



Mark Karr Class of 2026

Mark Karr graduated from Oroville High School in 1973 and distinguished himself as a scholar, athlete, actor, and leader. A third-generation Oroville native, Mark has combined professional achievement with a commitment to preserving Oroville's history and heritage.

During his years at Oroville High School, Mark excelled academically and was a member of the National Honor Society, California Scholastic Federation, and International Thespian Society. He earned the Bank of America Achievement Award in Drama and was recognized for his academic accomplishments and promise of future service. His love for theater was evident throughout high school, where he performed in numerous productions and earned praise for his ability to bring characters to life. Friends recall that Mark immersed himself completely in each role, focusing less on recognition and more on creating meaningful experiences for audiences.

Mark also established himself as one of the finest track and field athletes in Oroville High School history. Competing in the 100, 220, and 440-yard dashes, he set school records and earned league and sectional championships throughout his high school career. The 440-yard dash became his signature event, and he won the Eastern Athletic League championship in that event all four years. He captured Northern Section titles as a sophomore, junior, and senior and qualified for the California State Championships each year.

One of Mark's most enduring accomplishments came in 1973, when he set the Oroville High School 400-meter record, converting his 440-yard performance from 49.9 to 49.6 seconds. More than fifty years later, the record still stands. His achievements earned him recognition as the Most Valuable Runner, the High Point Athlete, the varsity team captain for three consecutive years, and eventual induction into the Oroville High School Track and Field Hall of Fame.

Following graduation, Mark attended California State University, Chico, where he earned dual Bachelor of Arts degrees in Political Science and History. He continued competing in track and field for three years and was a member of a sprint medley relay team that placed at the prestigious San Francisco Examiner Indoor Games. His collegiate experience reflected the commitment to excellence that defined his high school years.

In 1979, Mark began a successful career in the insurance industry that would span more than twenty-five years. Starting as a financial analyst trainee, he steadily advanced through positions of increasing responsibility with Maryland Insurance Company. His leadership abilities earned promotions to Western Regional Adjuster, Regional Property Supervisor, Home Office General Adjuster, Executive Property Adjuster, and ultimately Director of Property Claims. Throughout his career, he supervised major property loss investigations, catastrophe response operations, and large teams of employees across multiple states, including responses to significant natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina.

After leaving the insurance industry, Mark worked as a restoration construction project manager, overseeing repair projects involving fire, water, and mold damage. Later, he combined his professional experience with his lifelong love of boating and the outdoors by becoming an inventory manager for a marine chandlery company. He retired in 2014 after a career marked by professionalism, integrity, and strong leadership.

Retirement provided Mark with additional opportunities to pursue one of his greatest passions: preserving local history. Through extensive involvement with the Butte County Historical Society, Native Sons of the Golden West, and other organizations, he has become a respected advocate for historical education and preservation. His efforts have contributed to historical markers, educational displays, restoration projects, and public presentations that help tell the story of Oroville and its surrounding communities.

Among his many contributions are the preservation of the historic Thermalito Oddfellows Home pond, the development of educational signage at Riverbend Park, and the design of a monument commemorating the Northern Electric Railway. He has also delivered numerous presentations on local history, sharing his knowledge with community members.

Friends describe Mark as resilient, thoughtful, and deeply committed to learning. Despite personal challenges throughout his life, he has continued to pursue new interests, preserve local history, and contribute to his community. His passion for storytelling and historical preservation has enriched the lives of countless people while helping ensure that Oroville's heritage will be remembered by future generations.

Mark Karr's accomplishments as a scholar, athlete, actor, business professional, and community historian are significant. More importantly, they reflect a lifetime of perseverance, leadership, curiosity, and service.

Mark and his wife, Sherry, make their home in Roseville. Two new grandchildren keep them busy.