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Bernard Rocca Jr. -- S.F. business leader, Cal Bears fan

Ryan Kim, Chronicle Staff Writer Published 4:00 am, Thursday, September 1, 2005

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Obituary photo of Bernard Rocca.



Bernard T. Rocca Jr., a longtime **San Francisco business** leader and avid Cal Bears fan, died Saturday of heart failure at his home in Lafayette. He was 90.

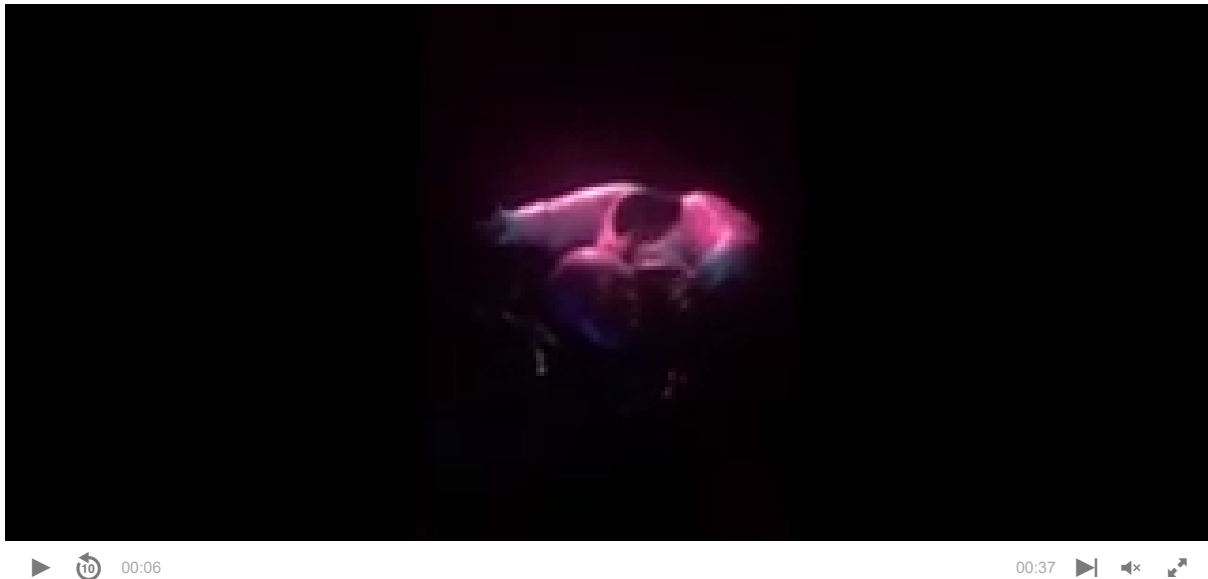
The Bakersfield native grew up in Berkeley and attended the **University of California**, where he studied economics and earned Phi Beta Kappa honors his junior year. During **college**, Mr. Rocca played piccolo for the Cal Band and was a member of Sigma Phi fraternity, two associations he continued until his death.

After graduating in 1936, Mr. Rocca joined **Pacific Vegetable Oil Corp.** as an administrative assistant to the president, Rocca's father, Bernard Rocca. During World War II, he moved to Washington, D.C., where he worked for the

Commodity Credit Corp. and then for the **War Food Administration**.

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After the war, he returned to Pacific Vegetable Oil and later became president in 1957 and CEO in 1967. During his time at PVO, which imports and processes vegetable oil, he pioneered the production of safflower seeds and the use of safflower oil.

After retiring from the company, Mr. Rocca helped co-found the **Pacific Commodities Exchange** in San Francisco. He traded futures on the exchange floor until it closed in 1976. His next move was to start **B.T. Rocca Jr. & Co.**, which traded in international coconut oil and palm oil markets.

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Mr. Rocca's interests extended to global economics and world affairs. He served as chairman of the **World Trade Association of San Francisco** in the 1960s and as chairman of the **San Francisco Committee on Foreign Relations** from 1988 to 1990. He also served as a director of the **Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco** from 1966 to 1972.

Mr. Rocca was a lifelong supporter of his alma mater and endowed a chair in international trade at UC Berkeley's **Haas School of Business**. He also supported his fraternity Sigma Phi and the Cal Band and enjoyed marching in the Cal Alumni Band.

An avid outdoorsman, Mr. Rocca loved hiking and camping, a passion he shared with children through his longtime service as a scoutmaster with the Boy Scouts in Lafayette. He founded Troop 223 in Lafayette and also served on the **Executive Committee of the Mount Diablo Council of the Boy Scouts**.

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Mr. Rocca is survived by his wife, Katherine, of Lafayette; sons Roy of San Francisco and Bart of Evanston, Ill.; daughter Marilee of South Lake Tahoe; six grandchildren; and one great-granddaughter.

Memorial services will be private.

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