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LOSS HITS HOME: REMEMBERING THE 9 VICTIMS OF THE CALABASAS HELICOPTER CRASH

'We all know him as just Kobe, a person.'

Don Leach | Staff Photographer

A WOMAN PRAYS Monday at a makeshift memorial for Lakers legend Kobe Bryant outside Pelican Crest, the gated community in Newport Coast where Bryant lived with his family. His daughter Gianna, 13, died with him Sunday in a helicopter crash in Calabasas.

Newport Coast neighbors salute Kobe Bryant

At least 100 people gather for a candlelight vigil and share stories about the former Lakers superstar, who was one of 9 who perished in a helicopter crash Sunday morning in Calabasas.

BY HILLARY DAVIS

People who knew Kobe Bryant as the father of four who lived up the street, ordered a certain pink drink at the corner Starbucks and trick-or-treated with their children gathered Sunday night in a park not far from his home to share their memories.

Newport Ridge Community Park is near Bryant's Newport Coast home and near their homes too. These were neighbors of the retired Lakers basketball legend and youth basketball coach whom some of the younger people knew around their school gym as Mr. Bryant.

Bryant, 41; his 13-year-old daughter Gianna; John, Keri and Alyssa Altobelli; Sarah and Payton Chester; Christina Mauser and Ara Zobayan all were killed in a helicopter crash Sunday morning in Calabasas. All lived in or near Newport Beach.

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A WOMAN RELIGHTS a candle in honor of Kobe Bryant at Newport Ridge Community Park in Newport Beach during a vigil Sunday night for the former Lakers star, who died in a helicopter crash earlier in the day.

Photo by Hillary Davis

Payton and Sarah Chester recalled as 'gorgeous human beings'

"While the world mourns the loss of a dynamic athlete and humanitarian, I mourn the loss of 2 people just as important."

BY HILLARY DAVIS AND COLLEEN SHALBY

Payton Chester's elementary school principal remembers the girl and her mother, Sarah, as "two gorgeous human beings."

"While the world mourns the loss of a dynamic athlete and humanitarian, I mourn the loss of two people just as important," Todd Schmidt, former principal of Harbor View Elementary School in Corona del Mar, wrote in a Facebook post Sunday. "Their impact was just as meaningful, their loss will be just as keenly felt, and our hearts are just as broken."

PAYTON Chester, left, and her mother, Sarah.

Courtesy of Chester family

The Chesters were among the nine victims of Sunday's helicopter crash in Calabasas that also claimed Kobe Bryant and his 13-year-old daughter Gianna. Payton, also 13, was one of Gianna's teammates on Bryant's Mamba Sports Academy girls' club basketball team. The crash occurred on the way to a game.

"As a principal, we work with some amazing families. The Chesters were one of those. Engaged, supportive, encouraging and full of mischief and laughter. And they had the best kiddos! This family made such a huge impact at Harbor View. They were genuine, kindhearted and caring to the staff, to other families and yes, especially to me," Schmidt wrote alongside photos of a beaming Payton. "You were

*See **Chesters,** page A3*

H.B.'s Ara Zobayan flew Bryant's doomed helicopter

He was an experienced flier and a certified flight instructor with over 8,000 hours of flight time.

BY DAILY PILOT STAFF

Ara Zobayan of Huntington Beach — the pilot of the helicopter that crashed in Calabasas on Sunday, killing nine people, including Zobayan and retired Lakers star Kobe Bryant — was an experienced flier and a certified flight instructor with more than 8,000 hours of flight time, sources said this week.

Bryant regularly used the helicopter, a Sikorsky S-76B owned by the charter service Island Express. Records show the aircraft had flown between John Wayne Airport, where it took off Sunday morning, and Camarillo Airport, where it was heading, about two dozen times in the past two years.

Kurt Deetz, a pilot who worked at Island Express and said he flew Bryant from 2014 to 2016, told the Los Angeles Times that after he left the company, Zaboyan became Bryant's go-to pilot.

The company said he was "our chief pilot" and had been with Island Express for 10 years.

National Transportation Safety Board member Jennifer Homendy said Monday that Zobayan, 50, had a commercial certificate and was a certified flight instructor who had 8,200 hours of flight time as of July.

Zobayan was an instrument-certified pilot who earned his commercial license in 2007, according to the Federal Aviation Administration's pilot certification database.

The database also shows Zobayan was up to date on FAA-required annual medical exams, according to news reports.

Even though poor weather forced Zobayan to swing northeast of his usual flight path, Sunday's route would have been very familiar to him, Deetz told The Times.

"It wasn't a question of him not knowing the neighbor-

*See **Zobayan,** page A3*

KTLA

ARA ZOBAYAN, 50, of Huntington Beach piloted the Sikorsky S-76B helicopter that crashed Sunday in Calabasas.

Facebook, via KTLA

JOHN, KERI and Alyssa Altobelli are seen in photos posted to Keri Altobelli's Facebook page.

Baseball community mourns the death of OCC coach

Pirates coaches and players weigh in on what John Altobelli, who died along with his wife and daughter, meant to them.

BY ANDREW TURNER

Sunlight gleamed over Wendell Pickens Field at Orange Coast College on Monday afternoon.

Had tragedy not struck the day before, one might have considered it to be perfect baseball weather.

Throughout the day, people went to the Costa Mesa school's baseball stadium, dropping in to pay their respects to a man that touched many lives.

John Altobelli, 56, who won four California community college state championships in heading the Pirates baseball program for 27 years, died Sunday morning in the helicopter crash that claimed the lives of nine people in Calabasas.

Among those aboard the helicopter were Lakers great Kobe Bryant, 41, and his daughter, Gianna, 13, as well as Altobelli's wife, Keri, 46, and his daughter Alyssa, 13. They were headed to a youth basketball game at Bryant's Mamba Sports Academy in Thousand Oaks. Alyssa played with Bryant's daughter on the Mamba club basketball team, which was coached by Bryant.

"Coach Altobelli was a giant on our campus — a beloved teacher, coach,

*See **Coach,** page A3*

CHRISTINA MAUSER died in Sunday's helicopter crash that killed nine people.

Facebook, via KTLA

Christina Mauser remembered as 'special mom' and coach

She was a standout in basketball at Edison High, where she graduated in 1999.

BY JULIA SCLAFANI

Christina Mauser, a Huntington Beach basketball coach and mother of three, was remembered Monday for her skills as an athlete, a mom, a wife and a teacher.

Mauser, 38, died Sunday in the crash of a helicopter carrying her, basketball legend Kobe Bryant, his daughter Gianna and six other people. All aboard were killed.

They were traveling to a game involving Bryant's girls' club basketball team and the Fresno Lady Heat at Bryant's Mamba Sports Academy in Thousand Oaks when the helicopter crashed in Calabasas after taking off from John Wayne Airport. The tournament, called the Mamba Cup, features boys' and girls' travel teams from fourth through eighth grades. Mauser was the Mamba team's top assistant coach, according to her

*See **Mauser,** page A3*