



PLEASANT VALLEY
HISTORICAL MUSEUM & GARDEN
Established 1964

The *Echo*

Presenting the 2026 Dons and Doñas Recipients



Top Row: Bill Thomas, Robert Burrow, William Schulze, Barton Stern
Bottom Row: Kimberly Stephenson, Linda Rhymes, Daniel Rhymes, Madeline Lee,
Nancy Lee Phillips, Kristie Akl

2026 Dons and Doñas Recipients Biographies

- **Abridged Version Biographies** are shown on Pages 3 thru 4 of *The Echo*.
- **Full Version Biographies** are presented in the *2026 Dons and Doñas Event Booklet*.
- The **2026 Dons and Doñas Event Booklet** is available on the *PVHS Website*: pvhsonline.org

President's Message

The recent Don and Doña's celebration was a lot of fun. Thank you to those who came and, if you were unable to make it, hopefully you will next year. We honored ten individuals with varied backgrounds, including a veterans' and children's advocate, the band manager of the Camarillo community band, an educator and activist, an aviation leader, and those were just four of the ten honorees. You can read about each of them as a copy of the program is online at pvhsonline.org. It is wonderful to read their stories and see how much they have given to make Camarillo the community that we love.

Work on the Museum expansion is continuing and soon you will see a new parking lot. The project has taken more time than originally expected with prices of everything going up and on our dependency of donations.

You know how magical books are - they open our horizons, teach us, and entertain us. It is the same when you visit a museum, but you have heightened awareness as you are seeing history in front of you and often can touch it. We can't wait for this to be a reality for our community when our Museum expansion is complete and we are reopened.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Ann Frank".

Save the day: The next PVHM&G Dons and Doñas BBQ Event is September 18th, 2027

Large Donation from Camarillo Fiesta Committee

After serving the Community for the past 60 plus years, the *Camarillo Fiesta Committee* has ended its sponsorship of the yearly Fiesta and other activities. At the last meeting of the board, it voted to disperse the last of its funds to the *Pleasant Valley Museum and Garden*, and to *kidSTREAM*. Each organization received \$25,000.

The mission statement of the Fiesta Committee stated, "to give back to the community." Every year they would earn \$15,000 to \$20,000 to support youth and community programs. During Covid, they sponsored music programs at Rancho Campana High School.

The late Mike Morgan was a founding member of the Fiesta Committee and had long wanted the funds left in the organization to go to the *Pleasant Valley Museum and Garden*. The committee also voted to support the building efforts of *kidSTREAM*.



Mike Morgan

2026 Dons and Doñas Honorees Brief Biographies

Kristie Akl: As one of the inspired founding members of kidSTREAM, Kristie worked for years to see its opening in 2026. She also worked children's activities with the Camarillo Library, Camarillo Ranch, Creative Arts workshop and other organizations. She was named "Woman of the Year" by West Ventura County Business Alliance in 2023. All of her activities are tied to giving children of Pleasant Valley an opportunity for growth in their learning.

Bob Burrow: Almost a Camarillo native, Bob worked for the City of Camarillo for years and retired as the Community Development Director. Using his knowledge gained from working at City government, he has shared valuable experience with PVHM for our building project, besides serving as President and other offices in PVHM. He has been the chair of the Don & Doña Selection Committee for years, and finally reluctantly, agreed to receive this honor himself.

Madeline Lee: Madeline's devotion to the veterans and their families is evidenced by her service with American Legion Auxiliary. She is still active in that and also in her church. She has held several positions both locally, and statewide as the CA Auxiliary President. With a master's degree in social work, she spent 25 years with the VTA County social agency, especially with children with special needs and adoptions.

Nancy Lee Phillips: Nancy has been involved in Community service as a board member of many PTAs, CA School Board Administration, YMCA and other organizations. Before retiring, Nancy worked in administrative offices for many years at PV School District, and the County Superintendent offices of both Kathy Long and Kelly Long. As a Sunrise Rotary member, and Director of the Gold Coast Veterans Foundation, she demonstrates commitment to the community.

Daniel Rhymes: We call him the Music Man. His blood is peppered with little black notes. The Camarillo Community Band has been under his leadership for more than twenty years, with personal involvement for over forty years. But his incredible devotion to the youth is evidenced by his opportunity to provide music education to local school children after the schools cut back on offering music curriculum to the grades. He also works with middle and high school students. Trinity Presbyterian Church also benefits from his musical talents.

Linda Rhymes: As a partner to Dan, she has had similar involvement in youth music in Camarillo. Her brass instrument talents are given in County ensembles as well as the Camarillo Community Band. She was an organizing member of SOKM — "Save Our Kids Music" in 1991, and in 1982 the Fine Arts for Youth program. Linda started or was involved in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Brownies and Girl Scouts both while their kids were in the program, and after they aged out. The adult choir and music programs at Trinity Presbyterian Church are led by her.

Bill Schulze: We say that he has the "heart of a lion" because he has been so devoted to the Lions Club of Camarillo-Somis for over 20 years. He works and/or heads up projects ever since his retirement in 2001. He was an immigrant as a teenager and fought to learn the language and skills—honed by joining the Marine Corps. Besides the LIONS, he constantly demonstrates a "can do" attitude.

Kimberly Stephenson: Besides her 22-year career in education, including Principal at A. Camarillo H.S., Kim is a board member of the Social Justice Fund for VTA County, member of AAUW, PV Lions, League of Women Voters, and others. She was recognized as "Woman of the Year" from State Senate District 19, and Women's Leadership Award from CSU-CI Multicultural programs. Kim represented Ventura County at the United Nations.

(Continued on Page 4)

2026 Dons and Doñas Honorees Brief Biographies

Bart Stern: A Camarillo native, Bart is President of the family company, Ventura Investment Company. Bart has served on numerous boards, including our prestigious PVHM&G! He has served on boards of directors of Boys & Girls Club, Casa Pacifica, Habitat for Humanity, Camarillo Health Care District, VTA County Property Appeals Board. He knows Camarillo!

Bill Thomas: Look to the sky! If he isn't there, he would want to be. US Navy training led to an impressive career in aviation at Pt. Mugu and Northrup Grumman. In Camarillo, he was a leader in Boy Scout troops, baseball and soccer teams, and Trinity Presbyterian and First Lutheran Churches. He serves as the "Air Boss" of the large "Wings Over Camarillo" airshow, board of directors for Cancer Support. And he supports local youth interested in experimental aircraft by giving them their first flight. He founded, and is President, of the A-7 Corsair 2 Association honoring Navy and Air Force pilots who flew the aircraft.

The Full Version Biographies are presented in the *2026 Dons and Doñas Event Booklet*, and the *2026 Dons and Doñas Event Booklet* is available on the *PVHS Website*: pvhsonline.org.

Click/Tap the menu's 'Dons and Doñas' option at the top of the website page.

The "Progress" of the Expansion Project

From the street, it looks the same as last month, but like most things, it is the underlying things that we cannot see that matter. The City has given us \$250,000 to complete the parking lot. We have been waiting on one last bid to move forward, as well as coordinating the construction of the City's pumping station in the NE corner of the parking lot. If we dig before the bid completion, it could rain, and we stop, and we lose money and wait again. Thus, we are ready to go once we have that contract.

We have come so far, it is almost scary that we could see the end of the tunnel! As that is possible, our garden, accessions and display team are working on the inside development of the museum. We are identifying display possibilities and working on some restoration of cabinets that will be used in the museum. Six years in storage in the Gazebo have made some evaluation necessary. There is a team of ladies that meet every week in the garden restoring and creating the displays for the outbuildings. They have done a great job. Every item in the buildings needed to be cleaned, replaced in the display and labeled with its descriptive information. We are preparing to move the items at the Todd's house to the museum. When we can move, we will be ready. Thank you for your faithfulness, support and patience.

Come and enjoy a meal at Ottavio's

PVHM&G Invites you to

1620 Ventura Blvd. Camarillo 805.482.3810
OTTAVIO.COM
Tuesday, October 13th
Dine - In Lunch Buffet Hours: 11am-2pm
Dine-In or Take-Out Deli Lunch Hours: 11am-2pm
Dine-In or Take-Out Dinner Hours: 3:30pm-8pm
<i>Present this coupon to your server</i>

On October 13th, present this coupon to your server, and a portion of the profits will go to the PVHM&G Expansion Fund. "Delicious" for both you and the Museum.

MEMORIALS

Donation in memory of 2007 "Don" David & Linda Bratz from:
**Linda Ayerza, Holly and Steve Kunkle, Betty McDonald, Beth Miller,
Gerald & Joan Olsen, Jim & Linda Reynolds, Debra Thiessen, Jeff and Mary Wolfrey**

Donation in memory of 2007 "Don" David Bratz from:
Max Copenhagen, Corrine Merritt, Gerald & Joan Olsen, Gregory Smith

Donation in memory of 2007 "Don" Sol Chooljian from:
Bob & Olivia Fulkerson, Mary Goldberg

Donation in memory of Jean Hoover from: **Bill & Joy Todd**

Donation in memory of 2015 "Don" Hillary Ling from: **Stella Ling**

Donations from Mary Jo McPherson in memory of:
**Kathleen Miller, 1994 "Doña" Tina Sanchez, 2021 "Doña" Helen Shields,
Marian Trachsel, Dolores Withers**

Donations from Fred Phipps & Cathy Trainer in memory of:
Jessica Barkee, 2007 "Don" Sol Chooljian, Mrs. Cay Friederich, Donna Reardon

TRIBUTES and HONORS

Honors to 2002 "Doña" Helen Andrews from: **Linda Ayerza**

Honors to 2026 "Doña" Nancy Lee Phillips from: **Susan Peterson**

Honors to 2026 "Don" Bill Schulze from: **Mary Catherine Henggeler**

Honors to 2026 "Don" Bart Stern from: **James Ludwig, Laura McAvoy**

Cheers to 2026 "Don" Bart Stern & 2026 Doña Kristie Akl from: **Rod Gilbert**

Tributes from Fred Phipps & Cathy Trainer in honors to:
**Ron & Janet Everett's 57th Anniversary,
2006 "Don" Frank and 2014 "Doña" Pat Roth's 67th Anniversary,
Steve and Carol Young's 50th Anniversary**

BUILDING and other DONATIONS

Linda Ayerza	Gail Brockett	Carol Bly	Marian Brown
Camarillo Amber's Light Lions Club		Camarillo Rotary Foundation, Inc.	
Fred Clayton	Bob and Kathy Fierro	E.J. Harrison & Sons	Candis Enriquez
Robert Garcia	Art Goulet	George Graham	W.R. Hillbrandt
Holly & Lance Johnson	Margaret Keyes	Jonathan Light	Simhan Mandyam
Diane Mendoza	Mary Ann Novak	Robert Olszewski	Vannesa Otto
Fred Phipps & Cathy Trainer		Pleasant Valley Garden Club	
Randall Richardson	Richard Rush	Debra Shade	Philip Smith
Ruff Smith	Chuck & Jo Spence	Bart Stern	Anonymous

2026

Dons and Doñas

Event



Robert Burrow



Nancy Lee Phillips



Bart Stern



Dan Rhymes

Kristie Akl

Kimberly Stephenson



Photos by Joan Rust



Bill & Pat Thomas



Bill Thomas' friends

Madeline
& John Lee



Kathy Long ° Gloria Miele ° Michelle Ascencion



Danielle Cortes ° Beckie Cramer ° Brenda Schearer



Phil McGrath ° Kathy Long
Loretta Scott



Kelly Long ° David Tennesen ° Bob Rust



Suzanne Schulze &
Kimberly Stephenson



Greg Farrin & Dave Hibbits



Dan & Linda Rhymes

Why “PLEASANT VALLEY” ?

The name Pleasant Valley has been used longer than any other in the area. Pleasant Valley located in Ventura County, encompassing modern day Camarillo, Somis, and the Oxnard Plain was named in the 1860s by the early pioneers settling in this area. It earned its descriptive name due to its flat, fertile and visually attractive landscape surrounded by rugged hills as viewed from the Conejo Grade. The name has deep roots in the area. Originally, the Heights of Camarillo were known as Pleasant Valley. It had one of the first “developments” for housing.

The land grants were from the late 1700s and early 1800s. Most of the original grantees sold them off. Pleasant Valley contained Rancho Las Posas; Rancho Guadalupe (by Point Mugu and CSU-CI, the Broome Ranch); Rancho Santa Clara del Norte (starts at Central Ave.); Rancho Calleguas; Rancho El Rio de Santa Clara; Rancho Santa Clara la Colonia (Ventura Blvd. West in Camarillo). There was one spot of land that was Ex-Mission owned by John Cawelti. “The Gore” was homesteaded in 1874 by 26 individuals.

On November 10, 1868, Mr. Mahan obtained a permit to create Pleasant Valley School District. It is the oldest continually operated school district in Ventura County. Although Santa Clara School District got its permit on August 13, 1868, it was not operational until 1873.

- 1850 California becomes a State
- 1864 Adolfo Camarillo was born (his father, Juan Sr., purchased Rancho Calleguas land grant from Ruiz). When Juan Sr. died, he left the grant to his 2 boys, Adolfo, 16, and Juan E., 14, born in 1867. They divided the grant in half with Adolfo taking the half closer to the ocean. Juan had the area where St. John’s Seminary is presently.
- Pleasant Valley Baptist Church was chartered in 1869
- Pleasant Valley Road is found on old maps
- Pleasant Valley Cemetery established 1871 (became Dizdar Park)
- Ventura became a county, separating from Santa Barbara County in 1873
- Pleasant Valley Mutual Water District was founded in 1924

“Don’t Wait any Longer: First Order Going in Soon!”

Since the launch in July of 2021, and through present, close to 405 – 4” x 8” bricks have already been ordered. As soon as the parking lot is prepared, we hope to install the first batch of Personalized Bricks. That means that we will soon be sending off the order to the company to etch in each brick.

Read the submission form on the following page for important details. A personalized brick can honor or remember any name, family, church, business, or event that you want to be immortalized as long as PVHM&G exists!

PLEASANT VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Museum Expansion Project

Personalized
Brick
Display
Patio



Buy your brick
with a click...



SCAN ME

"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 2026

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

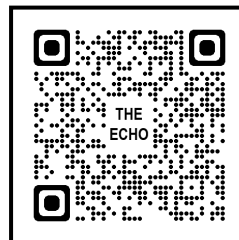
Telephone: (805) 482-3660

Email: pvhmag@gmail.com

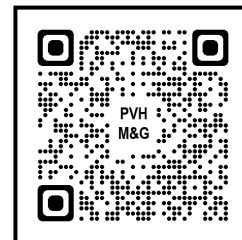
Website: pvhsonline.org

Newsletter Editor: Manny Hatz

PVHM&G – The Echo



PVHM&G – Home Page



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