

Roger Ramseier – 1936-2013

By Robert D. Dávila, Sacramento Bee

Roger Ramseier, a former Aerojet president who led the aerospace and defense contractor amid major industry downsizing after the end of the Cold War, died Sept. 13 of complications related to prostate cancer, his family said. He was 77.

Mr. Ramseier, who grew up in Sacramento, spent his entire career at Aerojet, a maker of rocket engines and missile propulsion systems based in Rancho Cordova. He started after graduating in 1959 from UC Berkeley – where he played football under legendary coach Pappy Waldorf – and climbed the ranks with a reputation as a visionary leader who approached problems head on.



Roger Ramseier

In 1978, Mr. Ramseier was named head of Aerojet's liquid rocket division, which was facing possible closure after shutting down production of Titan rocket engines as the space shuttle program was gearing up. Convinced that the United States needed more than one way to get satellites into space, he joined other Aerojet executives in lobbying Washington officials for a space shuttle companion vehicle. After the 1986 Challenger explosion temporarily halted shuttle flights, Aerojet was ready to provide NASA with rockets to launch satellites.

Mr. Ramseier moved to Carnelian Bay after retiring from Aerojet in 1997 and was a past president of Tahoe City Rotary Club. He enjoyed family gatherings, traveling, skiing in the Sierra Nevada and taking friends out on Lake Tahoe in his boat.

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