grade teacher in FSUSD. I was placed at Crystal Elementary school where Mayrene was principal. She helped me transition from teaching high school art classes to teaching 6th grade. She was an exceptional lady who dedicated her life to education and public service. My condolences to Jim and her family.

Judi Honeychurch - January 18, 2023 at 12:44 PM

GC

“ *Mayrene Bates was my aunt and I am so sorry to hear of her passing.
My condolences to her family.
She was truly an inspiration and a dedicated, lifelong, public servant.
She gave generously of her time and resources.
I will miss our talks!*

Gail Curtis - January 17, 2023 at 02:40 PM

LB

“ *In 1980 Mayrene hired me to teach fourth grade at Crystal Elementary School in Suisun. She was the first principal I ever taught with and what a great principal she was! She supported my efforts to try new things to reach my students at their levels of performance and help them to move forward in their learning. Mayrene was a mentor and friend. My thoughts are with Jim and family.*

Linda Barrow - January 15, 2023 at 10:04 PM

DS

“ *I have known the Bates family for over 50 years. The passing of Mrs Bates is crushing to not only myself but our entire community. Mr and Mrs Bates have always led by example. I went to School and played ball with their son David for many years. Mr Bates was my little league coach for a couple of years. I have had long conversations with the Bates over the years. Their kind hearts and care and compassion for all people was something that I have always admired. May God rest his arms on Mr Bates and David during this time. God bless you my old friends, please reach out if you need anything. Much love*

Daryl Snedeker - January 15, 2023 at 06:39 PM

TY

“ I am the niece of Uncle James who lives in Portsmouth, Va. and had the Godly privilege of being in the presence of Mayrene Bates twice during my life. I so vividly recall Mayrene's personality being warm, pleasant, kind, and Godly charming. Now she's in the care of God's mercy and grace enjoying the treasures of heaven

Theta Young - January 14, 2023 at 09:33 PM

KC

“ Mayrene Bates was one amazing, classy lady! She was a true champion for public education. She treated everyone with dignity and grace. I first met Mayrene when I moved here as a new teacher. She was one of the first district administrators that I met. She was so friendly and accepting that I knew I had made the right choice. Although I was not assigned to her school, I kept in touch with her throughout the decades. She was a strong woman leader who also was nurturing and truly cared about others. Mayrene loved this community and was an exceptional public servant. She holds a special place in the hearts of many. Her legacy will live on!

Kristin Corey - January 13, 2023 at 06:05 PM

AG

“ Mayrene Bates was an elegant, lovely lady, who shared her passion for education with generations of Solano County students and their families. She has left an indelible mark on all who knew her. I first met her when we served on the Fairfield Community Services Commission in 1987. As a young wife and mother, I looked to her example to better my own education. Mayrene and I crossed paths many times over the years politically and personally. I will miss her sweet demeanor and graciousness. Thank you, Mayrene for guiding us with your light.

Anne M Griffin - January 13, 2023 at 01:39 PM