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Service, Passion, and Good Health



Seventy-seven-year-old Tony Rosa is a veteran, a retired LAPD officer, a former international police advisor, and a long-time volunteer. He continues to live a life of service, has a passion for ongoing volunteer work, and

maintains good health.

Military Service, Ongoing Education, and the LAPD

After graduating high school, Rosa attended college for two years before volunteering to join the U.S. Army. "I was a military police K-9 officer for three years" and then volunteered for a "tour in Vietnam" (1966-67).

"After mustering out" of the service, Rosa joined the Los Angeles Police Department. While working full-time for the department, he earned a bachelor's degree "in English from Cal State Dominquez Hills and an M.A. in Public



Communications from Pepperdine University." He pursued these degrees as a pathway to promotions. "But later, I declined promotional opportunities beyond" earning the rank of sergeant "because I enjoyed being a field supervisor more than the managerial role. No regrets with that decision." In 2000, after serving "just short of 32 years," Rosa retired.

Serving as an International Police Advisor

"Almost immediately after retirement, I worked as an international police advisor for the U.S. State Department" and for the U.N. on peacekeeping missions. I served two years in Kosovo, two years in Liberia, and three years in Sudan. I traveled all over Europe and Africa during these deployments."

Each of the U.N. missions had "differently negotiated mandates for the countries involved. While in western Kosovo, Rosa "directed a large international police contingent and many Kosovo police recruits. One of the truly satisfying aspects of that tour was my ability to obtain asylum status for a Kosovo family who has since become very successful U.S. citizens."



While in Liberia, Rosa's role was "strictly advisory to the Liberian Police force. I was the Executive Officer to the U.N. Police Commissioner." His three-year mission to Sudan was also advisory. "I held various assignments there, including a six-month role as Acting Deputy Police Commissioner for South Sudan. I finally retired completely in 2009."

Volunteer Service as a Passion

I lived in the Paradise, California area when the 2018 Camp Fire destroyed my home. In early 2019, I moved to Sutherlin, Oregon, to be closer to family living in Roseburg.



One day, while walking near his home at Ford's Pond, Rosa met Jim Houseman, President of the Friends of Ford's Pond, a local nonprofit that manages the 202-acre community recreation area. Rosa was recruited as a volunteer. On average, he volunteers about 1,000 hours each year, picking up trash,

mowing trails, and removing hawthorn trees, scotch broom, and berry vines. "As for blackberry eradication, there is no secret weapon. Use all available tools and chemicals with great persistence! That is the key to eventual success."

As part of his volunteer work at Ford's Pond, Rosa has also participated in planting an Oak Savana. Future Farmers of America students from the local high school were also "an integral part of the planting experience, and it was truly inspiring to see the high school students' excitement in this effort."

"It was not a big leap into volunteer work for me because I was doing much the same thing in my homeowner's association in the Paradise, California area. As volunteers, we had "managed a 500- acre,

heavily forested green belt. The exercise, camaraderie, and service to my community were very important motivators.

The chance to continue this type of activity in Sutherlin was most welcome indeed. As a result, I have enjoyed joining another great group of people dedicated to improving the community and county."

Rosa recommends volunteering for Friends of Ford's Pond for those living in the Sutherlin, Oregon area. "You can work at your own speed and on whatever project is available. Without volunteers, this park would never have happened."

Back to Volunteering after an Unexpected 'Break'

While volunteering at Ford's Pond is Rosa's passion, "I occasionally find time to help my brother on his farm in Northern California. Unfortunately, a couple of months ago, during a task felling trees, we had an accident, and a tree fell on me. I sustained a back injury and a fractured ankle; this made it impossible to work on the pond for a month, but I am back at it, although at a slower pace."

For Relaxation

"While not doing volunteer work, I like to do a lot of reading, mostly history. Also, I enjoy emailing friends daily."

Advice

As he continues to do, Rosa suggests staying focused on being physically and mentally active. "In life, I have accomplished many things; to do so, I have maintained acceptable fitness, have eaten properly, never smoked, and used alcohol very sparingly." At seventy-seven, Rosa also takes no medications, "which is rare for my age."

"And never forget to have a sense of humor. Anyone can handle the good times; it is what you are and do when the going gets tough that defines you."