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YOLO COUNTY NEWS

Obituaries

James Buhlert & Ericka Barrett

By **Special to The Enterprise**

1936 — 2007 1944 — 2015

James Edward Buhlert was born in Woodland in 1936, and Ericka Lynne Barrett was born in Palo Alto in 1944. They both died at the age of 71, Jim in 2007 and Ericka in 2015.

Jim and Ericka met in the Department of Food Science & Technology at UC Davis in 1978 and were married in 1979.



Bringing two young daughters each from previous marriages, they blended a beautiful new family and worked tirelessly to strengthen and maintain the bonds of their new clan.

In keeping with the theme of their professional careers in Food Science, Jim & Ericka shared the belief that meals are the cornerstone of a strong family and the key to healthy children, so they insisted on one rule: everyone must gather for dinner every night. And no matter how late or disorganized, Jim and Ericka were sure to have food on the table and children in their seats, which more often than not included the many visiting friends of their daughters.

As the children grew and matured, so did their palates and the family meals began to veer away from the usual requests for hot dogs, cheese puffs and flakey flix. Jim and Ericka soon realized they had quite a large collection of gourmet recipes and a new hobby was created: 'The Fumblesome Famby Cookbook.' Over the years, they happily crafted several versions of their cookbook; a collection of family favorites, old & new.

When Jim retired from UCD, they switched directions and started pursuing a new hobby and dream: Building the family farm up in Humboldt County. Over the next few years, they built a beautiful main house and a guest cottage, complete with a huge workshop. They terraced a large portion of the property and planted a cherry orchard and an enormous kitchen garden, which included fruit trees, vegetables, herbs & flowers. When Ericka retired, they moved up to the farm permanently and happily hosted many gatherings over the years for family and friends. Always with amazing meals, great wines and exhilarating laughter.

How do you measure a life? In the words of that famous song, "Seasons of Love," you can measure your life "in daylight, in sunsets, in midnights, and in cups of coffee."

We would like to add: In gardens planted, in children raised, in kindness shared.

Ericka and Jim made the world a better place, and we miss them fiercely. Their DNA lives on in their family, including children Corie, Kelley, Sonya and Amy; grandchildren; Jim's brother Jan; and Ericka's sister Patti.

A celebration of their lives will begin at 11 a.m. Aug. 20, 2016, at the Putah Creek Lodge in Davis. In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate that memorial gifts be made to the Barrett and Buhlert Memorial Food Science Teaching Award at UC Davis: <https://give.ucdavis.edu/go/barrettbuhlert>. This fund was established to support graduate students who have demonstrated a passion for teaching and mentorship of other students — just as Ericka and Jim did during their tenures at UC Davis.