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APRIL 2025

SARATOGA

Spotlight



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December 8	January
January 8	February
February 8	March
March 8	April
April 8	May
May 8	June
June 8	July
July 8	August
August 8	September
September 8	October
October 8	November
November 8	December



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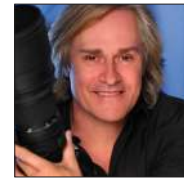
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DON AND SHERRY SCHARE

By Carol Gerwitz | Photos Family Provided

Enthusiastic barks greet visitors to the Saratoga home of Don and Sherry Schare. Doing the barking is the self-appointed guardian of the home “Her Highness, Queen Tinsel”, a fluffy, curly-haired white poodle. Once you enter the home, Tinsel will greet you with friendly tail wags. You are now part of her realm.

Tinsel came to live with Don and Sherry at the age of 3; she is now 11. A standard-sized poodle, Tinsel is the third poodle the Schares have owned. An impressive array of poodle-themed mementos decorate their living room, celebrating Don and Sherry’s love for their beloved Tinsel as well as her two predecessors.

Tinsel was a show dog in her previous life, and she is now the unintentional link to many of Don and Sherry’s Saratoga friends. “People know us because they see us walking her in town,” states Sherry. Tinsel is so well known that Don and Sherry were pleasantly surprised in Ashland, OR when someone asked, “Where’s your dog?” Tinsel chooses her canine friends, and Don and Sherry have made their own friends with the dogs’ owners and other walkers based on Tinsel’s friends. “People walk their dogs at the same time each day,” explained Sherry. “That means you run into the same people, start chatting and walking together, and become friends.” The motley crew of humans and canines, often numbering in the double digits, enjoys downtown Saratoga coffee shops and/or restaurants together, and they are grateful for the welcome they receive.

Don and Sherry are both from New York, Don from Queens and Sherry from Brooklyn. “We live in California but we’re from New

York,” Sherry stated. They enjoy their suburban neighborhood while at the same time being grateful they are close enough to downtown to be able to enjoy beautiful, peaceful walks.

After graduating from Cornell with a degree in electrical engineering, Don found his way to Saratoga. “Hicksville, Long Island was no Silicon Valley,” cracked Don. He has lived in the same house in Saratoga for 52 years. Happily retired now, Don worked in the computer field and then in marketing. Don has enjoyed volunteering at the Book-Go-Round which benefits the Saratoga Library, and he was an avid skier.

Sherry graduated from Brooklyn College and received an MS from the University of Pennsylvania. Before moving to California, Sherry taught biology in New York. Sherry migrated to Saratoga in 1995 via Los Altos. She taught at West Valley College and Lynbrook High School. Sherry put her teaching skills to use when she volunteered as an ESL tutor for senior Russian emigres. Sherry explained that many of these individuals were former civil servants of the Russian Government who had moved to the United States to live with their children where Russian was the primary language spoken in the household. She laughingly recalled one of her students asking, “Why aren’t you learning Russian as fast as I am learning English?”

A mutual friend introduced Sherry and Don. Sherry shared that she never received an official marriage proposal. Instead, Don asked, “Why don’t you quit your job and we can travel together?” That worked. There was a wedding. At the wedding reception, Don presented the friend who introduced them with a bill for the wedding! “He still hasn’t paid it,” quipped Don. Despite that, they remain friends and dine together frequently. Don and Sherry’s blended family consists of five grown children scattered across the U.S. and eight grandchildren.

The Schares have been fortunate to travel to several foreign countries. Previously they were independent travelers; nowadays they prefer group travel. They found Scandinavia and Croatia to be the most beautiful, the Galapagos the most unique, and Africa the most exciting. While in Africa they were thrilled to witness The Great Migration of hundreds of thousands of wildebeests. Sherry especially enjoyed “glamping” in the middle of Africa in a tent with

running water and, more importantly, indoor plumbing. According to Don, “Sherry’s idea of roughing it is cutting steaks with a dull knife.” “He’s right,” affirmed Sherry. “I’m a born and bred city girl.”

When at home in Saratoga, Sherry and Don enjoy dining out and attending local community events, one of the favorites being the Saratoga Car Show last summer where Miss Tinsel was the subject of numerous photographs. They are patrons of Bay Area performance groups: West Valley Light Opera, South Bay Musical Theatre, Opera San Jose, and TheatreWorks. They play bridge weekly, both together and separately, and they also enjoy cooking at home. Sherry’s expertise lies in preparing Italian and Mediterranean dishes; Don likes to whip up a mean stir fry.

With our warmer spring weather, Don, Sherry and Tinsel have revved up their walking. Please say hi if you see them out and about. Don and Sherry would enjoy the chat, and you could become part of Tinsel’s realm.



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SILICON VALLEY CIRCLE OF RED TRAVELS TO “IT’S GO TIME. LET’S GO RED!”

By Laura Enander Harris | Photos by Trisha Leeper Productions

On February 28, 2025, San Francisco played host to one of the most anticipated events on the health and wellness calendar – the annual American Heart Association’s (AHA) “Go Red for Women” luncheon. Held at the Palace Hotel’s elegant Garden Court, beautiful light rays illuminated a sea of RED to mark the occasion. This visual display symbolized the commitment of the Bay Area community to combating heart disease in women by supporting the Go Red for Women movement. This year’s gathering brought together an inspiring group of medical professionals, advocates, philanthropists, and community leaders united by a singular mission: to raise awareness and raise funds for heart disease and stroke in women.

The luncheon kicked off by passionate speaker Lianna Kinard, who at age 5 months had 3 holes in her heart repaired; then, at age 14, she had difficulty breathing and keeping her heart rate down. As she entered college she continued to decline and had open heart surgery to repair her defects. That was twenty years ago, and her doctor wasn’t even sure the surgery would work! At the time, treatment for heart disease often meant invasive procedures, long hospital stays, extended recoveries, and uncertainty about the future. Today, thanks to research funded by the AHA, her same surgery is now a simple, safe procedure performed in a Cath lab with minimal recovery time. Lianna said, “I’m living proof of the impact of innovation in healthcare”.



Keynote speaker Dr. Jessica Mega MD MPH, cardiologist at Stanford Health Care and AHA board member, shared groundbreaking research and innovations in heart health. She highlighted the importance of early detection, preventive care, and the role of technology in transforming how healthcare professionals approach cardiovascular diseases, especially in women.

One of the highlights was when all the attendees had the opportunity to “Open Your Heart” by raising their paddles and contributing to “Go Red for Women” inspired by one of “Silicon Valley’s Circle of Red” member’s generous matching gift of \$100,000. Silicon Valley’s Circle of Red members were represented in force at the luncheon by filling 6 tables of ten. Here in the heart of Silicon Valley, a group of dynamic women is stepping up to make a difference through the “Silicon Valley Circle of Red,” the most philanthropic and largest AHA circle in the nation. This exclusive group of philanthropists, executives, and community advocates is dedicated to supporting the mission of advancing heart health in their community through their time, resources, and influence. Joining the “Silicon Valley Circle of Red” offers women an opportunity to unite with others who are equally passionate about heart health in their community.

The 2025 “Go Red for Women” luncheon was an event filled with inspiration, compassion, and action. The commitment shown by all involved serves as a reminder that fighting heart disease is an effort requiring collaboration, dedication, and determination. As the event concluded, it was clear: the road to a heart-healthy future is one that everyone wants to travel together.



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AND ALL THE WHILE,
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By Stephen Guruwaiya



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GET TO KNOW YOUR ESTATE PLANNING DOCUMENTS

By Lisa Bryant

An estate plan consists of numerous documents that compliment your living trust. If you are not familiar with your estate planning binder, it can be difficult and frustrating to figure out what each document is and what purpose it serves. Here is a quick description of the most common documents contained in your estate plan.

Declaration of Trust

This is your living trust which states who is the trustee and the beneficiaries upon your death. This document also serves you during your lifetime, should you become incapacitated, by allowing the Successor Trustee to step in and manage all assets that belong to the trust. Typically the trust will govern your real property, brokerage accounts and large bank accounts. All property (real estate and money) needs to be titled into the name of your trust; this does not include IRA and 401K accounts.

Trust Transfer Deed and Assignment Documents

Your living trust is like an empty box until you fund it with your assets. If you own real property, it is important that it is transferred into your trust via a trust transfer deed. Similarly there are typically other assignment documents that demonstrate your intention to transfer your tangible and intangible personal property into the trust (e.g., financial accounts, household furnishings, jewelry, etc.). It is important to fund your trust properly in order to avoid difficulty in administering your estate when you pass away.

Advanced Health Care Directive and HIPPA Release

An Advanced Health Care Directive states what actions can be taken if you are no longer able to make medical decisions. It states your wishes about life support, organ donation and burial.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA)

was created to protect the privacy of your medical information. Health care providers cannot release your medical information without express permission. A HIPPA release allows your health care provider to disclose this information to your specified agents.

Durable Power of Attorney

A durable power of attorney will give another person the legal authority to make decisions for you if you become incapacitated. With a power of attorney in place, your family will avoid having to ask a court to appoint a conservator/representative if you cannot manage your affairs. This serves to pay your bills, manage your checking account and deal with the day to day affairs.

Pour-over Will

A Pour-Over Will directs any assets discovered not to be named into your living trust back to your trust in order to avoid probate. The Pour-Over Will also declares who are your spouse and children. This document protects from “long lost relatives” claiming to be related to you.

These are a few of the standard documents that are part of a well-rounded estate plan. It is recommended that you have your estate plan reviewed every 5 years due to possible changes in the law, changes with your health, or family situation. If you are missing any of these documents, or are not certain what your documents do, please contact Bryant Elder Law at (408) 286-2122 for a complimentary estate plan review.

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THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

By Jennifer Taylor-Mendoza, Ph.D. President, West Valley College

Dear Neighbor,

At West Valley College (WVC), we are passionate about providing a truly accessible learning environment for everyone, from students to community partners.

This commitment translates into tangible on-campus solutions: from agile scooters that enhance mobility in our bustling hallways to cutting-edge apps empowering our visually impaired students. As a leading voice for disability justice, we foster vital conversations that shape West Valley College culture and inform our broader community. Early in the spring semester, for instance, we held our inaugural WVC Assistive Technology Fair. Kicking off the free event was a keynote address by disability rights lawyer and inclusivity advocate Haben Girma, the first Deafblind graduate of Harvard Law School.

These activities and resources represent a handful of what West Valley College offers daily in cultivating an environment where all belong. As the community's campus, we also embrace opportunities to join hands with partners in further serving and promoting inclusivity.

Coming up on April 25, we are thrilled to welcome to the beautiful West Valley College campus the 45th Annual Kiwanis Special Games! The spirited event—organized by Kiwanis Club of Los Gatos,

Saratoga and Monte Sereno—provides fun, competitive activities for some 1,000 Santa Clara County kids enrolled in their schools' Adaptive Physical Education program.

In a March column in this magazine, past Kiwanis President Nancy Pearson wrote about the Kiwanis Special Games: "The Kiwanis partnership with West Valley College and the Santa Clara County Office of Education is the true definition of 'collaboration.'"

We are honored to collaborate, as always, with esteemed community partners who live our shared values.

Please plan on joining us for the Kiwanis Special Games at West Valley College, as one of the anticipated 300 student volunteers who power the games or among the fan base of around 3,000 cheering on our young athletes.

Together, we are making a difference in all students' lives.

In community,
Jennifer Taylor-Mendoza, Ph.D.
President, West Valley College



Nancy Pearson, Kiwanis Club, and John Vlahos, Associate Vice Chancellor, Intercollegiate Athletics



Martin Baccaglio, Kiwanis Club, and Dr. Jennifer Taylor Mendoza, President - West Valley College

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MEDICARE AND UNCERTAIN TIMES

By Lucille Maravilla



I have been receiving many calls from Medicare clients concerned that their Medicare coverage could change, or if they are new to Medicare, wanting to know if there will be problems enrolling in Medicare. Since the start of the new year, we have been hearing about proposed changes in our health care coverage. Let's focus specifically on Medicare.

The United States has a very complicated system. Congress passes laws which determine who can receive health care and how they will be covered. Congress and the executive branch may authorize entities like Social Security and the Center for Medicare Services (CMS) to provide the framework and the regulations for enrollment, program design, rules for the kind of care that will be provided, the payment form, etc. Each state determines how insurance companies will be regulated and whether their particular state will make exceptions to some federal laws and rules. The IRS, reporting to Social Security, can report income levels that require extra Medicare costs for high income earners. The list goes on and on. I think of all these connections as an intricate web of relationships. For good or bad, it's not easy to make changes. There are unforeseen consequences when something is added or removed, in even a small part of the overall system.

We have been hearing about examples of these changes, like less staff at Social Security. That could mean longer times to process Medicare enrollments or less experienced staff providing incorrect guidance about coverage and penalties. CMS may propose privatizing Medicare. So, coverage would be provided by insurance companies instead of the government. Would the insurance companies' focus be on profit or care? Would that mean that these companies would determine who is covered and how they receive that coverage? There is an executive order that removed the cap on drug costs. It has not been implemented yet. Will something else take its place? Questioning these possibilities does not mean that things should stay the same.

This is more of a reminder of the interconnectedness of all these systems.

Until the end of the year, we probably won't know how Medicare will change. Everything is in flux right now. It's important to stay calm. An experienced Medicare agent will try to help navigate truth from fiction. We have access to industry news and our professional associations, as well as updates from insurance companies. Contact your agent if you want more information. Your questions are valid.

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REMEMBERING OUR DEAR FRIEND, JACK FRAZER

By Stephen Guruwaiya

Jack Frazer, beloved husband of Sandi Frazer, father of Ian Frazer, Amanda Leon, and Jared Frazer, and grandfather of Maddox, Quentin, Cassian, and Lavinia, passed away peacefully at home at the age of 76.

A dedicated leader and community advocate, Jack served as a board member and owner of Samaritan Medical Center, Chair of the Board at History San Jose, and Vice Chair and founding member of Cancer CAREpoint.

His warm and welcoming spirit, compassion, and legacy of service will be fondly remembered by all who knew him.

For those who would like to remember Jack, please consider the organization closest to his heart, Cancer CAREpoint @ www.cancercarepoint.org



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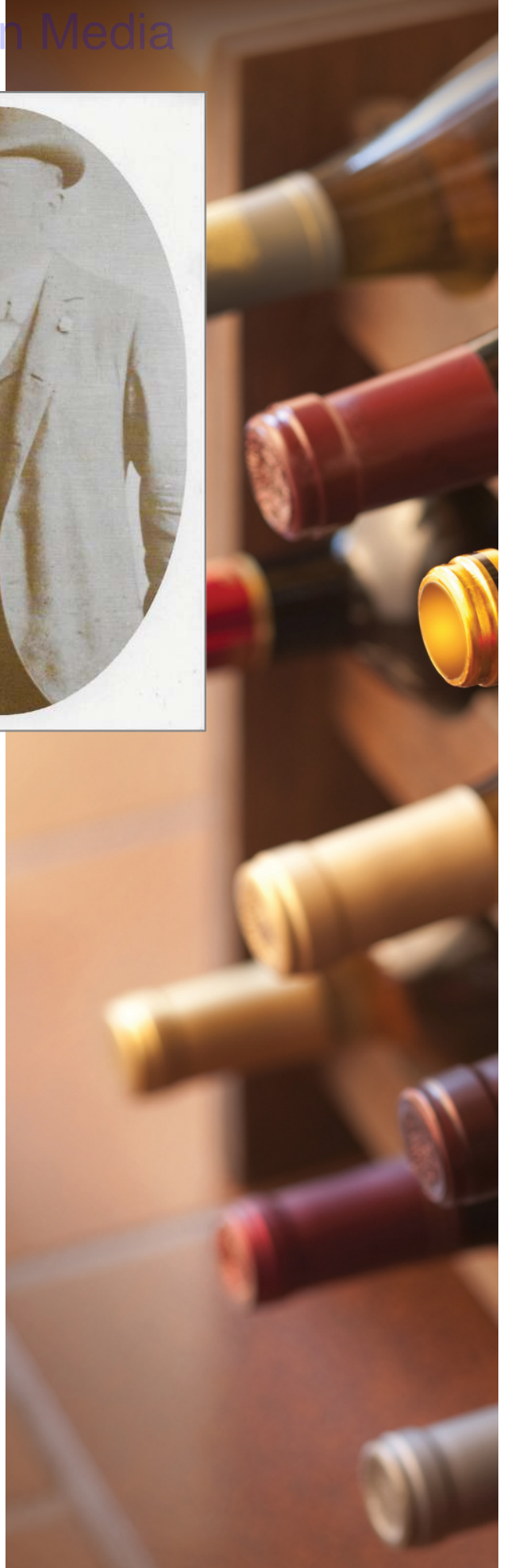
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NEW EXHIBIT: HISTORY OF LEGENDARY WINEMAKER PAUL MASSON AND THE PAUL MASSON CHAMPAGNE CELLARS

By Annette Stransky

The Saratoga Historical Foundation is featuring Paul Masson (1859-1940) the winemaker who earned the nickname “Champagne King of California.” Masson liked to tell his friends “Good wine makes good friends.” He was well known for his award winning sparkling wine, sparkling sense of humor and wide range of friends. Supposedly he provided actress Anna Heid with a case of champagne so she could take a bath...” The Paul Masson Champagne Cellars were part of the mystic of the Paul Masson story. Designed by renowned architect John Savage Bolles the Champagne Cellars and Bottling Plant was one of the most modern in the US in 1985. A metal sculpture towered above the entrance and was called the “effervescence of champagne” because Paul Masson used the phrase “dancing bubbles” of fine champagne. The ramp leading to the entrance had 153 feet of mosaics telling the history of wine by talented artist Jose Moya Del Pino. The champagne cellars provided a pleasant afternoon of touring the facility and ending the tour by sampling the up to 17 types in wine. The plant was located on Saratoga Avenue until the late 1980s when it was removed to make way for Highway 85. The exhibit runs until the end of May. The museum is located at 20450 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road in Saratoga. The museum is open from 1-4 on Friday and Sunday and 10-4 on Saturday. Admission is free.



IT'S THAT TIME! TIME FOR THE SARATOGA ROTARY ART SHOW

By Sheeba Garg

Rotary Club of Saratoga



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PURPLESTRIDE SILICON VALLEY, BENEFITING THE PANCREATIC CANCER ACTION NETWORK

By Ariane Chapple



Join us for PurpleStride Silicon Valley, benefiting the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, on Saturday, April 26, 2025, at Almaden Lake Park in San Jose! PurpleStride is the ultimate walk to end pancreatic cancer. It's a family-friendly day filled with fun, hope, and the power of community.

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By Cynthia Chang

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