

OUR REGION

SUNDAY
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THE SAN DIEGO
UNION-TRIBUNE

SAN DIEGO

News around the county

A review of events, including Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's forecast for a budget shortfall and changes at Lindbergh Field. **B2**



SPRING VALLEY

A home for aging cats

Senior felines get a sunny complex of their own at the National Cat Protection Society, home to 30 older cats. **G1**

SAN MARCOS

Family robbed in home invasion

Gunmen tie up a couple and their daughter in their garage, then take a large amount of jewelry and flee in the family's sport utility vehicle. **B2**

ROAD CLOSURES

Construction delays on county highways. **B2**

WEATHER

Regional, statewide and global forecasts. **B6**

RANCHO SANTA FE

'He always tried to make the most of life'

By Helen Gao
STAFF WRITER

The world knows David Roger Martin as the victim of a recent fatal shark attack off the coast of Solana Beach.

The longtime Solana Beach resident and retired veterinarian was much more than that.

His friends, family and pastor eulogized him yesterday afternoon as a kind man with an even temper and a deep faith in

God, and as a triathlete with many interests and hobbies. He lived life with quiet passion, driven by his father's early death at age 49 when Martin was 10 years old.

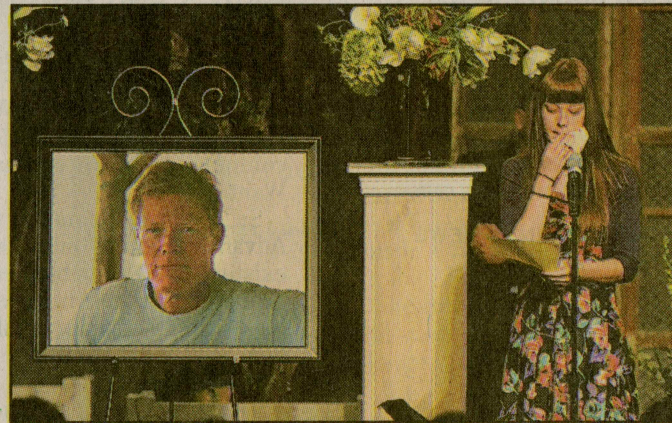
"He thought longevity was not in his genes, so he always tried to make the most of life," said Jeff Martin, David Martin's son.

A memorial service celebrating his life was held at Horizon Christian Fellowship in Rancho

Santa Fe, where Martin attended church. People who ran, swam and biked with Martin and animal lovers whose pets he cared for nearly filled the 700-seat sanctuary.

Martin, 66, bled to death the morning of April 25 after being attacked by a great white shark while swimming off Tide Beach Park with members of the Triathlon Club of San Diego. The

SEE **Memorial, B4**



At the service for David Martin at Horizon Christian Fellowship, daughter Hannah (right) said she will miss his smiles, bear hugs and bad jokes. *Charlie Neuman / U-T*



A photo of David Martin with his girlfriend was displayed in the church. At the service, his friends, family and pastor eulogized Martin as a kind man with an even temper and a deep faith in God. *Charlie Neuman / Union-Tribune*

► MEMORIAL

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Veterinarian's calm and caring manner recalled

circumstances of his death drew worldwide attention.

Pastor Bob Botsford urged mourners to trust in God even though they might question why Martin suffered such a horrifying death.

"David Martin loved God and had that kind of relationship with Jesus Christ, so today you can rest assured he's in a much better place because of what Christ has done and what David believed," Botsford said.

Jeff Martin said he found "real comfort" in the fact that his father died doing what he loved and in the arms of his friends.

"I wasn't ready for him to go," Jeff Martin said, his voice breaking, "but God has a per-

fect plan. This is part of that. We don't question that."

David Martin was born Jan. 29, 1942, in Riverside to a farming family and was the youngest of three children. He raised a steer that won first prize at a county fair in Pomona.

"That paved the way for veterinary school and a love of animals," Jeff Martin said.

David Martin had asthma as a child. He swam to strengthen his health, and swimming nurtured his love of the ocean and nature. He played water polo in high school and college.

Martin not only swam, ran and biked, he also loved fishing, skiing, snorkeling, flying, dirt biking, traveling, gardening and photography. He was the father of five grown children and had four grandchildren. He lived down the street from Tide Beach Park.

Martin moved to Solana Beach in 1970 and, with another veterinarian, opened All Creatures Hospital on Via de la

Valle in Del Mar in 1986. He retired in 1997 but still filled in occasionally at North County veterinary hospitals.

More than 6 feet tall and weighing about 200 pounds, Martin was known as Big Dave in the triathlon community. As a veterinarian, he was remembered for his calm and caring manner.

Daughter Hannah Martin read aloud a letter she wrote to her father, telling him how much she missed seeing him walk through the door after a long bike ride and making breakfast at a "ridiculously early hour."

She said she will miss his smiles, bear hugs and bad jokes.

"Every part of you I will miss as much as the next," she said, choking back tears.

Steve Wikse, a veterinary school classmate with Martin, shared memories of his friend as someone who always had "a sunburned nose and big ol' smile" and a bad joke up his sleeve.

Wikse said that whenever Martin was getting ready to tell a joke, he would rub his hands together. He would tell his joke, and they would get a big laugh out of it.

One summer, they worked together hauling hay. Wikse said that when thinking back to that summer, he recalls a strapping, hardworking Martin covered with sweat.

"David R. Martin is going to be missed by many, many people," Wikse said.

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