



PLEASANT VALLEY
HISTORICAL MUSEUM & GARDEN
Established 1964

The Echo

Presenting the 2025 Dons and Doñas Recipients



Back Row: Larry Kennedy, Darrin Parrent, Bob Taylor, Rick Peña, “Buddy” Kelley
Front Row: Stephanie Zierhut, Mike Ritchie, Sheryl Gonzalez, Dick Bellman, Kim Dallape

2025 Dons and Doñas Recipients Biographies

Abridged Version Biographies are shown on Pages 2 and 3 of *the Echo*.

Full Version Biographies are presented in the 2025 Dons and Doñas Event Booklet. Also, booklets for event years 2021 through 2025 are available on the Pleasant Valley Historical Museum & Garden website – pvhsonline.org. Click/Tap on **Dons & Doñas** at the top of the webpage to access the site containing ‘buttons’ to access any/all of the available Event Booklets.

President's Message

What a wonderful event we enjoyed at the annual Don & Doñas celebration! It's always special to hear the stories of those being recognized and how they have made a difference to our community. If you'd like to read about them, the event booklet has been uploaded to our website - pvhsonline.org - as well as those from previous years.

People are surprised to hear that the work of the museum continues even while we are closed for the expansion. The Accessions team meets weekly to document incoming historical documents and artifacts. There are speakers going to various schools and clubs sharing our fascinating history. Research is being done to fulfill community requests. Oral histories are being collected. The botanical garden is being maintained and new outdoor displays have been built. We can't wait to share this all with you! And a special thank you to those who have bought a brick or made a donation for our expansion.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Ann Jewell". The signature is fluid and cursive.

2025 Dons and Doñas Honorees Brief Biographies

Dick Bellman: Rio Mesa High school students from the 70s and later remember beloved teacher and coach, Dick Bellman. Whether through football or other student activities and the classroom, he was the “go to” guy. Check out his post-retirement involvement in the booklet.

Kim Dellape: Another teacher that made an impact on middle and high school students, Kim continues to serve through the Amber's Light Lions Club activities, Rio Mesa LEO advisor, and for Food Share.

Sheryl Gonzalez: As a teacher from kindergarten to 8th grade, an administrator, the Peace Corp, and now guiding students through the Camarillo Ranch House, she has made a difference in children's lives for decades.

“Buddy” Kelley; He bleeds soccer! Camarillo boys and girls have benefitted not only from his many levels of coaching, but from his influence on the PVR&P District for almost twenty years. Still a practicing lawyer, he finds time for mentoring youth.

Larry Kennedy: His emphasis has been on the post high school age students. Through his tenure on the Community College District, he has been instrumental in helping Veterans in their career pursuits. He also plays a lot of tennis!

Darrin Parrent: Though not a teacher himself, he has recognized the influence that teachers have on our society. He co-founded the Ventura County Educators' Hall of Fame, which publicly honors outstanding former teachers.

Rick Peña: A local man with traditions of giving back to the community, he most recently founded the Miracle League of the 805. The ADA-accessible field at Freedom Park provides an opportunity for those children to participate in sports. He is an active real estate broker encouraging people to settle in our wonderful community.

(Continued on Page 3)

(Continued from Page 2)

2025 Dons and Doñas Honorees Brief Biographies

Mike Ritchie: His incredible involvement with Franklin Graham's international Operation Christmas Child for over ten years makes use of his personality and organizational skills. His work with Many Meals, Food Share and mentoring youth athletes rounds out his life.

Robert Taylor: Another coach of youth sports, Bob also is very active in the Pleasant Valley Lions. His consulting career was "anchored" with multiple patents and designs with the Navy and other programs regarding keeping the ships where they belonged. Read his bio to understand!

Stephanie Zierhut: It is hard to classify her volunteer involvement in one area. She has been on many boards and directorships from schools, theatre, No Room at the Inn, and numerous community awards.

Save the date: **September 12, 2026** for next Don & Doña Award BBQ

Scenes of the 2025 Dons and Doñas Honoree BBQ Event



Expansion Project Update

If you follow the photos and updates on our building project, now it looks very different from the street. Slow down as you drive by on Las Posas to look at the progress.

We are looking to have the interior drywall done in the next month. The rough electrical and plumbing are now in. *The City and Stone Warehouse* donated porcelain tiles to do the floors and walls of both of our bathrooms. We are very grateful for their generous gift.

Sherwin-Williams has donated the paint for the interior of the building. The interior will not be an all white-walled museum, but will have cool blues and green for the backdrop of our maps, pictures, telephones, Fulkerson Library and other displays.

It seems like a long journey to this point, but we still have a lot of finishing to do: bathroom fixtures, lights, and wiring the building for Wi-Fi, computers, and all the necessary technology to help us reflect the 19th and 20th centuries today.

We truly appreciate your help. Any memorial bricks or donations go to the building fund....

PLEASE HELP AS YOU CAN.

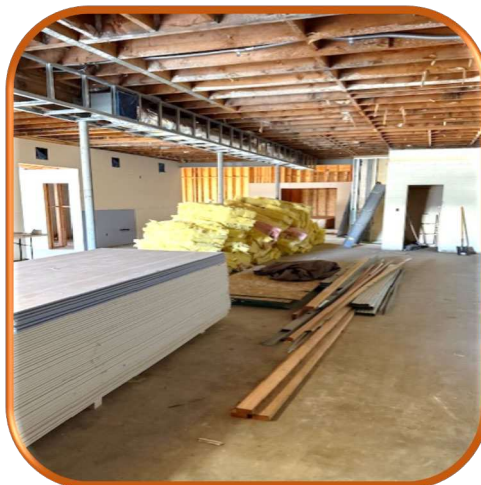
Progress Continues on the Museum Building



A view from inside the original building looking southeast into the new expansion building. Drywall has been delivered and will be installed next month after the electrical work for lighting, outlets and Wi-Fi is complete.



A view from inside the original building looking south into the Fulkerson Research Library. After the library is again filled with books, documents and maps of local history and interest, it will contain a rare historical archive of our Pleasant Valley.



Views looking south from inside the original building, near the front main entrance. Drywall, in the foreground, is stacked up waiting to be installed. The new expansion building, and the Fulkerson Research Library, is in far background. The Accessions Room and two Restrooms are on the far left. The museum volunteers will be painting the museum interior.





← ↑ The Museum's front exterior and entrance are getting detailed. The finished front will be noticed when driving by on Las Posas Road, and adds to the museum's ambiance when approaching the museum from the parking lot.



← ↑ The Museum's Botanical Garden Gazebo is doing its share storing and protecting museum contents until the museum is again ready to be occupied



← Diane Ellias, who previously depicted our garden plants with the dry creek bed vanishing into the eastern hills, has begun adding murals to the Museum's Botanical Garden Farm Display Building. Diane's work has just started and her initial progress already looks amazing. We are very excited to witness her results as the project completes. It will be another beautiful addition to the garden's atmosphere.

Diane's website is at dianeelliasart.com and it is worth visiting.



Echo Sound Bites

- In 1932: Somis ladies have been meeting informally as a social club since before 1910, and have officially incorporated as the *Somis Thursday Club* in 1932. Ida Goodyear was first President. The club purchased the Somis School building in 1924 extensively renovating it for the club's use by November, 1940.
- In 1945, October 26: The *Pleasant Valley Lions Club* received its charter at Somis Thursday Club hall. William Maxwell was first President.
- In 1947, June 22: The "Sixth Annual Amateur Horse Show," sponsored by *American Legion Post 741*, was held at the "Ball Park." Jean Daily was the "Queen of the Show." Post 741 was chartered in 1946.
- In 1955, October 24: Charter for *Rotary Club of Camarillo #659* granted by Rotary International. Guy Craig was elected President.
- 1966: *Camarillo Beautiful* started. Early active persons were Tweedy Rouse, Helen Ahern, Violet Palmer and Betty Rutherford. Credited with promoting and providing thousands of trees, bushes and flowers on divider strips, sidewalks and parks throughout Camarillo. Disbanded c.1980.
- 1966, September: The *Kiwanis Club of Camarillo* granted International charter. The first President was John Rush.
- 1970, May 29: The Board of Directors of the PVR&P agreed to sell an acre of land on corner of Temple and Ponderosa to the *Camarillo Boys Club* for their new facility, replacing the former house on Barry Street where the club started in 1967. In 1975 they moved to the new location, and in 1981 became *Boys & Girls Club of Camarillo*. Shigeru "Shig" Yabu was the founding director.
- 1971: *Meadowlark Service League* started.
- 1977: *Pleasant Valley Garden Club* formed. Edra Duncan was first leader.
- 1984, June 6: *Camarillo Optimist International* chartered. Disbanded in 2021.
- 1985, January 19: *Breakfast [Sunrise] Rotary Club of Camarillo #22172* chartered.
- 1987, December 16: County Supervisor, Maggie Ericson, and Shirley Carpenter, PVSD Superintendent, became the first women members of the Rotary Club #659.
- 2011, February: *Camarillo Amber's Light Lions Club* was chartered. It was named for a severely handicapped, but joyful and spirited little girl in Australia. Debbie Brown was first President.

Donations Received June 15th through September 14th

MEMORIALS

Donation in memory of 2013 "Doña" Linda Abbott from: Ray Abbott

Donations from Fred Phipps & Cathy Trainer in memory of:

Barbara Burke, Betty Gatlin, 2015 "Don" Hilary Ling, Dr. Linda Ramelli, Lee Silver, Judy Wurtz

Donations from Greg & Karin Farrin in memory of:

2008 "Don" Bill Little, Donna Lovato

Donation in memory of 2015 "Don" Hilary Ling from: Stella Ling

TRIBUTES and HONORS

Tributes from Fred Phipps & Cathy Trainer in honor of:

62nd Anniversary of Chuck & Jan Barkee, 56th Anniversary of Ron & Janet Everett,

65th Anniversary of Paul & Helen Faul, 92nd birthday of 2003 "Doña" Donna Lutz

Honoring 2025 "Don" Dick Bellman from: Jonathan Light

Honoring 2025 "Doña" Kim Dallape from: Mary Catherine Henggeler

Honoring "Doña" 2022 Mary Ann Novak becoming PVHM President from: Marian Brown

BUILDING and other DONATIONS

Karen Allen

Dave & Linda Bratz

Curran Cummings

Mary Goldberg

David Hibbits

Beth Miller

Nancy Phillips

Greg Rath

Amber's Light Lion Club

Caitlin Brown

Kim Dallape

John Greenwood

Paul & Winifred Jordan

Vannesa Otto

Fred Phipps

Brenda Schearer

Kris Teller

Ventura County Credit Union

Beardsley & Son, Inc.

Camarillo Rotary Foundation

Rita Faulders

Rod & Doris Harvey

Corrine Merritt

Beverly Pearson

Pleasant Valley Garden Club

Donna Searcy

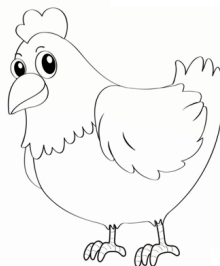
Let's Pick-up:

***PVHM&G
BBQ***

October 15th, 2025

Support the Pleasant Valley Historical Museum & Garden

Chicken BBQ Pick-Up



Still \$15

Grilled Chicken Breast
w/ Ginger Peach Glaze
German Cole Slaw
[no mayonnaise]
Vegetarian Beans
Garlic Bread
Ginger Cookies

NEXT:

October 15th [Wednesday]

5 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.

at

Camarillo Christian Church

1777 Arneill Road

[corner of Las Posas]

MUST RESERVE by the previous Saturday [10-11-25]

Call 805-482-3660, or email: pvhmag@gmail.com

Pay at pick-up with cash, check payable to PVHS; or PayPal [including CC] at [PVHsonline.org](https://www.pvhsonline.org)

Pleasant Valley Avocados and Citrus

Over the years, many skilled farmers and nurserymen have lovingly tended to, cross-bred, and mix-bred our avocado and lemon crops so they've evolved into the wonderfully bountiful local treasures we see all around us. Formal classroom teachers also play a critical role. Craig Mason learned the love of the land from his father, Jesse Mason, whose avocado orchard planted in the 1940s is still flourishing on the corner of Las Posas and Loma Drive. "He was always diligent. He loved the trees and the land," said Craig. "My dad would walk around the trees and talk to them and listen and care for them."

In high school, Craig was trained by James McElmurray, who in 1956 became the first vocational agricultural teacher at Adolfo Camarillo High School. McElmurray, whom Craig described as "very dedicated," was also from a farming family. Many of Craig's fellow AG students were from agriculture families. They met in a small barn and the corrals. Today the program continues with teacher Breanna Cole.

In 1959, Craig was in the first graduating class at Camarillo High School. He then left for California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, which offered a program specializing in avocado and citrus. His first job was with Berylwood Investment Company, a family business that was established by Thomas Bard in 1865. His son, Richard Bard, carried on the family business. Berylwood had extensive interests in ranching, farming, water, and oil. Craig explained that oil exploration played a key role in financing the other areas of operation.

The Berylwood Investment Company office was located in Somis. Correspondence was sent to P.O. Box 1 in Somis. The operation buildings still exist today where Craig received his assignments. The township of Somis was established in 1892 by Thomas Bard and a business associate. In 1969 Kaiser Aetna purchased the Bard family holdings. "There was a lot of sadness among the employees," said Craig.

"Richard Bard was beloved and truly respected" by his employees, said Craig. He understood that "the workers made Berylwood successful. The family was delightful." Bard also announced a retirement program for all the employees. "That was rare in those days," said Craig. He still receives a retirement check.

After the Kaiser Aetna grand development plans of Somis were scaled down, Craig took care of the avocado and citrus orchards in the Groves area of Somis. Today, life among the trees has come full circle, as Craig continues to carefully tend a variety of trees at his home in Camarillo Heights. Leading his list of trees are avocados and citrus.

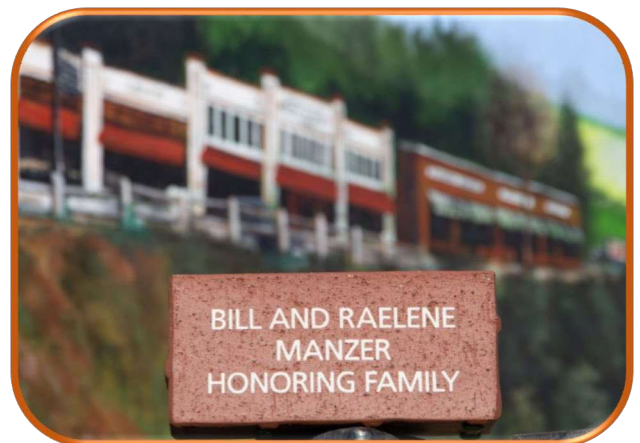
Museum Expansion Fundraising: Sponsoring a Personalized Brick

The Personalized Brick Fundraising Campaign is doing its part in the Museum Expansion Fundraising program. Since the Personalized Brick Campaign launch in July of 2021, and running through present, a total of 361 Bricks have already been ordered. The popularity of the Personalized Bricks has continued to escalate after the Expansion Building Groundbreaking Event in 2022, and popularity will continue through the construction project. Sponsoring a Personalized Brick today will ensure delivery with the first batch of bricks, and secure an early prime location for the displaying of your brick.

Sponsoring a personalized 4" x 8" brick, which will be located and displayed at the PVHM&G Museum outdoor location, is more than a \$200 donation to the PVHS Museum Expansion fund:

- 1) A brick can be personalized with your name, and/or your family's name, allowing you to be part of the PVHS Museum history.
- 2) Or, a brick can be personalized to honor anyone, or anything, you want to be remembered.

The form to reserve and sponsor a personalized brick is displayed on the following page:



PLEASANT VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Museum Expansion Project

Personalized
Brick
Display
Patio



Buy your brick
with a click...



“Be a Part of History”

Reserve a place in PVHS Museum history by sponsoring a personalized brick to be installed on site as part of the project. You may sponsor a brick in your name or to honor anyone or anything you want to be remembered.

PLEASE PRINT, maximum 16 spaces per line, including blank spaces and punctuation. All inscriptions will be centered and capitalized. Filler in the engraved area will provide a permanent contrast and protect the quality of the engraving.

Enclosed is my \$200.00 contribution for a 4” x 8” paver with up to three lines of text.

Make checks payable to *Pleasant Valley Historical Society*; or to use PayPal (PayPal allows payment with a Credit Card), please visit our website at *pvhsonline.org* and use the PERSONALIZED BRICK button at the top of the webpage.

Your Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Please mail this completed form to:

P.V.H.S.

PO Box 570, Camarillo, CA 93011-0570

October 2025

The mission of the Pleasant Valley Historical Museum & Garden is to acquire, identify, restore and preserve artifacts, documents and photographs related to the Pleasant Valley community; to make the museum and garden a focal point for the dissemination of local history and education of the general public, and to recognize local residents who have provided outstanding service to the Pleasant Valley community.



PLEASANT VALLEY HISTORICAL MUSEUM & GARDEN

Established 1964

Location: 720 Las Posas Road, Camarillo
(Presently closed for Construction)

Mailing Address: PVHS, PO Box 570,
Camarillo, CA 93011-0570

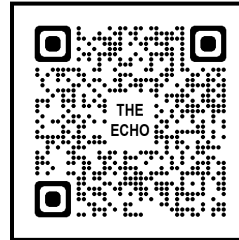
Telephone: (805) 482-3660

Email: pvhmag@gmail.com

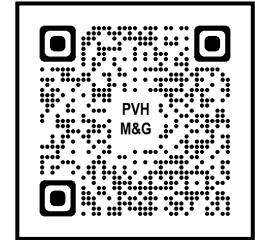
Website: pvhsonline.org

Newsletter Editor: Manny Hatz

PVHM&G – The Echo



PVHM&G – Home Page



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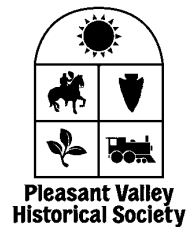
<https://www.instagram.com/pvhsmuseum>



Follow us on YouTube:

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