

## Kenneth A. Blake

### La Palma

While it was through his two young sons that Ken Blake first got involved in La Palma, he has worked to make his community a better place to live since arriving in April 1971.

Sons Christopher and Ryan both attended George B. Miller Elementary, and while they were students there, Blake joined the PTA. He also took his boys to the YMCA, so they could join the father and son Indian Guides program.

When his son Christopher was a student at John F. Kennedy High School, Blake joined the Kennedy Band Boosters, and for four years was the Booster's treasurer and member of the "pit crew," setting up the percussion section for performances. He also spent four years as a member of the Kennedy High School Site Committee, helping the campus hook up to the internet. Since its inception in 1995, the JFKHS Scholarship Foundation also has had Ken's support and expertise.

In 1989, Blake was appointed by the La Palma City Council to the Cultural and Beautification Committee, a position he kept until December 1994. Throughout his term he helped develop several community functions: the Holiday Tree Lighting, Memorial Day Service, Arts in the Park, Summer Concert Series and the Arbor Day Event, which

led to La Palma receiving the national designation as a Tree City. During his appointment to the committee, he also served a term as chairman.

For 21 years, Blake has been a member of La Palma Days Parade Committee, an annual community event with parade and band review. Since his involvement began, he has been chairman of the cars for dignitaries. Originally, he required 10 cars and now the need has grown to between 60 and 70 cars. The annual November parade has been designated by the Orange County Board of Supervisors as the official Orange County Veterans Day Parade.

Blake's volunteer nature led him to join the Kiwanis Club of La Palma, where he could be a part of their outreach programs for both youth and philanthropic activities. With the Kiwanis Club, he also helps out at the pancake breakfasts the club prepares for the community's Fourth of July event, Cancer Society's Relay for Life and the Continental Little League. In addition, he barbecues hamburgers and hot dogs for other non profit events, such as the JFK Boosters, and carnivals at George B. Miller and Luther elementary schools.

For 12 years, from December 1994 to December 2006, Blake served on the La Palma City Council and was chosen mayor for three terms. While on city council, he played a major role in soliciting combined efforts of La Palma and the City of Cypress in constructing the Skate Park that serves the youth of both communities. During his term,

he also became involved with activities of the League of California Cities, holding several posts, both county and state.

On the state level, he was chairman and vice chairman of the Community Services Committee, Community Services Department Program Planning Committee and the Annual Conference Resolutions Committee. He also served on the Helene Putman Selection Committee, a group that reviews projects submitted by California's cities.

As a result of Orange County's recent financial troubles, the Orange County Library Advisory Board was instituted, and Blake served as chair and vice chair. "Through negotiations, the cities were able to keep all libraries open so that residents would be served," he says.

During his tenure on city council, Blake was a member of the policy committee and both CAB liaison and Finance Committee member. He also represented La Palma on the Orange County Fire Authority for 10 years, serving as chair of Operations and Procedures, Board of Directors, Design Committee for Regional Operations and Training Center and Firefighters Memorial Selection Committee. He was an alternate director of the Orange County Sanitation District, as well.

Upon his retirement from ECCO Equipment Corporation in 2008, Blake expanded his service to La Palma by becoming a member of the Volunteers in Policing.

A graduate of Santa Monica City College, Blake transferred to California State University, Northridge where he earned a bachelor of science degree in accounting and soon after became a certified public accountant. He and his wife, Karen, continue to live in La Palma. Both sons live in Texas.