

## Bay Area Residents Invited to Sign Nelson Mandela Memorial Books

The books will be shipped to Mandela's family next year.

By Cody Kitaura

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UN Photo/Pernaca Sudhakaran: Nelson Mandela addresses the Special Committee Against Apartheid on June 22, 1990, at the United Nations in New York.

### ***By Bay City News Service***

With many people throughout the Bay Area still mourning the loss of former South African president Nelson Mandela, there are several ways to pay tribute to the revered leader locally.

Mandela, who was the first black president of South Africa and served from 1994 to 1999, died Thursday at age 95. He was imprisoned for 27 years for fighting against apartheid.

A memorial service will be held Tuesday in Johannesburg. President Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama will be part of a U.S. delegation attending that will also include Congresswoman Barbara Lee, D-Oakland.

At San Francisco City Hall, a condolence book will be available to sign at the mayor's office through the end of the week.

The book will give residents a chance to write memories, poems, thoughts and ideas about the beloved leader today through Friday. The mayor's office is located in Room 200 at City Hall. Those wishing to sign the book can stop by between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

A civic memorial will be held at 8 a.m. Wednesday in the City Hall Rotunda to celebrate Mandela's life. The event will be led by former Mayor Willie Brown.

In honor of the human rights icon, all flags at city buildings and grounds will be flown at half-staff until sunset on Sunday, according to the mayor's office.

Memorial book-signing events are also planned for elsewhere in the Bay Area.

At the Oakland and Hayward Chapel of the Chimes cemeteries and at San Mateo's Skylawn Memorial Park, residents can sign books that will be sent to Mandela's family in South Africa.

Oakland Chapel of the Chimes general manager Harley Forrey said anyone is welcome to visit the lobbies of the facilities until the end of the month to sign the books and share thoughts about the man affectionately known as Madiba.

Forrey said that although he never met Mandela, he admired him as a leader.

Bay Area residents who may have seen Mandela during his 1990 visit to Oakland as part of a U.S. tour after he was freed from prison are encouraged to bring photos and other mementos, Forrey said.

"It's just another location for people to come pay their respects," Forrey said.

The memorial books will be available for signing today until Dec. 31. Visitors can come by from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Skylawn Memorial Park is located at state Highway 92 and Skyline Boulevard in San Mateo County; Oakland Chapel of the Chimes is at 4499 Piedmont Ave. in Oakland; and Hayward Chapel of the Chimes is at 32992 Mission Blvd. in Hayward.

The books will be shipped to the Mandela family in the beginning of 2014.

Those who can't make it in person can mail notes to be pasted into the books or send their messages online at <http://oakland.chapelofthechimes.com>.

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