

# SARATOGA

An exclusive magazine serving the residents of Saratoga  
*The Heart of Saratoga*

*Spotlight*

*John & Ruth  
Feemster*

Two Hearts,  
Two Lives,  
One Love



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**PUBLISHER** | Stephen Guruwaiya  
**CONTENT COORDINATOR** | David Nielsen  
**DESIGNER** | Kristen Baker  
**CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER** | Khushboo Goyal, Shutter Magic Photography

**ADVERTISING**

**PUBLISHER** | Stephen Guruwaiya  
**EMAIL** | sguruwaiya@bestversionmedia.com

**EXPERT CONTRIBUTORS**

**OPEN MORTGAGE**  
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Content Due:	Edition Month:
December 7 .....	January
January 7 .....	February
February 7 .....	March
March 7 .....	April
April 7 .....	May
May 7 .....	June
June 7 .....	July
July 7 .....	August
August 7 .....	September
September 7 .....	October
October 7 .....	November
November 7 .....	December

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Dear Neighbors,

*Happy February...and Happy Valentine's Day!*

This month, we have the pleasure of featuring John and Ruth Feemster, who were married via Zoom during the pandemic. They have had long and interesting lives and we're sure you will enjoy learning more about the newlyweds!

You'll also have a chance to read about community events and more in this month's issue.

Please feel free to send us any content you would like to share. At *Saratoga Spotlight*, we love sharing what's going on in our community!

See you in town,

*David Nielsen*  
Content Coordinator  
[dnielsen@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:dnielsen@bestversionmedia.com)

*Stephen Guruwaiya*  
Publisher  
[sguruwaiya@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:sguruwaiya@bestversionmedia.com)



*Stephen Guruwaiya*  
Publisher



*David Nielsen*  
Content Coordinator



*Khushboo Goyal*  
Contributing Photographer



*Kristen Baker*  
Designer

**EXPERT CONTRIBUTORS**

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# John & Ruth Feemster

Two Hearts, Two Lives, One Love

**J**ohn and Ruth Feemster's story is one of coming together and finding love after suffering loss. Their stories and lives are quite different, but theirs is one that is being forged from all they have to share with one another.

Ruth was a Navy Brat growing up. Her father, John Walker, was career Navy who enlisted at the age of seventeen, ultimately gaining the rank of Commander. As a Supply Corp Officer on the USS Enterprise, her father was captured at Cavite Naval Base in the Philippines and survived 4 years at the Cabanatuan POW Camp. Following his release, he served in various Naval offices in the U.S. before being discharged due to medical reasons at the age of 47. Ruth is the only surviving member of three children of John H. and Mildred R. Walker.

Ruth's early education began in California but, due to the family's moves, she attended different schools almost annually in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Mexico, Virginia, finally graduating from Long Beach Polytechnic High School back in

California. She then went on to earn her BS in Medical Technology from Pennsylvania State University in 1956, then her AA in Medical Record Technology from West Valley College in 1977.

Living in so many different communities while growing up offered many interesting opportunities for Ruth. Her junior year of high school was in Arlington, VA, where she was a member of the school choir. The choir was exceptional and was asked, along with two other high school choirs, to sing along with the National Symphony Orchestra and Soloists in a 'Voices of America' broadcast of Beethoven's 9th Symphony in Constitution Hall, with the President and his Cabinet in attendance. Their Spring Concert took place in the National Art Gallery. Very memorable experiences!

She earned what she calls her "PhT" (Putting husband Through) while working at the UCLA Medical Center Clinical Laboratory for 4 years. Ruth was later the Assistant Director of Medical Records at Children's Hospital at

Stanford for 12 years before moving to San Jose Good Samaritan Hospital where she held various management positions in the Medical Records department for 7 years.

Ruth and her husband, Robert R. Neiman, PhD, who passed away in 1975, had three children, Leslie, Robert, and David. She now has four grandchildren and two great grandchildren!

*John and Ruth with Cindy Teerlink*



John earned his BSME and MSME from the University of Missouri, his MBA from Santa Clara University, is a Registered Professional Engineer, State of California, and holds a Life College Credential.

John's career was in Technical Engineering starting as the Principal Engineer at US Navy, China Lake, starting in 1957. He was then with United Technology as Program Manager from 1967. From there he went to General Electric Systems as engineer in 1981, before moving to Lockheed Missiles & Space as Systems Engineer in 1995.

In 2005, John became owner of Applied Visual Basic, INC, a software development company specializing in structural seismic analysis. He went on to become owner of AVE INC, in 2015, which specialized in the building of new and rebuild of residential homes.

John has a daughter, Dr. Margaret Feemster, who is a pediatrician. Margaret enjoys photography, traveling, camping, and skiing. He also has a younger brother, Robert. John has two grandchildren, and four great grandchildren.

John enjoys snow and water skiing, hiking and mountain climbing, flying light sport planes, as well as singing, including church and symphony chorale. In the past, John has volunteered his time with the FAA for flight safety of light aircraft, as the President of the Saratoga Senior Center, the President of the local chapter of the Experimental Aircraft Association, speaker for light aircraft clubs & Wings of History Air Museum and is a CERT participant. He is also interested in developments in engineering/physics technology, teaching practical thinking.

Ruth enjoys gardening, birding, singing, hiking, physical fitness, going to libraries, and travel.

John's wife, Phyllis, passed away following illness in January 2019, after being together for 55 years. Ruth, a good friend of Phyllis', was there for John, when needed most, helping with trips to the hospital and recovery. Ruth had also suffered the loss of a loved one. They found themselves alone with the effects of loss and sorrow deep within them.

Quite by chance, they met again in 2020 at one of their favorite old activities; a senior exercise class ran by their friend, Cindy Teerlink. Over the following months, John and Ruth experienced health problems and relied on each other to be there for one another. First John needed to have foot surgery, not once, but twice, and Ruth was there to care for him. Then, Ruth fell and broke her leg and John was there to care for her. Following this, John had a heart attack and, once again, Ruth was there for him. Being old friends, it was only natural for them to help each other through their care needs. Through this, and the pandemic, they became aware that working together had helped them a great deal.

With love and respect for their lost loved ones, John and Ruth found warmth and comfort in one another and decided to marry



in December 2020. Due to the pandemic, the ceremony was performed over Zoom. Good friend Cindy Teerlink was their witness, and their friends and family were able to be there for the ceremony virtually.

John and Ruth love to travel. And, though they have no travel plans at the moment, they believe that travel is most enjoyed when there is both something to appreciate about the people's accomplishments and their natural environments as well. The topography throughout each location is unique and the things built by the natives compliment their ingenuity, whether it's here or in another country.

Ruth has lived in Saratoga for two years, after living in San Jose for 56 years. John has lived in Saratoga for more than 50 years. Both John and Ruth enjoy that the people of Saratoga are active, pursue their professions and skills, have broad interests, have common cares that blend with theirs, and are friendly and supportive.

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BY DAVID NIELSEN | PHOTOS BY KHUSHBOO GOYAL, SHUTTER MAGIC PHOTOGRAPHY

AFTER MEDICARE  
ANNUAL ENROLLMENT

# MEDICARE

## *What You Should Know*

**E**very year December 7th is the last day for the Medicare Annual Enrollment (AEP). This was your opportunity to enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan, to change your Medicare Advantage plan, or to select a Medicare drug plan. AFTER December 7th, you have a new opportunity to make changes during the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment (OEP) from January 1-March 31.

For those of you enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan (Part C or MA-PD), the Medicare Annual Enrollment Period (October 15-December 7) provided you the opportunity to review your Medicare Advantage plan. As a current member you may have received information regarding plan changes such as a decrease/increase in copays, coinsurance, and out of pocket maximum. There might have been changes in the provider network (doctors, hospitals, clinics, etc.) and/or the drug formulary (list of drugs covered by the plan).

During the Annual Enrollment Period (AEP), if you enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan with drug coverage (MA-PD), you could change plans as many times as you wanted. However, the last plan you chose, and submitted the application by December 7th, was the Medicare Advantage plan you are enrolled in effective January 1.

With the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment (OEP), January 1-March 31, you can disenroll in then Medicare Advantage plan selected by December 7th and enroll in a new Medicare Advantage plan. However, you can only do this once.

If you had a Medicare drug plan (PDP), it should have been reviewed. The Medicare drug plan may have mailed an Annual Notice of Change. Even if the number or type of prescription drugs you currently use did not change, you should have checked the notice. Changes might include an increase/decrease in monthly premium, the annual plan deductible, the drug formulary, and/or the drug tiers.

Whether you kept your current Medicare drug plan or enrolled in a new plan, Medicare drug plans (PDP), cannot be changed after December 7th.

If you were enrolled in a Medicare Supplement and a drug plan, you had the opportunity to enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan with drug coverage (MA-PD) effective January 1. The Medicare Advantage plan replaced the Supplement AND Medicare drug plan.

Other changes include: Disenroll the Medicare Advantage with drug coverage (MA-PD) and return to Original Medicare. In this scenario you should enroll in a Medicare drug plan (PDP) so that you can have drug coverage and won't be fined. Enroll in a Medicare supplement plan and submit to underwriting for a 2/1, 3/1, or 4/1 effective date. You would be required to answer medical history questions. If approved, and only if approved, you could then apply for a Medicare drug plan (PDP) with the same effective date, using OEP as a special enrollment period. This would automatically terminate the Medicare Advantage plan.

Discuss with your agent why you want to make changes or why you are unhappy with your choices. A knowledgeable agent can help you navigate through the rules for OEP.

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BY LUCILLE MARAVILLA | COMMUNITY INTEREST

# Growing 2 Shine!

## Growing Food & Community Together

Well, we certainly needed the rain, but it came in a bit TOO strong for our parched soil and caused major damage throughout the Bay Area! Unless there are trees down that need to be removed immediately for access or safety reasons, it is best to wait until after the last chance of frost to prune away all the over-watered, not-too-pretty, freeze-damaged foliage on your shrubs and landscape plants. If you prune early and we get another frost, your plants may not survive the trauma and damage. Because we are seeing unprecedented, water-logged conditions (that most of us haven't seen in our lifetimes) many plants may not survive even if you practice safe pruning.

If, in fact, you lose a significant number of trees, shrubs and landscape plants – try to look on the bright side – that gives you the perfect opportunity to rethink your lawn, landscape and garden. Perhaps you will finally lose-the-lawn, or at least a good portion of it. Mother Nature might have taken out several of the plants that were beyond their “healthy lifecycle”. Perhaps this is a great time to decide to actually have fewer things that you need to feed, water and care for. I always say with great pain comes great change – so please take time and rethink what you have and what you really want **before** you spend time and money replacing things you lost!

### Bareroot Trees & Shrubs

February is a great time to plant bareroot trees and shrubs. Bareroot plants are plants that are dug up and propagated while in their dormant state. They are shipped in plastic or burlap bags, not in containers with soil. Since they are lighter and take up less room, nurseries stock a much wider variety than those that are potted-up. Once planted, they also take off much faster since the roots are loose and not compacted. Local nurseries should have a good variety of apple, apricot, cherry, fig, pear, nectarine, peach and plum trees now. How about a few: grapes, strawberries, raspberries, or blackberries. And, don't forget about rhubarb – it takes some time to get established – but is amazing in homemade strawberry-rhubarb pie!

### What to Plant in December

Key: • Seed | • Transplant | • Bareroot

- arugula • asparagus • beets • berries •• Bok choy
- broccoli • carrots • cauliflower •• chard • cilantro •• collards
- fennel • kohlrabi •• mustard greens •• peas
- potatoes • rhubarb • strawberries

*Local nurseries should have a good supply of most of these.*

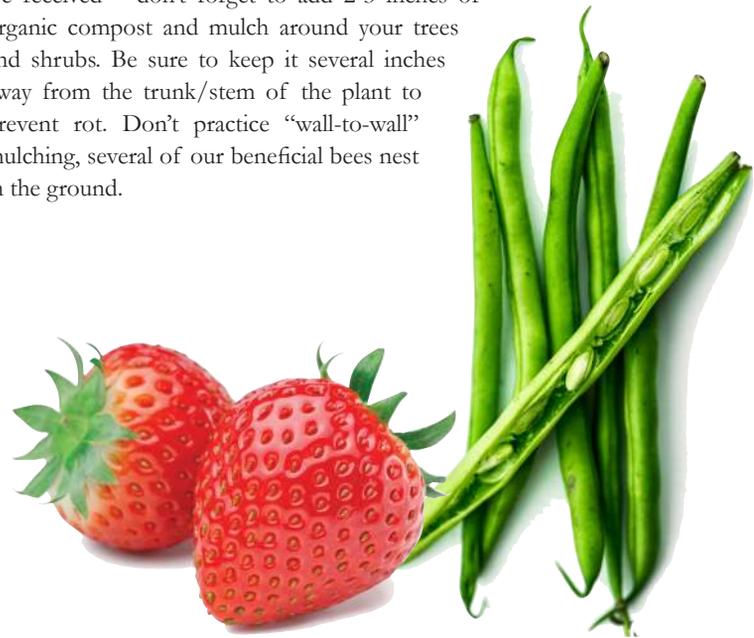
### Ready to Harvest Now

- green beans • plums • pears • peas • corn • raspberries
- grapes • apples • tomatoes • okra • almonds



## Green Tip of the Month

Since we want to conserve a majority of all the recent water we received – don't forget to add 2-3 inches of organic compost and mulch around your trees and shrubs. Be sure to keep it several inches away from the trunk/stem of the plant to prevent rot. Don't practice “wall-to-wall” mulching, several of our beneficial bees nest in the ground.



*If you have a garden (or real estate) question for Rebecca, email her at: [rjepson@ggsir.com](mailto:rjepson@ggsir.com); or call 408-357-3990.*

**Growing2Shine.com**



BY REBECCA JEPSEN | COMMUNITY

**THE DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN AWARD**



Diane Brandenburg and Nathan Mantino

Sherri Burke and Linda Lester and Susan Emerick and Dea Wilson

Diane Brandenburg and Angela McConnell

Paul Normandin and Lisa Normandin and Larry Stone

Diane Brandenburg and John Kennaday

On November 30, 2022, Diane Brandenburg was honored with the Distinguished Citizen Award, by the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council of Boy Scouts of America. This award, in its 48th year, is reserved for the true legends of our community in both their professional and personal dedication to others. Diane’s celebration was an Artsy Party attended by over 200 guests, held at Villa Montalvo in Saratoga. “Partnering with Montalvo and having the enthusiastic support of Executive Director Angela McConnell, and their staff event coordinator, Bri Banners, was an absolute dream in fulfilling our vision”, said Heather Lerner, Chief Development Officer of the local BSA Council. Both the venue and party theme truly reflect Diane’s personal artistry and support of institutions throughout the decades that create a world which allows children to thrive. Guests, who were asked to dress as their favorite artists, enjoyed a wine reception, live entertainment from Duo Gadjo, silhouette portraits by Jodi Carr of Arty Party, as well as live roaming sketching by Suhita Shirodkar. Diane personally greeted each guest and at the end of the evening selected the winner of the best costume, which included Bob Ross, Frida Kahlo, Andy Warhol and Georgia O’Keefe. Dinner

was expertly crafted and served by Le Papillon. The formal presentation of Diane’s award included a tribute video from friends and family, and a special presentation from Nathan Mautino, an Eagle Scout, who shared his creation of meditative respite spots along the very trail that Diane had hiked with her Scouts—the Skyline to the Sea.

Tributes to Diane came from friends that go as far back as kindergarten and from a vast distance including His Holiness the Dalai Lama, from Tibet. Diane’s impact is truly global.

Diane grew up in Hayward, California, the daughter of Homer and Adelaide Struble. She attended San Jose State, where she met Lee Brandenburg. The couple wed in 1952 and raised four children, Eric, Karen, Bill and Gary. She was involved with Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Brownies and Girl Scouts and has spent many a night camping. She even climbed Mount Whitney.

Diane has been on the board of The Forgotten International since 2009. She was a key capital fundraiser for the Martin Luther King Jr. Library

and spent many years raising funds on the Library Council Board. She made it possible to build the Children’s Discovery Museum, YMCA’s Camp Campbell renovations, The Lucas Arts Program at Villa Montalvo, The San Jose Fire Museum and Gymnasium for the New Children’s Shelter along with her husband Lee. She is an active philanthropist. An enormously talented fine artist, Diane shares this gift with others by hosting annual Girls Art Week in Pebble Beach. You can find an exhibition of Diane’s work premiering this May at the Triton Museum in Santa Clara.

Across the many tributes that came in Diane’s honor, prevalent recurring themes included Kindness, Selfless, Caring, Friendship, Partnership and Commitment.

Diane’s celebrations continue, as she turned 90 this month and has no plans to slow down. The needs of the community are great, the inspiration through art and creativity are a necessity, and she is the perfect embodiment of a dedicated Distinguished Citizen of great impact.

BY HEATHER LERNER, PHOTOS BY SHERRY TESLER-LIGHT FX PHOTOGRAPHY | COMMUNITY INTEREST

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# MAYOR'S CORNER

I'm honored that my fellow City Council Members unanimously selected me to be Mayor of Saratoga, the community my family has called home for three generations. I'm also proud to be the first person who was born and raised in Saratoga to be elected to the City Council and to serve as Mayor.

I grew up in Saratoga and attended Sacred Heart School, near City Hall where I am so often now. I learned what it means to be a team player from a young age, and I bring that perspective with me to the City Council. While attending Sacred Heart, I was named Most Valuable Player on two championship volleyball teams, and I was chosen by my peers to represent the school on the first all-star softball team.

I continued to develop leadership skills during my time at Saint Francis High School, where I was Editor of the school yearbook. I went on to attend UCLA and the College of Notre Dame. My strong ties to the city extend to the Saratoga Village and business community as well. For 15 years, my family and I owned and operated an antique store and flower shop in the Village.

I have always been passionate about finding opportunities to volunteer and serve this community that means so much to me. Some of my favorite memories throughout 30 years of volunteering have been serving as President of the Village Merchants Association, being Chair of the Blossom Festival and Chair of the Village Halloween Costume Walk, establishing the Saratoga Business Development Council as a charter member, working with West Valley Community Services, participating in cleanup projects on

Highway 9, and being a Rotarian for 23 years. Before being elected to the City Council in 2020, I also served on the City's Planning Commission for over 6 years. Volunteering truly brings me joy, and I hope to inspire others to spend more time making a difference in our community this year.

There are several key issues I plan to focus on during my term as Mayor. Given rising inflation and economic uncertainty throughout the world, it is critical for the City to remain fiscally responsible and maintain a balanced budget. We must begin conversations about how to wisely use our resources to continue providing quality services in the coming years. Safety is another top priority of mine. I deeply appreciate Saratoga's strong relationship with the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office, and I look forward to working together this year to monitor crime trends and discuss additional ways to keep Saratoga safe.

As you have heard, I also have a big place in my heart for small businesses. I believe it is important to support them, so I look forward to exploring permanent outdoor dining options downtown, along with other ways to support local businesses.

I'm certain that, together, this City Council can make a difference when it comes to these subjects and more. I'm so enthusiastic about working with this dynamic group of individuals and leveraging our diverse backgrounds and experience to do our best for Saratoga. I look forward to all that is ahead, and I cannot wait to see you all around town this year!



BY MAYOR KOOKIE FITZSIMMONS | COMMUNITY

## INNER WHEEL'S FOUNDER'S DAY *Champagne Brunch* CELEBRATION

This year the Inner Wheel, District 517 Founder's Day Champagne Brunch Celebration will be held Sunday, February 26, 2023, at the Castlewood Country Club in Pleasanton.



"Our Inner Wheel Club welcomes new members. We are an enthusiastic group, ages 30s to 80s and some members work full time, a variety of nationalities, who live in Almaden Valley, Willow Glen, Los Gatos and Saratoga areas . . . a wonderful dynamic combination. Please join us to have lunch and look us over", Janice LeFevre, Saratoga Inner Wheel President.

Please contact Janice LeFevre at [janicealefevre@gmail.com](mailto:janicealefevre@gmail.com) or (408) 867-4923 for more information on Inner Wheel and the upcoming Founder's Day Champagne Brunch Celebration. Please join us!

BY JANICE LEFEVRE | COMMUNITY EVENT



LECTURE BY AUTHOR ROBIN CHAPMAN

*“The Valley of Heart’s Delight:  
True Tales from Around the Bay”*

Saratoga Historical Foundation has scheduled its first “in person” event since the beginning of the pandemic featuring historian, journalist and author Robin Chapman in March at the Saratoga Foothill Club. The former KRON-TV newswoman will speak about her latest book, “The Valley of Heart’s Delight: True Tales from Around the Bay” and sign copies of the new work, published in July 2022 by The History Press.

The book is the third in a trilogy of books Chapman has written about the region since returning to the Bay Area from her work around the nation and the world as a broadcast journalist. “The Valley of Heart’s Delight: True Tales from Around the Bay” is a collection of true and rarely told tales she has uncovered about the green and golden Santa Clara Valley.

Chapman tells of movie director Alfred Hitchcock and his weekend estate in the hills above Saratoga, where he frequently entertained guests such as actress Ingrid Bergman and Cary Grant. Evoking his cameo appearances in the movies, Hitchcock could sometimes be spotted by surprised locals as he shopped for antiques along Big Basin Way. And, as it turns out, Hitchcock’s home in the region had a big impact on his classic film “The Birds.”

Chapman also has details of an early and innovative electric railway—founded by entrepreneurs and funded by investors—called the Peninsular Interurban, which once carried commuters and tourists from San Jose, Los Gatos and Saratoga around the valley and north as far as Stanford University. Saratoga historian and electric rail expert Ray Cosyn aided Chapman in her research on this tale.

Also featured: details on singer Bing Crosby’s donation that helped start a local youth center, and how he turned out to be a no-show at his very own party. Chapman uncovered details of MGM movie star Esther Williams’s first marriage, which took place in Los Altos, while she starred in a San Francisco swimming show with the movie’s Tarzan, Johnny Weissmuller—himself an Olympic swimmer. And she tells of the origins of those historic mission bell markers along the El Camino Real in the region. With the help of the Saratoga Historical Foundation, Chapman discovered they were originally installed by a woman who produced them by becoming the first woman bellmaker in the United States and paid for them with the help of women’s clubs in the state.



From the innovative work that went on a Moffett Field; to the story of a Jewish refugee from Hitler, who found success in the region and then helped spread understanding during a previous pandemic; to the contribution of a local African-American employee at Stanford who left his property to the university for parkland, Chapman’s book turns out page after page of surprising stories for locals to enjoy.

Chapman spent nearly a decade of her career covering Congress and the White House as a reporter for ABC7 news in Washington D.C. “But I hope you won’t hold that against me,” she laughs. “I covered a lot of parades and fires too.”

Her talk is scheduled for Tuesday, March 14 at 7:00 p.m. at the Saratoga Foothill Club, 20399 Park Place in Saratoga. Chapman will also be signing all three of her books at the event including her new book as well as “California Apricots: The Lost Orchards of Silicon Valley” (2013) and “Historic Bay Area Visionaries” (2018), all from the History Press.

For more information contact the Saratoga Historical Foundation at <https://www.saratogahistory.com> or call 408-867-4311.

*Photo of author Robin Chapman provided by Robin Chapman, Photo of Peninsular Railway train schedule, property of Saratoga Hi*

BY ANNETTE STRANSKY | COMMUNITY EVENT

**STORM AND DROUGHT IMPACT  
ON OUR TREES**



I am deeply concerned, at this point in our existence, about what is happening to our beautiful old trees. Three years of drought, in addition to our current severe storms, is doing untold damage to our tree canopy. My guess is with the extensive loss we’ve been experiencing, 8 huge oaks have fallen in the last week on our side streets and medians. Our tree canopy has suffered enormously.

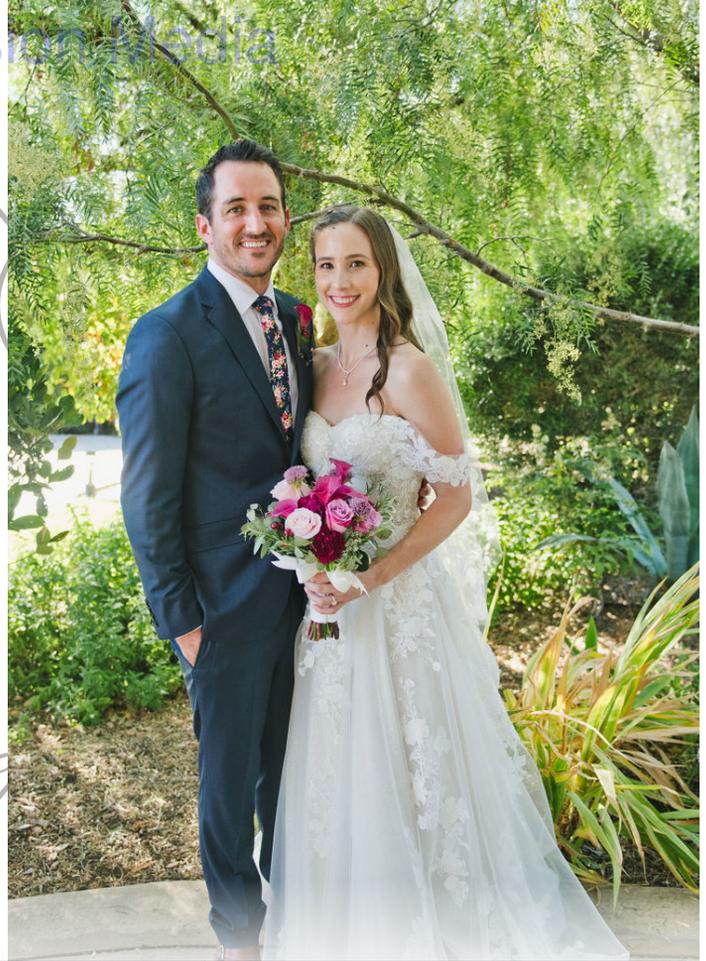
The Graduation Oak (pictured) was a three-hundred-year-old oak that was in front of the Saratoga Union School District administrative offices. The tree lost a huge limb in September which caused the district to have it cut down.

It is time for us to plant replacement trees across our 12 square miles. I urge the city council to start a program of regeneration so this city can maintain its heavily treed look. Years ago, we had a program where we planted 2,000 documented trees two years in a row. It is time for Saratoga to reinstate this program. Please contact the council now and urge them to start replacing our lost oaks with young healthy trees. We need to think of the future.

BY JILL HUNTER | COMMUNITY EVENT

## CONGRATULATIONS *to the Happy Couple!*

**C**ongratulations Mr. and Mrs. Cody and Heather Teerlink! Cheers to continuing the Teerlink Legacy, Love and Service for Saratoga! May your lives together be happy, healthy, and prosperous!



BY DAVID NIELSEN, PHOTO COURTESY OF ONELOVE PHOTOGRAPHY | COMMUNITY

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## The Difference Between Life and Death

### RACING HEARTS IS A LIFE SAVER.

In just ten years Racing Hearts has placed over 1,000 automated external defibrillators (AEDs) within Santa Clara County, and they've made Santa Clara County the first county in California to have defibrillators in virtually all public schools. It's an outstanding example of the good that non-profits and government can do when we work hand in hand.

### AND WHAT A JOURNEY IT'S BEEN.

Two decades ago, Stephanie Martinson was out climbing Yosemite's Half Dome when she suffered an aborted sudden cardiac arrest. She was just twenty-three years old.

Stephanie was not the first young adult, and she won't be the last, to experience sudden cardiac arrest. We hear too many stories of otherwise healthy people collapsing suddenly. Maybe it's a student at sports practice, or a friend at work, or a neighbor at a farmers' market. It can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere.

Sudden cardiac arrest is not the same as a heart attack, but it's just as dangerous. Instead of a blockage, it's an electrical disturbance that stops the heart beating correctly.

After her ordeal, Stephanie was inspired to do something. In 2012, she founded Racing Hearts with a clear mission: to increase the survival rate of people suffering a sudden cardiac arrest. How would she and her volunteer team get that done? By placing AEDs in easy to access locations throughout the community, and by teaching people how to use them.

An AED is a small but powerful device. It uses electrical pulses to reset the heart, like turning a frozen computer off and on again. "Public access" AED models, like the ones placed through our partnership with Racing Hearts, are easy to use and capable of defibrillating a cardiac patient before the ambulance arrives.

There are more than 350,000 cases of sudden cardiac arrest each year in the U.S. — 7,000 of them children under age 18 — and nearly 90% are fatal. The survival rate for those experiencing this kind of cardiac event is 5- 8% when traditional cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is used, but increases to 80% with the use of AEDs. Clearly, having AEDs widely available makes a huge difference — between life and death.

In 2014, I proposed that Racing Hearts partner with our Board of Supervisors, the City of Mountain View, El Camino Health, and local school districts to place 49 AEDs in public locations throughout Mountain View, including schools and recreation/ community centers.

Following the success of the Mountain View pilot, in 2015 the Board of Supervisors allocated \$500,000 in matching funds to get even more AEDs out into the community, including in County park ranger and sheriff patrol cars. Soon after, Racing Hearts, the County, and El Camino Health collaborated with our local state legislators to update California legislation to make it easier to own and maintain AEDs.

By 2018, Santa Clara County was the first county in California to have AEDs in virtually all public

schools, spread among elementary, middle, and high schools. When we started our partnership with Racing Hearts, fewer than 10% of local public schools had access to the equipment.

Racing Hearts has now placed more than 1,000 AEDs in Santa Clara County. In the West Valley, that includes the Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department vehicles in addition to our schools.

It's a triumph, to put it simply. After completing their mission to raise awareness and blanket our community with life-saving AEDs, RacingHearts' journey has recently come to a natural close. I'm honored to have worked with Racing Hearts from day one, and I hope the Racing Hearts story continues to inspire partnerships between non-profits, local organizations, and government.

Thank you, Racing Hearts. You're a life saver.

*Joe Simitian was elected to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors in 2012 and re-elected in 2016 and 2020. He represents the Fifth District, which now includes Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Saratoga, Stanford, and portions of San Jose. Joe's public service over the years includes stints as a member of the California State Senate, the California State Assembly, Mayor of Palo Alto, President of the Palo Alto School Board, as well as an earlier term on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. He served as an election observer/ supervisor in El Salvador and Bosnia and participated in refugee relief and resettlement efforts in Albania and Kosovo.*



BY COUNTY SUPERVISOR JOE SIMITIAN | COMMUNITY EVENT



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## CAN HEAT PUMP WATER HEATERS *Help You Save Energy?*

**W**ith rapidly rising energy costs and general inflation eating away at our monthly budget, many people are looking for ways to make their homes more energy efficient. Some solutions, like replacing windows, can be quite complicated and time consuming. Others can be finished in a single day and bring lifelong energy savings. This month I'm discussing a relatively new technology: heat pump water heaters. I'll cover the pros and cons, as well as compare them to conventional natural gas and electric resistive water heaters.

### What is a Heat Pump Water Heater?

Heat pump water heaters use a technology that's been around since 1913, and one I'm well familiar with as a heating and air conditioning expert. Most folks know that a typical air conditioner uses a refrigerant circulated by a compressor pump to our furnace and back to the outside condenser. This moves heat from inside our homes to the exterior atmosphere – thus cooling us off in the summer.

Well, a heat pump water heater uses this same type of system but in reverse. It moves heat from the atmosphere into water in a storage tank. I know this seems counterintuitive – using a refrigerant to create heat? However, I assure you, it not only works, it's also far more energy efficient than other methods of heating water.

### How Efficient are Heat Pump Water Heaters?

According to manufacturers' data, heat pump water heaters are up to 5 times more energy efficient than natural gas water heaters. And the U.S. Department of Energy says they are up to 3 times more efficient than conventional electric resistive water heaters. One manufacturer claims homeowners can save up to 60% on annual energy costs by switching to their heat pump water heater.

### How Do They Compare to Natural Gas?

As mentioned above, heat pump water heaters are much more efficient than natural gas water heaters. But that's just the beginning of the advantages. When you replace a natural gas water heater with a heat pump model, you eliminate what's called a "standing pilot." Virtually all natural gas water heaters use a continuously burning pilot flame that emits carbon into the atmosphere 24/7 every single day.

Another advantage of heat pump water heaters is the elimination of a constant fire and carbon monoxide poisoning hazard. The National Fire Protection Association estimates 5,400 home fires per year are caused by water heaters, resulting in about 20 fatalities. However, far more are impacted by carbon monoxide poisoning. The CDC says about 430 people die from it every year and another 50,000 end up visiting the Emergency Department to seek treatment.

### What About Electric Resistive Water Heaters?

Conventional electric resistive water heaters became commercially available in the late 1940s.

They are most often used in areas where natural gas piping does not exist as a public utility. While conventional electric resistive water heaters are relatively inexpensive to purchase, they use up to 60% more energy annually than a heat pump water heater, so cost more over their lifespan.

### Heat Pump Only Water Heaters vs. Hybrid?

Heat pump water heaters come in straight heat pump models and hybrids. Both models take essentially the same physical space. However, there are a few key differences. The heat pump only water heaters use less energy and can plug into a standard 120V shared outlet – meaning possibly no expensive electrical work if a plug is available close by.

The hybrid version combines a heat pump water heater and a conventional electric resistive water heater in a single unit. Hybrid models are better in extremely cold climates (not required here in the San Jose area) and in situations where a faster recovery rate is desired – for instance, you have an 80-gallon Jacuzzi tub you use frequently in your main bathroom. The disadvantages are that hybrids use more electricity, cost slightly more to purchase, and may require an electrician to run a new 220V circuit if replacing a natural gas water heater.

Both versions are available with Wi-Fi and smartphone interfaces. This enables additional efficiencies by turning them off at night, while away at work, or when on vacation. The hybrid models can also be programmed to work in heat pump only – a mode equally as energy efficient as straight heat pump models.

### Where Can I Learn More?

Contact Mark Hall directly for more information on his cell phone at (408) 754-7717 or mark@valleymechnical.com. We're Here to Help!

*Valley Mechanical Corporation CA. License # 688433 is a heating and air conditioning company with a unique approach to our industry. Our vision is to help customers make their homes more efficient, more comfortable, and healthier. We are a San Jose based company with over 25 years of experience taking part in energy savings programs – both residential and commercial. Our office number is (408) 288-5675. If you have questions or need any of our services, you can call me, Victor Valladares President, directly on my cell phone at (408) 639-6355. I was born and raised here in San Jose and I'm a local Evergreen resident who enjoys taking good care of my neighbors personally.*

BY VICTOR VALLADARES | COMMUNITY

*Shutter Magic*  
PHOTOGRAPHY

Hi there! I'm Khushboo - a wife, mother of two adorable boys, and the owner of Shutter Magic Photography. My mission is to help you celebrate your life by capturing memories for you and your loved ones to share and cherish over the years. I take pride in creating a visual story and I am committed to capturing beautiful moments for my clients to treasure. Shutter Magic Photography specializes in couples, maternity, family and senior portraits.

*"The memories we make with our family is everything."*

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# CHAMPAGNE, CHOCOLATES, & KATYA – *A Happy Hour Benefit Concert*



The Saratoga Foothill Club Historic Landmark Foundation (SFCHLF) announces a benefit concert featuring renowned pianist, Katya Grineva, at the Saratoga Foothill Club on Friday, February 17, 2023. With the theme, Champagne, Chocolates, & Katya – A Happy Hour Benefit Concert, the program will begin with a champagne reception at 5:00pm, followed by the recital from 5:30pm to 6:30pm. Timing of this Happy Hour Benefit Concert allows for arrival during daylight and encourages dinner plans in Saratoga restaurants following the program.

Tickets are \$55.00 and may be purchased online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/509674338667>. Capacity will be limited, as seats will be spaced in the interest of current health protocols.

**Champagne Reception – 5:00pm | Performance – 5:30pm**  
**Friday, February 17, 2023**  
**Saratoga Foothill Club | 20399 Park Place, Saratoga**

Proceeds benefit the preservation of the Saratoga Foothill Club clubhouse, a Julia Morgan designed historic building.

A spokesman stated, “Please take this opportunity to help the SFCHLF while enjoying a celebrated artist who has had the distinction of being the only solo female pianist performing 20 times at Carnegie Hall. Champagne, chocolates, and a romantic repertoire await you – a perfect February offering.”

BY REIKO IWANAGA AND GAY CRAWFORD, PHOTO COURTESY OF KATYA GRINEVA | COMMUNITY EVENT

# GO WEST

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- ✓ Our rate structure is all-inclusive, meaning no point system/no add-ons



*After what seemed like a never ending search for a perfect facility for Mom, we found Palm Villas. Our Mom had special requests and Gary agreed immediately saying, "We can do that."*

*When she entered Palm Villas, she was an elderly frustrated woman just waiting for her life to end. In less than 6 months, our Mom was a new person, enjoying life and looking forward to each new day. A special thanks to Garry and Michael for helping to make the transition from the family home our mother lived in for over 60 years to her new home. We thank Lu for all the activities he provided which gave her many hours of joy and happiness.*

*The Harter Family*

**Please call us direct or  
visit us anytime at:**

**[PALMVILLASFAMILY.COM](http://PALMVILLASFAMILY.COM)**

**Come visit us at either of our locations!**

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