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JULY 2025

SARATOGA

Spotlight



**ON THE FARM WITH
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February 8	March
March 8	April
April 8	May
May 8	June
June 8	July
July 8	August
August 8	September
September 8	October
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November 8	December



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KIRAN RAPAL, DDS

ON THE FARM WITH THE CARGILL FAMILY

By Carol Gerwitz | Photos by Dave Lepori

Jim Cargill readily admits he operates on “get it done” speed most of the time—a necessary tempo for him to juggle the many roles he has embraced over the years and continues to fulfill. Most of these activities are grounded in either agriculture, the hospitality/food service industry, service to his Saratoga community, or family.

Jim was raised in San Diego, where the neighbor who lived down the hill from his family had a patch of land. When Jim was in the fifth grade Jim asked the neighbor for a job. The neighbor asked, “Jimmy, do you know how to drive a tractor?” Never having driven a tractor, “Jimmy”, with all the bravado of a fifth grader, hopped on the tractor, popped the clutch, took off, and managed to stop the tractor before hitting the fence. He got the job and started the following day.

When Jim and three buddies moved north to attend San Jose State, Jim needed to find somewhere that wasn’t covered in concrete. He opened the Yellow Pages to “stables,” and the first place he found was Garrod Stables. Jan Garrod was the first person he met there, who told Jim to “saddle up and show me what you’ve got.” Fortunately, Jim knew how to ride a horse, and was told to “come back in the morning and see the foreman.” Jim worked at the Garrod Stables all through college, one of the two boys among a lot of girls. One of those girls was Shelley House, whose father, ironically, had bought her a horse to keep her away from boys. She and Jim have been together for 34 years.

Jim and Shelley have lived among the 73-acre House Family Vineyards on Old Oak Way for 18 years. “As the vineyard business evolved into the wine and wine tasting business, I honed my skills of wine making and vineyard management along the way seeking the advice of renowned winemakers in our AVA (American Viticultural Area). The UC Davis winemaking program also gave me the fundamental basis to go along with real world winemaking experience.” Jim is the House Family Vineyard’s winemaker, and he runs the business aspect of the vineyard. Jim is quick to share credit: “All of my children, my wife, my nieces, nephew, brothers and sisters-in-law, and my father-in-law and his wife have all rolled up their sleeves and help lift this business to the successful level it is today.”

Jim owns the Rio Adobe Southwestern Cafe in Cupertino, which he opened 20 years ago. However, Jim’s foray into the restaurant world actually began at the tender age of 11, bussing tables at a Mexican restaurant in San Diego owned by a family friend. His early duties soon expanded to kitchen chores, where he closely observed the cook as she slowly and deliberately toasted the flour and spices for the sauces. When the cook offered to let Jim stir the





sauce, Jim employed his “get it done speed”, but was told to slow down and give the sauce more time to cook on the fire. Jim took the lesson to heart and slowly toasts the flour and spices in his own restaurant. Then there’s the guacamole, which the restaurant makes several times a day every day. Jim computed that during his culinary career, he has ordered over 7.2 million avocados!

Jim and Shelley and their family of four kids love to travel and have seen a lot of the country via road trips where each afternoon they search out the best local milkshake. The family has annual ski trips where they rent a big house to enjoy breakfast, then “getting out for fresh tracks” followed by hot tub time followed by big family dinners with great wines. Jim loves teaching his children to cook, and they enjoy big, noisy Sunday suppers and holiday meals. This summer Jim, family members, neighbors, and wine club members will enjoy a river cruise on the Danube, featuring House Family wines.

Jim has a love for vintage cars and never shies away from getting his hands greasy, bringing life to old cars. He plays a guitar to wind down in the evenings and is an avid outdoor enthusiast who enjoys mountain biking or trail running daily. He loves greeting his neighbors while on these runs (or while in his Jeep, zipping between the restaurant, the vineyard and local hardware stores), and he proudly states that he knows each neighbor. He is always looking out for them—helping to fix a sprinkler system or giving a call to a neighbor when he sees a package lingering on their front door. His neighborhood has an active and robust FireWise group (a program of the National Fire Protection Association), and Jim is spearheading the effort to establish FireWise groups in other nearby

neighborhoods. Thanks to the actions of Jim and his neighbors, their fire threat rating has been downgraded by Cal Fire standards from “very high” to “moderate”, completely skipping “high.”

Jim’s community involvement extends well beyond his immediate neighborhood. He is president of the Santa Cruz Winegrowers Association and chair of the Saratoga Parks and Recreation Commission. He is incoming president of the Saratoga Chamber of Commerce and a member of several other clubs in the community that do philanthropic work. Recognizing the opportunity and need to create a multi-night community event, Jim developed “Saratoga Nights,” running the first Thursday of each month April through October, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. in downtown Saratoga. Jim cordially invites the community to grab take-out from a local restaurant and then join in the fun in the Village.





MEDICARE AND YOUR VACATION

By Lucille Maravilla

As the weather improves, many people are preparing to travel and go on vacation. If you plan to travel, here are some points to consider regarding your Medicare plan.

With domestic travel, coverage may depend on whether you have a Medicare Advantage plan or Original Medicare and whether it's an emergency or routine care. With travel outside the United States and its territories, Medicare generally doesn't cover medical costs. Some Medicare supplement plans, which require enrollment in Traditional or Original Medicare (Medicare Parts A and B), offer limited coverage for travel outside the US borders. Outside of the United States, Medicare Advantage plans may cover emergencies. Let's look at the details and differences between the two options.

With a Medicare supplement and a stand-alone prescription drug plan (Part D), coverage while traveling in the US and its territories is fairly straightforward. You can go to any doctor or hospital that accepts Medicare (most do), whether for routine care or an emergency. Medicare supplements are standardized and provide cost-sharing with Original Medicare. It's when you venture beyond US borders that things get trickier. If you travel outside the US, Medicare doesn't cover you except in very limited or rare circumstances. This coverage usually applies to medically necessary emergency care. You will pay a \$250 deductible and 20% of the cost of the medical treatment received, up to a lifetime maximum of \$50,000.

If you receive your benefits through a Medicare Advantage plan (Part C), it's worth checking to see if you get any coverage for emergencies

while abroad. And even if you don't leave US soil, you should see what your plan would cover. Clarify your plan's definition of an emergency.

While Medicare Advantage plans are required to cover emergency care anywhere in the US, you may be on the hook for routine care outside of your service area. With a traditional Medicare Advantage HMO plan, when you travel outside the network, you have emergency coverage only. With a Medicare PPO plan, you have both coverage for emergencies and out-of-network coverage for non-emergencies, but will pay more for these out-of-network services.

Medicare may cover you if you are on a ship within the territorial waters adjoining the country—within six hours of a US port—or you're traveling from state to state. Still, the closest hospital to treat you is in a foreign country (i.e., you're in Canada while heading to Alaska from the 48 contiguous states).

Be aware that the State Department has numerous advisories in effect for foreign travel. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) publishes the US government recommendations for travel in the US, as well as infectious disease risk assessments by country and travel requirements for each country.

Your vacation will be less stressful if you have taken the time to learn how your Medicare coverage works during travel. You may want to consider purchasing medical travel insurance. Contact your Medicare agent if you have questions.

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MAYOR'S CORNER STRENGTHENING SARATOGA: ONE VOLUNTEER AT A TIME

By Mayor Belal Aftab

When I look around Saratoga, I see a city shaped by the countless hours given by dedicated volunteers who have deeply invested in our community's well-being. Volunteerism remains integral to Saratoga's identity, evident in landmarks like the Saratoga Library, supported by groups like the Foothill Club and Friends of the Saratoga Library, and community events such as Saratoga Nights, energized by our Chamber of Commerce and Saratoga Vitality volunteer group.

Yet, many local organizations tell me they're facing challenges in attracting a consistent flow of new volunteers. This issue highlights a broader challenge: sustaining active civic engagement across generations.

Several factors contribute to this trend. A significant one is the decline of local journalism. Once, multiple local newspapers regularly covered city council meetings, school board decisions, and neighborhood activities, ensuring residents remained connected to local and regional issues. Today, our attention is often pulled toward global news headlines and the continuous flow of information on digital platforms, which can obscure community matters that directly impact our daily lives.

Demographic shifts also play a substantial role. Many households in Saratoga now have dual-income parents juggling demanding careers, family responsibilities, and other commitments, leaving less time for community volunteering. Our aging population also means fewer traditional gathering points like youth sports events or school-based activities, which historically encouraged local interactions. Additionally, younger generations often prefer flexible, episodic volunteer opportunities over long-term commitments, which can impact traditional volunteer models.

Despite these challenges, I remain optimistic about Saratoga's potential for community connection. The steadily growing attendance

at Saratoga Nights clearly signals our collective desire for local gatherings and personal connections.

So, how can we nurture civic pride and volunteerism today? Start with small steps: greet your neighbors regularly, participate in local community gatherings, or explore one of Saratoga's many volunteer opportunities available at saratoga.ca.us/volunteer. Civic pride isn't confined to grand gestures—it flourishes in everyday kindness and consistent connections we foster. Consider applying to a city commission, which is a lightweight yet meaningful way to serve your neighbors and friends in an official capacity while gaining valuable insight into local governance.

Everyone is involved in something, which is excellent. But don't be shy about inviting your friends and neighbors into your communal activities, and hopefully they'll do the same for you. Often, folks within a given ethnic or religious group engage in communal activities together, which is lovely. However, local civic organizations and commissions offer opportunities to expand beyond these circles, leveraging skills many in our community have developed through building synagogues, mosques, companies, churches, nonprofits, and more, ultimately enriching Saratoga as a whole. Each volunteer who participates—whether tending the flowers downtown like our wonderful Village Gardeners, supporting local businesses, or assisting with community events—strengthens the social fabric that makes our city unique.

I encourage each of you—young or old, new resident or lifelong Saratogan—to actively seek your place within our community fabric. Each gesture of volunteering, or even just attending an event, reinforces our collective identity and ensures Saratoga remains a city we are all proud to call home. Together, let's build on our volunteerism and civic pride tradition, securing Saratoga's vibrant legacy for generations to come.

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SANTA CLARA COUNTY SUPERVISOR'S CORNER - MARGARET ABE-KOGA

By Margaret Abe-Koga

Greetings, Saratogans! In this, my inaugural column in Saratoga Spotlight, I'd like to introduce myself and open the door to dialogue about all things Santa Clara County and you. I am Supervisor Margaret Abe-Koga and I am honored to be your new supervisor for Santa Clara County's District Five.

I took office on January 6 this year, but long before that, ever since it became a part of District Five in 2022, I was actively thinking about Saratoga and its needs in Santa Clara County.

I'd like to use this column to share with you my priorities and my approach to county government.

But first, a little about me. I've been a resident of Santa Clara County for many years. I grew up in nearby San Mateo, the only daughter of working-class Japanese immigrants. I found my aptitude in student government and discovered my love of public service through serving one of the most dedicated members of Congress, Anna Eshoo. A lucky opportunity to intern with her while she was Supervisor Eshoo in San Mateo County opened my eyes to see how government could help people.

I set down roots in Mountain View, where my husband and I have raised two daughters and cared for my parents. The birth of my daughters set me on my path to elective office. They made me think of the future in a way I had not before. I realized that I needed to work for a more sustainable city, county and world, for not just my generation but for them and their future.

I started with local government, and I have stayed with local government, because it's closest to the people. I've been on the Santa Clara County Board of Education and the Mountain View City Council for 16 years. As a former mayor of Mountain View, twice, I see how the county and cities can cooperate for better outcomes.

This year and in the future, my north star is fiscal resilience.

This is an extraordinary time to be in local government, particularly county government, which is charged with providing our residents with basic safety net services.

There is a strong sense of uncertainty. The federal government, which has always been a partner, feels more like an adversary. It is slashing previously committed funds and has clearly signaled that Medicaid funding will be deeply cut when the federal fiscal year

begins in October. The county's budget, which we adopted in mid-June, will be closely watched in relation to the federal actions.

To be fiscally resilient, we are looking for opportunities to recover costs wherever we can in county departments and to generate revenue from leasing County properties. Next month I will have updates on wildfire prevention measures the Board of Supervisors have approved.

Supervisor Margaret Abe-Koga and her staff can be reached at District5@bos.sccgov.org

Ask a question or provide feedback. All correspondence is welcome!



Executive Decisions.



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FROM THE DESK OF THE SARATOGA CHAMBER PRESIDENT - NEW BEGINNINGS AND DEDICATED SERVICE

By Jim Cargill

My name is Jim Cargill of House Family Vineyards in Saratoga and Rio Adobe restaurant in Cupertino. I am the incoming president for the Saratoga Chamber of Commerce. As I transition into this role, I am excited about the new opportunities and energy for the chamber that I hope to bring forth. I am grateful for the leadership who's shoes I will be filling. I want to thank Vicki Seelig and Gary Smith for their current roles as president and secretary respectively. Both Vicki and Gary exemplify the type of leadership that propels organizations to the highest levels. Their dedication to Saratoga knows no limit. They are always the first to sign up to help and among the last leave when help is needed. With gratitude I thank them for their service.

We have a very busy summer and fall season already in the works. Saratoga Nights, hosted on the first Thursday of every month, has proved to be a growing and popular event in our downtown village. This event showcases our local merchants at the Saratoga Village parking lot, which is closed off to create a wonderful gathering area for the community. We have featured local bands that play from 5-8 pm. Residents gather to enjoy local wines and beer, dinner from local restaurants in our dining area, and dance the night away on warm Saratoga summer evenings. This is a perfect jump start to any

weekend. These events will run on the first Thursday of the month, through October. The chamber website will have more information about each event. We hope you can join in the fun.

Fall will come quickly, and the Holiday Wine Stroll will be on us. This is hosted on the Friday after Thanksgiving. This is a family-focused event with the annual tree lighting in Blaney Plaza, Santa's Village for the kids, carriage rides, and the evening wine stroll.

There are plenty of opportunities to get involved and make Saratoga into the vibrant community that many dream of having. It is through the dedication of volunteers like Vicki, Gary the chamber board of directors and the business community that this is not a dream but a reality. Come out and see.

For more information, visit www.saratogachamber.org or (408) 867-0753 | 14460 Big Basin Way, Saratoga, CA 95070.



Jim Cargill, President
Saratoga Chamber of Commerce

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HOLOGRAPHIC WILLS: WHY HANDWRITING YOUR WILL IS NOT A GOOD IDEA

By Lisa Bryant

A holographic will is a handwritten will (no typing on the computer) that is valid in California if it meets certain requirements identified at California Probate Code §§6110-6111. Although it seems cost-effective to be able to simply jot down your final wishes next to that crossword puzzle you were trying to finish, there are potentially some major pitfalls.

First, you might unintentionally make errors or write your wishes in such a way that is too ambiguous for your family to interpret correctly. Another major concern with handwritten wills is the potential for ambiguity. Most people lack the legal knowledge to clearly express their intentions, and vague or inconsistent language can lead to confusion over who inherits what. For example, a phrase like “I leave everything to my children” could become legally problematic if the testator has stepchildren, estranged children, or deceased children with their own heirs. Without professional legal guidance, important elements such as naming a guardian for minor children, planning for tax implications, or including backup beneficiaries are often overlooked.

Second, you may fail to plan for the unexpected. Specifically, you might fail to plan for contingent heirs or executors. For example, who should oversee administering your estate if your oldest son, who you named as executor, gets a great job that is overseas and cannot return to the United States for the ongoing court dates that probating a will requires? If you failed to name a back-up explicitly, a family member who you did not want to be in charge might get appointed. Similarly, if one of the heirs you name does not survive you and you did not put a contingent heir, your estate may not be distributed in the way that you wanted. The gift “lapses” and could potentially be subject to the laws of intestate succession—California’s default plan for estate distribution.

Finally, a will—holographic or otherwise—is not always the best way to distribute your assets when you die. A will directs your estate to probate. Probate is when the court supervises the processes that transfers legal title of property from the estate of the person who has died (the “decedent”) to his or her heirs. In California, you must go through probate if your loved one did not have a living trust and owned real property greater than \$61,500.00 or had assets totaling \$184,500 or more. Probate often means a lot of work for your family, large attorneys’ and court fees, and a lot of time (a year or more) before heirs even receive a distribution from your estate. Therefore, a living trust is often better for those owning real property or have assets totaling \$184,500 or more because it avoids probate, which means that upon your death, your family can administer your estate much faster and more cost-effectively.

Working with an attorney or using a reputable estate planning service ensures your wishes are clearly documented, legally sound, far less likely to be challenged and more cost effective. For more information on whether a will or trust is right for you, please visit our website at www.BryantElderLaw.com, or call (408) 286-2122 to schedule a free consultation.

If you would like to review your current financial POA, or if you have questions about creating a financial POA, please contact Bryant Elder Law at (408) 286-2122 for a complimentary POA review.

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CHROME MEETS COUNTRY: SARATOGA CLASSIC AND COOL CAR SHOW

By Tiger Teerlink



It's no surprise... the Saratoga Classic & Cool Car Show is now the most popular classic car show in the South Bay Area, according to local car-show enthusiasts and show-car owners. Classic and cool car fans say they love this particular show because of the quaint setting in the Historic Village of Saratoga, as well as seeing the right mix of show cars, activities, and food. For the 14th time in 15 years, "Chrome meets Country" in downtown Saratoga at this year's Classic & Cool Car Show set for Sunday, July 27th, where almost 300 colorful classic and cool cars will gather in the village.

The Car Show.

The Saratoga Chamber of Commerce organizes the Saratoga Classic & Cool Car Show and runs from 10 AM to 4 PM on Sunday, July 27th. Classy food, tasty beer and wine from local wineries and breweries, craft vendors, and two live bands in the center of town all add up to a fun-packed day for people of all ages. My son, Cody, and I, with the help of the Chamber of Commerce (local volunteers), did the first Saratoga car show in 2010. Initially, we planned to stage it on Saturday, but then we realized that Sunday was better because the banks were closed and we could utilize their parking lots. It was kind of scary and fun at the same time because Highway 9 traffic drove right through the car show. I guess you could have called it a "drive-through" car show.

Today, with the help of the City and Cal Trans, we re-route State Highway 9 around the heart of the village and close off the part of Highway 9 that goes through the middle of town. This allows for a much safer and roomier area to have a formal stage with fun activities, such as a halftime show, and to accommodate the show cars by parking them diagonally against the curb, pointing towards the center of the street. This approach to parking the shiny and colorful show cars

reinforces the classification of Highway 9 as a California State Scenic Highway!

The Saratoga Classic & Cool Car Show is a win/win/win for everybody... The Historic Saratoga Village gets many first time visitors, the registered show car drivers get two free lunches from village restaurants (paid for by the Chamber of Commerce to promote Saratoga and its businesses), and the visitors get to walk the centerline of Saratoga's Big Basin Way to view some of Silicon Valley's coolest cars, snack at the many Saratoga restaurants or shop at the local stores. All this can happen while you're tapping your toes to live classic rock.

Unlike other shows, you will see American and foreign cars of all years, makes, and models, ranging from the 1920s, to the classics of the 50s, 60s, and 70s. You may even see new cars from local car dealers. Occasional live radio broadcasts from the sidewalks and live classic rock music by "Chubby's All Stars" heard from wireless speakers throughout the village have become the trademark of this show. They will definitely set the mood again for this year's outstanding and colorful event. New this year is the addition of the classic British rock band, Nigel and Clive, and the British Invasion.

Car Show Week.

The main car show on Sunday, July 27th, is preceded by "CAR SHOW WEEK". This starts July 19th with the Official Car Show VIP Kick-Off Party at the hilltop House Family Vineyards. (VIP PASSES are available for purchase at the Chamber Office or by Calling the Chamber). Car show week continues with a Free "Revin-Up" Rally on Wednesday, July 24th at Jakes of Saratoga, where those who drive their cool cars get a significant discount on their food order. Then, on July 26th, the traditional "Tri-City Cool Car Cruise" takes place. The Cruise

starts at the Saratoga Village Chevron gas station and travels through parts of Saratoga, San Jose, and Campbell. Other exciting activities during CAR SHOW WEEK will be listed on printed materials and various websites listed below. "There's something for everyone during Saratoga's Car Show Week, so be sure to mark your calendars... It's a terrific time to visit Saratoga.

To find out more about Saratoga's Car Show Week and the Classic & Cool Car Show, including how to volunteer to help, please go to SaratogaChamber.org or the official 2025 Saratoga Classic Car Show website, SaratogaCarShow.com. You can also email info@saratogachamber.org or call Tiger Teerlink at 408-828-9614 or the Saratoga Chamber of Commerce at 408-867-0753.



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Kicking Off Summer with the Stones

By Stephen Guruwaiya | Photos by Dave Lepori

Once Again, It's ALWAYS a HIT! Carmen and Larry Stone know how to kick off summer in style with a BANG!

Local community leaders put their responsibilities and community work aside just for a little while to come together and just have fun among friends.

Whether leading a city, Santa Clara County leadership, Rotary, or just good old community service, everyone had a ball.

Thank you, Carmen and Larry!



Carmen and Larry Stone



David and Anne Neale, Geri Weimers, Jerry Di Salvo



Liesa Fenton, Diane Brandeberg, Sandi and Dick Conniff, Robert Massey, Bonnie Brezzo



Dan Woods, Julia Miller, Wayne Doiguchi



Matt Braker, Gay Crawford, Lissa Kreisler, Elizabeth and Dave Monley



Larry Stone, Dianne McKenna and Ron Gonzales



Larry Stone and Neysa Fligor



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Julie and Bruce Newnan, Larry Kuechler Ivonne Montes de Oca, Dave and Elizabeth Monley, Joe Di Salvo



Gea Carr, Carmen Stone, Joe and Chris Di Salvo



Stephen Guruwaiya, Latasha and Jason Williams, Gay Crawford



Kay Shara, Susan Hayes, Gary Shara



Larry and Carmen Stone, Dave and Joan Barram, Pat Dowd



Carmen Stone, Stephen Guruwaiya, Colleen Wilcox, Sandra Jewett, Valerie Burniece, Diane Brandenburg, Michael Mulcahy



Dan Orloff, Lori Lammle, Gregory and Diane Monteverde



Michael Miller, Jeff Blum, Richard Ressman, Mary Curtis



Rob and Naila Pena, Robert Massey, Colleen Wilcox, Richard Ressman



Sean and Lori Cottle, Jeff Hare



Karen Fox, Sondra and Tim Gill, Aaron Hurst, Megan Toeniskoetter



The Greatest Generation—The Greatest Inspiration

By Annette Stransky

“The Greatest Generation, according to Dr. Gary Laine, is those men and women who were born in the first 30 years of the last century who experienced the First World War, the Roaring 20’s, the Great Depression, multiple global conflicts and the Modern Age-Atomic Age.”

Dr. Laine spoke at the recent Memorial Day observation held at Madronia Cemetery in Saratoga. Over 1,415 US flags and laurel branches could be seen decorating the graves of veterans who lie beneath the fragrant redwoods and magnolia trees.

He had stories to tell about three men. Captain Benjamin Salomon, a dentist who graduated from USC in 1937. Ben was drafted into the Army in 1940 as a private and became an officer in the Army Dental Corps. He was declared the best all-around soldier in his unit. He was part of the 105th Infantry and was part of the battle of June 15, 1944. He was transferred to Saipan where he volunteered to replace the 2nd Battalion’s surgeon who had been wounded. The Japanese soon overran the perimeter and the aid station. He ordered the wounded patients to be evacuated. He proceeded to protect the patients and Salomon grabbed a weapon and killed those that entered the hospital tent. Then he remained behind to cover the withdrawal. When the Army team returned days later, they found his body slumped over a machine gun. His body had been riddled with 76 bullets and numerous bayonet wounds. It took 58 years because of bureaucracy before he was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously in 2021. He was a hero.

Lou Conter of Grass Valley, CA died at the age of 102. Conter was the last living person on the USS Arizona. He grew up in Colorado and carried a rifle in case he met a mountain lion on the way to school. One of his jobs was working for Swift’s meat processing company for 30 cents a day. He joined the Navy at the age of 18. He reported to the USS Arizona at Pearl Harbor in 1940 and was assigned to turret #3. He was a quartermaster in 1941. The Arizona was attacked and killed 1,177 men instantly. The ship sank in 10 minutes. The fires would burn for five days, and his job was to try and retrieve living and dead. The conditions became too dangerous, and the operation was suspended.

After Pearl Harbor he flew a plane and became a PBY to patrol the New Guinea area and pick up downed fliers and deliver supplies. He was part of the famous Black Cat squadron in Indonesia and flew over 200 missions. He was shot down twice. On another occasion he saved the lives of 219 Australian coast watchers who were vital to the allied cause. After the war he developed a survival program, SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape), which became essential in saving incarcerated prisoners of war. He was an American hero.

The third story is about Harvey Gann. He was drafted into the Army Air Corps and became a top turret gunner-radioman on a B-24 Liberator bomber in Italy. On one mission his plane was attacked by Germans, and they had to bail out of the plane. He would be the only survivor as the aircraft lost altitude. Unfortunately, he was captured by a Nazi motor launch. He was sent to Frankfurt, Germany for interrogation. Over the next 15 months he would escape from prison three times and be recaptured. Finally, on his fourth try, he succeeded because the war in Europe was declining. He returned to Austin, Texas where he joined the police department in vice and narcotics. In the 1960s he joined a well-known task force that would incarcerate and prosecute notorious gambling, prostitution and burglary rings for that era. Harvey Gann is an authentic American hero.

These men will not be forgotten. Not when there are people like Dr. Laine. Dr. Gary Laine is a third generation USC Trojan and Dentist, and a former U.S. Navy Dental Corps member. He is a WWII historian and Bay Area Honor Flight board member.

Background

The Saratoga Foothill Club has been producing the Memorial Day Observation since 1928. It is sponsored by the City of Saratoga. It traditionally starts with a flag ceremony at the Memorial Arch in Blaney Plaza followed by a procession to Madronia Cemetery. The Memorial Arch was one of the first memorials in the valley honoring WWI veterans. On the right side of the arch are listed the names of those who gave their lives in World War I; on the left side is an inscription dedicating the crossroads park (Blaney Plaza) in honor of those citizens who serve "without reward, the public good."



Councilperson Yan Zhao, Bill Cooper, and Doris Cooper



REIKO IWANAGA - 2025 NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWSHIPS

By Ashley Iwanaga

Los Gatos resident (and former longtime Saratoga resident) Adrienne Reiko Iwanaga received a remarkable email recently: a notification that she is one of seven recipients of the 2025 National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellowships which, according to the NEA website, is “the nation’s highest honor in the folk and traditional arts.”

Reiko was introduced to classical Japanese dance as a child while she was incarcerated with her family at the Granada Relocation Center (Amache) in Colorado during World War II. Reiko continued to study dance after the war, and in 1965 she underwent a rigorous testing process in Japan to be certified as a dance master. While continuing her training in classical dance, Reiko became involved with Bon Odori folk dancing through the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin and in 1988 became that church’s head Bon Odori teacher. She began choreographing new



dances that, while historically relevant, were fun, simple to learn, and appealed to all ages. Today more than 2,500 dancers participate in the San Jose Buddhist Church’s Obon Festival, reputed to be the largest such celebration in the U.S. and for Buddhists

a time when the community dances in gratitude, joy and remembrance of family and ancestors who have passed away.

Reiko’s award states that she has “preserved and revitalized the traditional Japanese folk dance of Obon Odori, sparking new interest in the art form and expanding its reach and popularity...” She teaches, lectures, runs workshops and partners with educational, community and cultural organizations to give Odori demonstrations. The public can experience Obon Odori at the annual Obon Festival on July 12 and 13 or at events at Hakone Estate and Gardens.

Reiko is a recipient of many honors, including being named Saratoga’s Citizen of the Year a few years ago. She remains committed to her family’s legacy while continuing to evolve American Obon Odori, ensuring it remains relevant, approachable and fun for a contemporary audience.

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