

# Do You Remember?



By Anne Homan

## Valentines through the Years

Navy pilot Gene Morgan was transferred to the Livermore Naval Air Station, now the site of Lawrence Livermore National Lab, after VJ Day in September 1945. He knew little about the area, but he heard that there were horse races in nearby Pleasanton. When they had some time off, he and a friend decided to "thumb it to Pleasanton." They got a ride, but soon learned that the driver was headed to San Jose, not Pleasanton. "This became the luckiest day of my life! We had no sooner jumped out of his car when here came two beautiful ladies in a brand new Buick." They drove the sailors to the race track. One of the ladies was Isabel Bonne. Gene and Isabel were married on December 9, 1945 in the Livermore Naval Air Station chapel. They traveled to the Hilton at Long Beach for their honeymoon. Only military personnel could book a hotel room in those days. The morning after their wedding night, Gene went out to find a newspaper; Isabel was still in bed. He came back to find a strange man in the hotel room. Gene said, "Who in the hell are you?" He replied, "I am the house detective; show me your marriage license or I will throw you out." Fortunately, Gene did have the license, and they were allowed to stay the maximum five days.

Hiroko Kretz came to Livermore in 1991 from the Los Angeles area after the death of her husband. Her daughter was living here then but soon moved to Texas. Hiroko decided to stay in Livermore, but she was lonely. She and a friend signed up for a cruise. One evening on the ship, a tall English widower named John Waite invited Hiroko to dance. "He was not a very good dancer," Hiroko said. "He just sort of walked around the dance floor." He asked her to dance every evening. Near the end of the cruise, he suggested that if she ever came to London, she should let him know and he would show her around. She went for a week and had a marvelous time. In turn, she invited him to Livermore. Eventually, John moved here, and they were married 10 years ago at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church. They have attended ballroom dancing classes together, and John's style has definitely improved, according to Hiroko.

The principal at Granada High, Chris Van Schaack, worked as a food server at an El Torito restaurant while attending graduate school at Sacramento State in 1986. One of his duties was to train and orient the new hires. One of these was a very shy, quiet young woman named Erin Richardson, who was also a student at Sac State. As they worked together, he was impressed by Erin's hard work and honesty—they developed a mutual respect for each other, which segued into love. Chris doesn't believe in a sudden blooming of love at a glance across a crowded room. "Great relationships," Chris said, "are born out of respect. This takes time to develop."

Livermore High's principal, Darrel Avila, also met his wife in college. Pat Swartz and he were both attending St. Mary's College. They were physical education majors and had gone to the gym to watch an intramural game. They were introduced to each other by a mutual friend. Darrel is convinced that the important ingredient in their attraction for each other is their common interests in athletics. After their marriage and graduation from St. Mary's in 1978 and 1980, Livermore High students have enjoyed the Avilas' leadership and guidance in many athletic fields.

Henry Rosa was a student of mine at Livermore High in an English class. When I asked Henry, now the bookkeeper at Lucky's on North Livermore Avenue, about meeting his wife, he told me with a straight face, "It was an arranged marriage." His mother, Ana Rosa, worked as the cake decorator for Pam Blank, the owner of the Baskin-Robbins store that was near the Vine Theater. One day in 1990 Laurie Blank was complaining to her mother that she did not have a date for her senior prom at Amador High. When Henry dropped by the store later, Mrs. Blank suggested that he ask Laurie out. Their first date was at Gay Nineties Pizza, where Laurie forgot Henry's name when she had to introduce him to a friend. Also, to make the night more memorable, his car battery died. They did attend her senior ball, and they have been married for 16 years this coming May.

Carole Cardoza and Mike Murray are members of longtime Livermore ranching families. They knew each other at Livermore High, but never dated. After graduation in 1959, Mike served in the U.S. Army for three years, some of the time in Germany when the Berlin Wall was being built. Carole and Mike "remet" in Granada Bowl, the popular hang-out for young people in the 1960s—not to bowl, but to have a few drinks, to party a little after work. It was "classier" than going to a downtown bar, and, if they asked, you could tell your parents you were at the bowling alley. Mike asked Carole for a date there. From then on, they dated often and usually were a threesome with Norman Marciel. They tired of that, so they introduced Norman to Lillian Fullenwider; Norman and Lillian got married before Carole and Mike. The Murrays will celebrate their 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary in June, the Marciels #45 in September.

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