

Living Well

A monthly special section of news & information for seniors

Lifetimes of Achievement

These seven honorees laid the groundwork for a stronger community

Whether it's establishing neighborhood holiday traditions or boosting educational programs to make them more inclusive, the volunteer efforts of this year's seven Avenidas Lifetimes of Achievement honorees helped make our neighborhoods and communities more welcoming places to live.

For the better part of three-plus decades, Gary and Jeff Dunker, Annette Glanckopf, Barbara Gross,

LaDoris Hazzard Cordell and Judy and George Marcus have given their time and energy to improve the lives of those in their communities and beyond.

These volunteers have served on — and in many cases have helped launch — neighborhood associations, community boards and educational foundations and as heads of nonprofits. Along with their many other hands-on efforts, they've distributed meals, worked behind the scenes prepping for and

cleaning up after public events, assisted children with homework and provided space for nonprofits to meet.

To honor them, the senior-serving nonprofit Avenidas and the Palo Alto Weekly will host a special garden party at a local home on Sunday, May 15. Tickets for this public event are \$85, with proceeds benefiting Avenidas' programs for older adults throughout the area. Tickets include appetizers, wine and music. For tickets and more information, go to avenidas.org.



Gary and Jeff Dunker

From sharing meals to creating ghoulish delights, couple aims to bring joy to young and old

Gary and Jeff Dunker have dedicated years to enriching the lives of those young and old. Gary, a longtime Palo Alto elementary school teacher, launched a food distribution program similar to Meals on Wheels for families at Duveneck Elementary School and, after retiring, volunteered for more than five years in after-school homework programs at schools in Palo Alto and East Palo Alto. She also has served as a hospice respite volunteer with Pathways, a board member for the Peninsula Center for the Blind (now Vista Center) and a board member at Gamble Garden. She has volunteered with Avenidas for 35 years, raising money for the Senior Day Health program (now Avenidas Rose Kleiner Center) and has participated in cognitive activities with the center's participants for the past 14 years.

Jeff, a lifelong athlete who was named All-American Track and Field in shot put at Cal Poly in 1969, spent his early career teaching physical education to local children through the Palo Alto school district's Enrichment Team. For 37 years, Jeff has spent each October decorating the outside of the couple's Palo Alto home for Halloween. It's an annual tradition that attracts about 1,500 trick-or-treaters, including many of his and Gary's former students, now parents and sharing their childhood tradition with their own children. Jeff also has served as a board member for the nonprofit La Comida, which provides hot meals to local seniors.

Together, Jeff and Gary

volunteer at Trinity Church in Menlo Park, where Gary serves as commission chair of the monthly luncheon series and Jeff assists with the event.

The Weekly spoke to Gary and Jeff about their volunteer work and the impact it's had on their lives and the community in which they live. The following interview has been edited for length and clarity:

PAW: What brought you to Palo Alto?

Gary: I came to Palo Alto from Santa Barbara to attend Stanford when I was 17 and have lived here for 58 years, still driving my '66 white Mustang! I was teaching at Crescent Park School when our Realtor said he had a move-in perfect home to show us. When he parked in the driveway across the street from my kindergarten classroom, I said, "No way, I am not living across the street from where I teach." And here I am, 49 years later, feeling incredibly fortunate to have been able to teach and live in Palo Alto. All our friends from 40-plus years are here. We have a history that comes from the stability of longtime relationships and community. It is a community that cares about each other, takes care of each other in times of joy and sorrow.

PAW: What's your proudest achievement?

Jeff: When I was 43 and my dad was 85, we competed in the Northern California Masters Games (a multi-sport competition for athletes over age 30) that

was in 1991 at Stanford University. My dad and I both won first place in our respective shot put and discus events. Dad had volunteered for 15 years to coach the shot put and discus athletes at Woodside High School after I graduated. My own shot put record fell to one athlete that Dad coached. His volunteerism encouraged me to continue to volunteer for future Master Games and to coach shot put and discus at Gunn and Menlo Atherton high schools.

PAW: What's the most rewarding part about your community work?

Gary: Knowing that you are making a difference in your community by volunteering is so rewarding. Working together and creating something worthwhile all build camaraderie with both the organization and your friends. I especially like when I have the opportunity to create my own programs with the organization's goals in mind. I did that with the Rose Kleiner Center (creating cognitive games for people with dementia), also with tutoring and with Trinity Church, where I have organized a monthly speaker luncheon series since 2007. Individualizing my volunteer opportunities gives me a chance to use 35 years of teaching experience.

Jeff: My most rewarding volunteer activities occurred when I first started as a substitute teacher. I made the acquaintance of several teachers who were planning to provide camping and



Magali Gauthier

Jeff (left) and Gary Dunker (right) have spent decades serving the Palo Alto community, from volunteering to deliver meals to making their home a Halloween tradition.

backpacking activities for their classes and needed a willing and credentialed volunteer. Providing kids and young adults with their first-time exposure to the high Sierra and Yosemite and seeing their wonder and then appreciation of their amazing surroundings gave me satisfaction that I still enjoy today, some 50 years later.

PAW: What makes volunteering with your organizations worth it?

Jeff: Working as a member

of the La Comida board was very satisfying knowing that I was helping to provide a social venue for seniors to share a low-cost midday meal with new and longtime friends. My father was a devoted diner at these meals and inspired me to volunteer with La Comida.

Gary: Volunteering with my organizations is worth it because everyone is grateful and

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Living Well

MAY 2022

Calendar of Events

Join us for a Garden Party

2022 Avenidas Lifetimes
of Achievement

Sunday, May 15
3:00-5:00pm

You are invited to come enjoy appetizers, wine and music in the private garden setting of an estate home as we celebrate these outstanding community members:

LaDoris Hazzard Cordell
Gary & Jeff Dunker
Annette Glanckopf
Barbara Gross
Judy & George Marcus

Tickets: \$85

For more information, to purchase tickets, or to make a donation in honor of one of our Lifetimes Achievers, visit www.avenidas.org or call (650) 289-5445.



For complete schedule or info about Avenidas events, call 650-289-5400

May 2
Tech and Innovation Discussion Group via Zoom
12-1pm, on Mondays. For info or to register, email rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org. Free.

May 3
Tuesday Trekkers
every Tuesday, 10am. Email register@avenidas.org for details and location.

May 4
Book Club: A Children's Bible by Lydia Millet
2:30-4pm, Avenidas@450 Bryant. Space is limited. RSVP & proof of vax required. Email register@avenidas.org. Free.

Housing
3-4:30pm, Avenidas@450 Bryant. RSVP required. Email register@avenidas.org or call 650-289-5400.

May 5
Avenidas Village Coffee Chat
10am via Zoom. Email dgreenblat@avenidas.org to register. Free.

Wonder Women Lesbian Social Group via Zoom
3pm via Zoom. Email lgbtq@avenidas.org for info and to register. Free.

May 6
Pop-up Sale!
1:30 to 4pm, Avenidas@450 Bryant. Handmade gifts, reasonable prices.

May 9
Apple Tech Talks (1:1 tech support)
1-4pm, on Mondays – onsite or via Zoom. RSVP required. Email rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org. Free.

May 10
Collage Club at Avenidas
every Tuesday, 9:30-11:30am. Bring your own materials. RSVP and proof of vax required. Email register@avenidas.org. Free.

May 11
Webinar: Stroke 101, via Zoom
11am-12pm. Sign-up at register@avenidas.org for log on info. Free.

May 12
Info Session: FREE ClearCaptions Advanced Telephone Captioning
11am-12pm via Zoom. RSVP for log on info to register@avenidas.org or 650-289-5400. Free.

Song Appreciation: "Favorite Michael Jackson Song," 4pm via Zoom. Email lgbtq@avenidas.org to join. Free.

May 13
Casual Bridge at Avenidas
1:30-3:30pm, Fridays. RSVP and proof of vax required. Email register@avenidas.org. Free.

May 14
Avenidas Rainbow Collective Walking Group:
Canopy Tree Walk Mountain View. Email lgbtq@avenidas.org for more info and to register. Free.

May 15
Lifetimes of Achievement Celebration
3-5pm. Call 650-289-5445 for location and tix.

May 16
Mandarin Workshop: Stroke Awareness
1-2pm on Zoom. Presented in Mandarin only. Sign-up at avcc@avenidas.org for log on info. Free.

May 17
Wonder Women Lesbian Social Group via Zoom
7pm via Zoom. Email lgbtq@avenidas.org for info and to register. Free.

May 18
Mindfulness Meditation, every Wednesday
2-3pm, via Zoom. Visit www.avenidas.org for log on information. Free.

May 19
Avenidas Village Coffee Chat
10am via Zoom. Email dgreenblat@avenidas.org to register. Free.

Tinnitus Support Group
5:30-7:30pm via Zoom. RSVP for log on info to register@avenidas.org. Free.

May 20
Dot Mandala Workshop
9:30-11am, Avenidas@450 Bryant. RSVP required. Call 650-289-5400. \$35/\$45

May 23
Play Reading Club via Zoom
10:30am-12pm, Mondays. Email trmccloud@avenidas.org for more info and to join. Free

May 24
Mindful Engagement Podcast Discussion Group via Zoom
10-11am, on Tuesdays. RSVP not required. For info, email rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org. Free.

May 25
Avenidas Village Coffee Chat
1pm, Avenidas@450 Bryant. RSVP required. Email dgreenblat@avenidas.org to register. Free.

LGBTQ Elder Appreciation Celebration
4-6pm, Avenidas@450 Bryant. RSVP required. Email lgbtq@avenidas.org. Free.

LGBTQ Movie Lounge:
"Tig," 6-8pm, Avenidas@450 Bryant. Proof of vax required. Drop-in, free.

May 26
Book Club: The Dovekeepers:
A Novel by Alice Hoffman, 2:30-4pm via Zoom. Email register@avenidas.org to register. Free.

Song Appreciation:
"Favorite Song by Female Group," 4pm via Zoom. Email lgbtq@avenidas.org to join. Free.

May 27
Webinar:
"Digital Security Threats and How to I.D. Fake E-mails," with Eric Gee of AnewVista, 11am via Zoom. Presented by Avenidas Village VISTAS. Email dgreenblat@avenidas.org to register. Free.

May 29
Memorial Day.
Avenidas closed.

May 30
Short Story Discussion Group via Zoom
11am-12pm, on Tuesdays. RSVP required. For info, email rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org. Free.

May 31
Legacy Podcast Discussion Group via Zoom
2-3 pm, on Wednesdays. RSVP required. Email rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org. Free



Magali Gauthier

Annette Glanckopf has changed her life and the lives of many others through her service on more than 19 boards.

Annette Glanckopf

Veteran organizer serves on 19 boards, unites residents and neighborhoods

Annette Glanckopf has spent decades bringing together neighbors and neighborhoods throughout Palo Alto. As chairperson of the Midtown Residents Association, she was instrumental in restoring Scott Meadows in Greer Park, installing five public art projects in the neighborhood and reviving the Midtown Shopping District by pushing for ground-floor retail. Glanckopf co-founded Palo Alto Neighborhoods (PAN), a networking organization that connects neighbors and neighborhoods. She also co-founded the Emergency Services Volunteer (EVS) organization and the nonprofit support group Pacific Stroke Awareness. She has served on more than 19 boards, including the Rotary Club of Palo Alto, The Woman's Club of Palo Alto, Palo Alto Players, Leadership Palo Alto, as well as on the city's Comprehensive

Plan and the Future of Residential Housing task forces. She received a Community Champion Award from the 13th Senate District, and the city of Palo Alto recognized her in a 2017 proclamation.

The Weekly spoke to Glanckopf about her volunteer work and the impact it's had on her life and the community. The following interview has been edited for length and clarity:

PAW: You have a long legacy of volunteering in the community. When did you first start volunteering, and how did that experience snowball into decades of community service?

Glanckopf: It's hard to say exactly when I first volunteered, but it was in the mid-'90s. I was working at El Camino (Hospital) and one of my colleagues

said, "Well, I'm running off to Leadership" (a volunteer training program in Sunnyvale). It sounded very interesting, so I contacted the (Palo Alto) Chamber and learned that Palo Alto had the same program. The focus of the leadership program is for volunteers to get to know more about their city and get involved in their community. One of my classmates was on the American Heart Association Board, and he recruited me to be a board member. ... and then somewhere along the way, I got involved in the Midtown Residents Association, which was just forming, and joined Palo Alto Rotary.

PAW: What inspired you to focus on "community building" in your neighborhood?

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Barbara Gross

She's spent her career bringing businesses and nonprofits together

Barbara Gross, a longtime resident of Portola Valley, has used her business ventures to support local nonprofits. While general manager of the Garden Court Hotel for 15 years, she hosted numerous charitable events at the Palo Alto venue. She has been an instrumental member of the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce, serving on the group's board of directors, government action council and

downtown marketing committee. She helped form the Palo Alto Downtown Business and Professional Association and was among those who orchestrated the formation of a public-private partnership between the association and city to renovate Lytton Plaza. Organizations, including the Stanford Health Library, the Community Breast Health Project, Palo Alto Partners in Education, Palo Altans for Government

Effectiveness (PAGE), East Palo Alto elementary schools and the Peninsula Stroke Association, have all benefited from Gross' leadership. Gross was honored in 2005 with the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce Athena Award for providing valuable service to the community.

The Weekly spoke to Gross about her charitable work and the impact it's had on her life and the community in which she lives. The following interview has been edited for length and clarity:

PAW: What brought you to Palo Alto?

Gross: Varian (Medical Systems) recruited my husband from his doctoral program for a three-month project. We leaped at this no-pressure opportunity in the early 1970s, knowing that we would return to our wonderful New York City E. 72nd Street apartment. ... However, lured by the lifestyle change, we said goodbye to our families and began a new life here. I can't think of a better place to live.

PAW: What's your proudest achievement?

Gross: Throughout my 15-year retail banking career, my office teams earned multiple corporate awards and recognition. The same holds true for my 15-year hospitality career. I'm most proud of the development of these teams. Caring for colleagues inspires loyalty. At the hotel, for example, we partnered



Magali Gauthier

By hosting many charitable events at the Garden Court Hotel and serving on the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce, Barbara Gross encouraged partnerships between local businesses and charities.

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Employment

Senior Product Manager

Mercari, Inc., is seeking a Senior Product Manager in Palo Alto, CA to develop and implement product strategies consistent with the company vision. Teleworking permitted within a reasonable commuting distance of the Palo Alto worksite location. Employment and background checks may be required. Email resume to Mercari, Inc. at us_jobs@mercari.com. Please reference job code FK042122 on resume.



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LaDoris Hazzard Cordell

She's opened door after door for generations behind her

LaDoris Hazzard Cordell has spent much of her life creating change: She was the first lawyer to open a private law practice in East Palo Alto and in 1982, she became the first African American female judge in northern California. She was later elected to the Superior Court of Santa Clara County. After serving 19 years, Cordell retired from the bench and joined Stanford University as vice provost and special counselor to the president for campus relations. The university ranked last place in the enrollment of Black and Hispanic students among major law schools before Cordell arrived. With her help, Stanford climbed all the way to first. She also has served as a council member for the city of Palo Alto, the independent police auditor for the city of San Jose and an on-camera legal analyst for CBS-5 news on KPIX-TV.

The Weekly spoke to Cordell about her work and the impact it's had on her life and the community in which she lives. The following interview has been edited for length and clarity:

PAW: What brought you to Palo Alto?

Cordell: My admission to Stanford Law School in 1971 brought me to Palo Alto. I chose to remain here because of the

city's stellar school system in which both of my daughters were educated. As well, I remained here because of the city's intellectual environment created by both the presence of Stanford University, because of the technological savvy fostered by the city's cutting-edge businesses and because so many of the city's residents are concerned and actively involved in city government.

PAW: What would be your advice to your 22-year-old self, or to any 22-year-old now?

Cordell: When I was 22 years of age, I was a first-year student at Stanford Law School. I was the only African American woman in my class and learned from a faculty devoid of any women and with only one person of color. As the first person in my family to enter the legal field, I found myself under tremendous pressure to succeed in an extremely competitive environment. Yet, I persevered and graduated in 1974. My advice to 22-year-olds today is to never forget that you stand on the shoulders of others who have come before you and who opened doors so that you have unlimited opportunities. Keep your eyes on the prize and failure will be an impossibility.

PAW: What's your proudest achievement?

Cordell: One of my most fulfilling achievements was leading the effort to lift the entry restriction to Foothills Nature Preserve (which, from 1965--2020, banned nonresidents from visiting the public park). Represented by the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union), I was one of the plaintiffs in a lawsuit against the city (of Palo Alto) after negotiations stalled. Courageously, the majority of the Palo Alto City Council did the right thing and voted to make this beautiful public space available to all, regardless of their place of residency. Taking down barriers to equality is a good thing.

PAW: What are the most pressing issues facing the younger generation?

Cordell: Sadly, the country that our younger generation will inherit is rife with problems, among them climate change, voter suppression, racism, sexism and homophobia. That being said, I have great faith in and hope for our young people, who are ... smart, informed and compassionate.

PAW: What's the most rewarding part about your community work?

Cordell: "Activism is my rent for living on this planet." Those are the words of author, poet and social activist Alice Walker that are my mantra. My activism has,



Magali Gauthier

As the first lawyer with a private practice in East Palo Alto and the first African American judge in northern California, LaDoris Hazzard Cordell has broken barriers for herself and others.

in part, been to focus on city government by serving on the Palo Alto City Council for four years and to serve on government committees, such as those established to assist in the selection of the city's police chiefs. My reward for community service is simply believing that in some way, I have improved the quality of life for

others while striving for equality and justice for us all.

PAW: What advice do you have for others looking to volunteer?

Cordell: My advice to anyone contemplating volunteerism in our community is simply this: Pay your rent! ■

— Chris Kenrick

Judy and George Marcus

Restaurateur couple invest in local education and charity

Judy and George Marcus, co-owners of Kokkari Restaurant in San Francisco and Evvia in Palo Alto, are known for their decades of civic and philanthropic work, which has impacted everything from health and education to the arts. They have volunteered at various organizations together and independently over the past five decades. Together, the Los Altos Hills duo established the International Center for the Arts at San Francisco State University and contributed \$25 million — the largest donation to the university ever — to establish the George and Judy Marcus Hall for the Liberal and Creative Arts and the new home for the Broadcast and Electronic Communication Arts program in 2018.

George founded Marcus & Millichap, established in Palo Alto and now one of the largest commercial real estate firms in the world. He sits on the board of directors of Millennium Challenge Corporation, UCSF Foundation, CSU Foundation and Georgetown School for Foreign Service and is an emeritus

board member of the Library of Congress Trust Fund and Corporation of Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. He is the regent emeritus of the University of California and a former California State University Trustee.

Judy, who supported the family while George was launching his business, has dedicated many years to community service, contributing her time and talents to such organizations as Humane Society of Silicon Valley, Cristo Rey San Jose, the Montalvo Arts Center, Breast Cancer Connections, Avenidas and Community Services Agency in Mountain View, where she served as president. Their home has been the site of countless fundraising events for nonprofit organizations, as well as for U.S. presidential and other political candidates. After graduating from San Francisco State with a bachelor's degree in physical education,

The Weekly spoke to George and Judy about their volunteer work and the impact it's had on their lives and the community in which they live. The following

interview has been edited for length and clarity:

PAW: Thinking back, what inspired you to first get involved in volunteering and philanthropy?

Judy: Growing up, I think my family was always involved with doing something — whether it was during the holidays or other times — reaching out to groups that needed extra help. I was a Girl Scout. We didn't have very much ourselves, but it was always important to give.

George: I think it starts if you're involved in religion. Religious organizations are organizations that get you to think a little about philanthropy and caring about anybody in need. I'm Greek Orthodox. The Orthodox religion is very large and I served on the board of a (humanitarian aid) organization called International Orthodox Christian Charities. We would go abroad and we would try to help people through all these crisis situations, no matter what their ethnic background or religious traditions. That was a very



Magali Gauthier

Through their long history of donating and volunteering, restaurateurs Judy (left) and George Marcus have left their mark on everything from health and education to the arts.

fulfilling thing for me.

PAW: Through philanthropy efforts and hands-on volunteer

work, you have stepped up to make the community that you

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Marcus

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call home a better place for all. What makes this area so special to you?

Judy: George and I came to this area because of its beauty and many amenities. Our community has blossomed into a place for creativity and innovation that is changing things all over the world. This could almost compare to the Golden Age of Greece.

PAW: What kind of impact do you feel your volunteer work has had on the community?

Judy: I think the best thing that can happen with a nonprofit is to go out of

business. We sometimes continue programs that have outlived their usefulness. Things are changing in different communities, and we need to adjust with the change. What was good for the community 30 years ago may not be appropriate today. We did this with Families in Transition (an assistance program for immigrants and their families), which was in East Palo Alto before Ikea was to be built in 2003. (Through the) program, we started a housecleaning co-op, had a few women learn to drive, some did the cleaning and some watched the children. All the money was split evenly, and eventually, the women went on and developed their own business. They were able to become empowered. Many moved away when the community became more gentrified. The money we had left in the

organization was divided between the city's Ecumenical Hunger Program and Eastside Prep.

PAW: What's been the most rewarding part about your volunteer work?

George: Trying to do good and seeing a difference you can make in different organizations.

Judy: When I see life changes, whether it is economic or educational, I know that the time spent was worthwhile. It's nice to support a variety of things — it's very fun to me — rather than just one area.

PAW: What advice do you have for others looking to volunteer or make a difference in their community?

George: When you volunteer, you need

to be effective and make sure you have goals. Regardless of what kind of charity it is, you really have to make headway. Half of the goals are usually about raising money. You have to have people who are trained, you have to have financial capabilities, and it all has to be monitored to track your results. I'm a businessman, so I think in those terms all the time.

PAW: While owning restaurants, operating a mega real estate firm, raising a family, launching nonprofits and volunteering, how have you managed to successfully balance it all?

Judy: We can balance what we do because we prioritize, focus and invest the time. We work on things separately, but we are a team. ■

— *Karla Kane*

Glanckopf

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Glanckopf: In the 1990s, I was elected as chair of the Midtown Residents Association. There were only a handful of neighborhood associations at that time. Although I knew about organization and management, I didn't know much about my local community and how to build a residents association. A friend of mine, Yoriko Kishimoto — she was president of the University South Neighborhood Association — we started talking about shared

neighborhood issues, how to get things done and how to organize people. We met monthly and before we knew it, 15 neighborhoods were meeting. These meetings evolved into Palo Alto Neighborhoods.

The Emergency Service Volunteer program ... was another organic kind of thing that happened. In the late '90s, the Midtown Residents Association had occasional meetings that featured personal preparedness. These meetings didn't get as much interest as those on traffic, development or crime. Then 9/11 happened, Midtown residents wanted to know what to do. That was the catalyst to build a cadre of volunteers to support each

other during a disaster. In 1993, Palo Alto Neighborhoods formed an emergency preparedness committee. ... In 1994, the city hired a director of Emergency Services and merged all similar volunteer groups into the Emergency Services Volunteers organization.

PAW: What achievement are you most proud of?

Glanckopf: The one thing that gives me joy almost on a daily basis is my Midtown bears. They are just a special delight to me. If you haven't been to Hoover Park, go and take a look at these gorgeous silver bears — a mama bear and three cubs.

Every time I walk by them, I enjoy seeing little kids climbing on them and petting them.

PAW: What advice do you have for others looking to volunteer?

Glanckopf: Well, first of all, I would definitely encourage everyone to volunteer. Volunteering does a lot of things, besides introducing you to some wonderful people, it can give you an incredible sense of accomplishment. Figure out what your passion is ... and then just jump in and volunteer. It's a great venue, if you want to make your community better. ■

— *Linda Taaffe*



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Dunker

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supportive. No matter what the job, I leave feeling appreciated by both the staff and the participants. Thank-you's always feel so rewarding and invigorating.

PAW: What advice do you have for others looking to volunteer?

Gary: When you first get started, choose just one volunteer program that

speaks to you. Try doing it with a friend or two. As time goes on, new opportunities arise and you may change your focus. Even when I worked for 35 years, I always volunteered with some organization. If you have kids, it is fun to find family projects to do together.

Jeff: Find an organization you're passionate about. Then, once you've chosen it, make it your focus and plan on long term service. ■

— *Chris Kenrick*

Gross

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with the Palo Alto Adult School to bring an ESL teacher to the hotel to teach our non-English speaking colleagues. Members of our housekeeping staff were able to learn at no cost, without traveling elsewhere, while still on the clock in a safe environment. This opened up their personal worlds as well as their professional opportunities.

PAW: What was most rewarding about your community work?

Gross: We would invite nonprofits to come into the hotel, and we underwrote some of these events 100%. My place of business became a meeting place, and mingling with community leaders provided personal insight and different marketing opportunities. There were also many personal relationships and city projects that came out of this. For example, helping to build the downtown parking garages was the result of hundreds of hours of work by teams of people. Creating a public-private partnership to rebuild Lytton Plaza illustrated what could be accomplished.

PAW: What advice do you have for others looking to volunteer?

Gross: Being "of service" is a basic tenet of society and must be fostered. It has been my family teaching since childhood. We are fortunate to have so many companies, businesses and individual donors supporting our schools, service organizations and local programs. Today, many people have a much more global perspective of community, and are accomplishing great things in so many ways. Additionally, we must not lose sight of the local impact one can have in shaping our children, community and local government.

PAW: How were you able to build community and market your business?

Gross: Hotels typically are on the top of all nonprofit organizations' list for donations. And, to their credit, most hotels give willingly. Our approach to donating expanded over time, from an overnight stay to supporting nonprofit meetings and events. The premise was based on the audience these organizations would bring to the hotel. ... We felt the hotel became an important gathering place and the beating heart of our work within the community. ■

— *Chris Kenrick*