

## The Lees Travel to Thailand and Japan for Learning and Some Fun

By Rob Lee

My wife, Janice, and I traveled to Thailand and Japan for several weeks in January. and the two portions of the trip were very different. The two parts of the trip were very different—one was for learning and the other part was for fun.

The time in Thailand was a guided “learning trip” sponsored by The Freedom Story (TFS), which works to prevent child trafficking and exploitation. We have sponsored TFS for years, and knew generally what their mission was, but we didn’t know how they worked to reach that goal.

We started with a small group of 11. We met in Bangkok and took a “typical tourist” canal tour in a very loud, fast, and low-to-the-water “long-tail” boat. The next day we traveled south to experience firsthand the highs and lows of Pattaya, known as one of the sex tourism centers in Asia.

Our minivan drove down Soi 6 street. In shocked silence, we noted that bars lined both sides the entire length of the street, and in front of each bar scantily clad young (some very young) women stood waiting for the evening rush. After that, we experienced “Walking Street” a foot-traffic only street where there were wall-to-wall, LOUD discos, sex-shows, and



the like. After witnessing the severity of the problem, the next few days we met with people whose NGOs (non-governmental Organizations) work to rehabilitate young women who have been manipulated into the sex trade. They help rescue those caught up in “Scam Centers” where they are forced to text and email people around the world to bilk people out of their money.

Some of these organizations provide jobs and life skills, others help gather forensic evidence for the police to assist in criminal prosecutions.

Some also provide shelter for women and children.

After Bangkok and Pattaya, we traveled north to Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai where the Freedom Story is based and even spent time in the golden triangle region of Thailand, Laos and Myanmar (formerly Burma). This very loosely governed area.

We learned that most of the poorest people in Thailand live in the northern area of the country and come from hill tribes, who are not ethnically Thai. These tribal people have very dismal job opportunities, and the rampant poverty restricts educational opportunities.

The primary outreach of the Freedom Story is awarding scholarships to selected students. TFS helps pay for their school uniforms and books. They provide “wrap-around” support such as checking with each student’s teachers and monitoring each student’s progress. According to TFS, 90% of their scholarship students complete high school! TFS also works with families to examine possible income-generating ventures to raise their standard of living.

They visit local schools and inform the students about human rights and how to avoid being enticed into fake “job opportunities” in Bangkok. We

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# The Fire Took Their Homes, but Not Their Spirit

People all over the world heard about the disastrous Eaton fire that destroyed 9,400 homes and businesses in Altadena in January, but they couldn't imagine the scope of the catastrophe. However, those on the ground in Pasadena recognized immediately how bad things were and how much help the fire victims were going to need.

The PCC administration promptly realized the extensive assistance required by the fire victims and took immediate action to provide comprehensive support. The college significantly contributed by offering aid to the entire community impacted by the fire. No specific numbers were available, but PCC students, staff and retirees whose homes burned down or whose lives were upended numbered in the hundreds.

PCC offered free meals and distributed essential supplies from the hundreds of donations that came in. The college also collected money and gave financial support to students and staff impacted by the fire. The Ballmer Group, a philanthropic organization, gave PCC \$1million to help those affected by the fire.

The college also hosted a Disaster Recovery Center, allowing those affected by the fire to connect with the various agencies that could provide help. Community groups gave PCC high marks for significantly impacting the lives of many of the fire victims. Residents of the burned-out area expressed a desire to rebuild in Altadena, posting signs throughout the area. Others encouraged their neighbors not to sell. The photos on this page just give a sampling of the many signs.





# Their Asian Adventure Continues in Japan

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were able to spend some time visiting with a TFS scholarship student at her home. Despite the fact that her family makes very little money (her father was disabled by a stroke, rendering him unable to work and her mother works long hours picking oranges), she was about to graduate from high school.

She had already been accepted by Chiang Rai University and spoke of her desire to become a translator after she graduates from the university. It was so encouraging for us to hear her speak of her plans. It was evident that she was on a path to a better life.

While in Thailand, Janice and I were also able to have fun. We interacted with elephants at a sanctuary operated by hill tribe people, shopped at stores that sold hand-made crafts from hill tribe people, enjoyed eating tasty and inexpensive foods such as (a lot of) mango sticky rice, fresh smoothies, and every noodle and rice dish you can imagine.

We also had time for a few Thai massages, where we paid to have our backs “worked over” by women who must have the strongest fingers and

elbows on the planet. We left Thailand sobered by the scope of the problems of the sex trade industry and international “scam centers” that had spring up in the last few years, but we were also hopeful because TFS and other NGOs are making a difference.

If you’d like more information, go to their website: (<https://thefreedomstory.org/>). Better yet, consider supporting their work and/or join them on a learning trip coming up in November (<https://thefreedomstory.org/travel/>). I HEARTILY recommend a learning trip to you.

We left behind the jam-packed Thailand schedule and enjoyed a quiet, unstructured, “what do you want to do tomorrow or this week in Japan?” We attended a traditional Japanese tea ceremony and a ramen-making class, strolled through a once-a-month swap meet (primarily for locals), and visited the Bamboo Forest, amazing temples and beautiful gardens, and the Kyoto Nintendo store.

I even enjoyed a 10-minute, \$10 haircut at a barbershop we discovered.

We also came across a “stand up” Ramen restaurant which had no chairs, just a standing area where I slurped down a \$2.20 bowl of ramen!

Getting around Japan was much easier than the last time we were in Japan



(1990) due to Google Translate (which instantly translated signs and spoken language) and Google Maps, which provided literally step-by-step directions, including which platform to find specific trains and many times the App informed us when the next train would arrive.

We returned home tired but had experienced more highs and lows in 2.5 weeks than we thought possible!





(From left) Former PCC presidents Dr. James Kossler, Dr. Jack Scott along with current PCC president Dr. Jose Gomez and Hoyt Hilsman, president of the foundation, meet after Scott's presentation.

# Dr. Jack Scott Honored at PCC Foundation's Local Legends Series

By Rob Lee

The PCC Foundation hosted an event at the University Club in Pasadena honoring Dr. Jack Scott, former superintendent/president of Pasadena City College as part of its Hometown Legends Series.

The program was set up in a Q&A format with Dr. Jim Kossler, another former PCC superintendent/ president, questioning his friend and mentor about some of the events in Dr. Scott's recently published memoir, "A Man for All Seasons."

Dr. Scott hails from Sweetwater, Texas, a small town where life was strongly influenced by the (very conservative) Church of Christ, the denomination of Scott's family. He attended the church's college, Abilene Christian, where he met his wife, Lacreta.

At that time, he appeared to be destined for a career as a minister in the Church of Christ in Texas.

However, a series of twists and turns

changed the trajectory of his life.

One of the first turning points came when he accepted an invitation to pastor a Church of Christ congregation in Connecticut, a long way from his Texas roots. The congregation, which was multi-racial with its members coming from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, thrived under his steady and gentle leadership. Another watershed moment occurred when Dr. Scott enrolled in the Yale Divinity School. He shared in his book that the academic and spiritual challenges there caused a change in him.

He said he started divinity school as a disciple of the Church of Christ but graduated as a disciple of Jesus. Rather than take a position as pastor in his denomination, Dr. Scott and Lacreta moved to California where he joined the faculty of Pepperdine College. This shift to academia led to even greater changes.

While teaching at Pepperdine, he earned a Ph.D. in American history

from Claremont Graduate University. Later, when Pepperdine moved most of its students and resources to the Malibu campus, Dr. Scott stayed for a time to guide the downtown campus and subsequently he transitioned from working at church-affiliated schools to teaching at Orange Coast College. He quickly rose to the Dean of Instruction at Orange Coast College, then to President of Cypress College, and finally President of Pasadena City College.

After the tragic death of his son in a gun accident, Dr. Scott left higher education to become a California State Assembly person and then a State Senator. If that weren't enough, after he "termed out" of politics, he joined the California Community College as Chancellor.

Jack and Lucreta Scott's lives were marked by incredible challenges, but together they overcame adversity and managed to improve higher education in Pasadena and throughout the state.



# *Skip Robinson Inducted into the State Community College Athletic Hall of Fame*

Skip Robinson, former athletic director at PCC, was inducted into the California Community College Athletic Association State Hall of Fame in March.

He said, "it has been such an honor to be recognized by the governing body of Community College athletics in the state. To be the 7th person from PCC to receive this prestigious honor is quite a feeling of gratitude. "I am a proud product of Pasadena."

Skip Robinson made a name for himself in Pasadena City College Athletics in 1966, when he earned JC All-American honors as a defensive back, contributing significantly to the Lancers' Western State Conference championship and their appearance in that year's Junior Rose Bowl. Following his impressive collegiate career, he returned to PCC as an assistant football coach, forming part of a coaching staff that led the team to Metropolitan Conference titles in 1972 and 1974, along with national champion accolades in both seasons.

Robinson became PCC's first black head coach of an athletic pro-

gram by taking over the men's track and field team in 1974, leading them to state titles in both 1978 and 1984. In 1995, Robinson made history again as PCC's first African-American athletic director, a position he held for over a decade. Robinson is the first PCC alumnus inducted since former

Lakers star Michael Cooper, was honored in 2010. His induction places him alongside PCC inductees into the state Hall of Fame, including baseball and track legends such as Jackie Robinson, Ray Bartlett, Darrell Evans, Mack Robinson, Jerry Tarkanian, and Michael Cooper.



**Skip's wife Iris and daughters Rachaelle and Raeganng joined him at the Induction ceremony to celebrate the State Hall of Fame honor. Only six other PCC alumni have been named to the State Hall of Fame.**

## *New Members Added to the Retirees Board*



**Cyndi George**

As a native of Pasadena and growing up here, it is almost a given that I would attend PCC as a student. Right out of high school I attended and completed the Cosmetology Program. Years later (1990) I would return to learn the new world of computers.

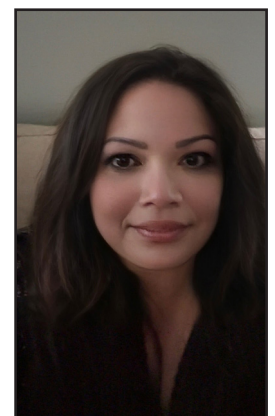
A two-year CIS Certificate Program required I complete an internship. To fulfill this requirement, I worked on campus at the Student Computer Lab. While there, I was recommended as a candidate for a part-time position in the Grants Office. This was how I started in grants, which led to a 30-year career writing, facilitating, and managing grants at PCC. My career at PCC was always interesting as it allowed me to work with faculty and staff from across the campus. Each grant brought new people and programs into my life. I retired two years ago and spend my time at family

gatherings, walking my dog, playing with my cat, gardening, and working on upgrading/restoring two 100+ year-old houses in Pasadena. I look forward to serving the PCC retirees, many of whom I have worked with during my

Hi, my name is Yuri. I worked at PCC for 35 years. Started out at the CEC as an hourly employee. From there I worked in the Life Sciences office for a year and later for a quick month in the English Division prior to landing in Human Resources. I am a mom of two, and this year I am celebrating 25 years of marriage.

I enjoy bingo, dancing the night away, and I love the beach on a nice 84 degree day.

I am excited and looking forward to this new chapter of my life.





# Retirees Association Hosts This Year's Winners at a Scholarship Luncheon

By Alan Lamson

For the first time in years, all 11 of our scholarship recipients attended our May 16 awards luncheon at the Pasadena University Club. Joining them were members of our Retirees Association along with Amy Carnes from the PCC Foundation and Raul Ibanez from the CORE organization at the college.

After lunch, each of the students was introduced by their luncheon companion. The students were then **given the opportunity to speak.**

From their introductions, we heard riveting stories about their difficult lives, especially the five who have been in prison. Struggles with addiction and incarceration were a common condition among the five as was drug addiction among many of the others.

Most disturbing were the stories of three women, who had lost their

children while they were in prison.

There were also stories about the difficulties of balancing school with parenting, surviving abusive relationships, and even struggling with autism. One woman said she was diagnosed with autism in 2017 and that has changed her life. Before then she struggled with school and seldom left her home.

Since then, she has received support that has changed the course of her life. Now she says that "Being able to go to college and succeed in my classes has brought me so much joy." She has earned a 4.0 average in her classes and is working her way through the Honors Program and looking forward to earning her bachelor's degree at either UCLA or Cal State Northridge.

Another student doubted that she could attend college. She was placed in foster care at 9, adopted at 14, and kicked out at 18. She barely passed

junior high and flunked out of high school. But now she carries a high GPA at PCC and feels that because of her experience she can help others to "kick start" their lives. She was so overcome with emotion during her presentation that she could barely finish.

While all have experienced difficulties returning to school many years after high school, all have succeeded despite the many obstacles in their way.

Retiree Jo Ann Lee commented about how the students at her lunch table have now become "advocates for rehab and redemption" and are helping to provide "the support and guidance that brought them to where they are today."

As one of our former presenters commented: "These are true stories of resurrection and redemption in the real world. They reassure me about America's future."

## All Donations Help Deserving Students, Please Give

Each year at this time, the Retirees Association gives scholarships to outstanding students who have returned to school to make better lives for themselves.

Many have been abused, others were homeless, some were on drugs and others were incarcerated. All have changed their lives at PCC. Unfortunately, there are a lot of deserving students that can't be helped because there isn't enough money. Once again, we would like to ask you to donate to the scholarship fund.

Most of our donations come from smaller amounts given by people like you.

With more donations, we can offer more scholarships. Please write a check in any amount to the PCC Foundation and mark it "Retirees Scholarship." If you prefer, call the Foundation at (626)585-7065 and donate by credit card or you can also go to <https://pasadena.edu/foundation/> and donate online. There is a button that says Donate Now.



# Daryl Taylor 2024 Veteran World Champion in 70s Men's Epee

By Daryl Taylor

I began teaching at PCC in the *Business Division*, and at the end of my career I was teaching fencing in the *Kinesiology, Health and Athletics Division*.

*I began fencing in high school at Pennington Prep in New Jersey. I fenced and played football at the University of Pennsylvania from 1971 to 1975.*

*After college*, I took a break from fencing. I didn't start back in competitive fencing until I turned 60 at the urging of my PCC fencing students. I began to train and compete in my age group. I started winning! Below are a few of my competition results:

**2019: Gold - Veteran World Championships (Team)**

**2018: Gold - Veteran World Championships (Team)**

**2017: Silver - USA Fencing National Championships (Veteran 60-69)**

**2016: Gold - December North American Cup (Veteran 60-69)**

**2015: Gold - December North American Cup (Veteran 60-69)**

**2014: 18th - April North American Cup (Veteran 60-69)**

**2013: Silver - March North American Cup (Veteran 60-69)**

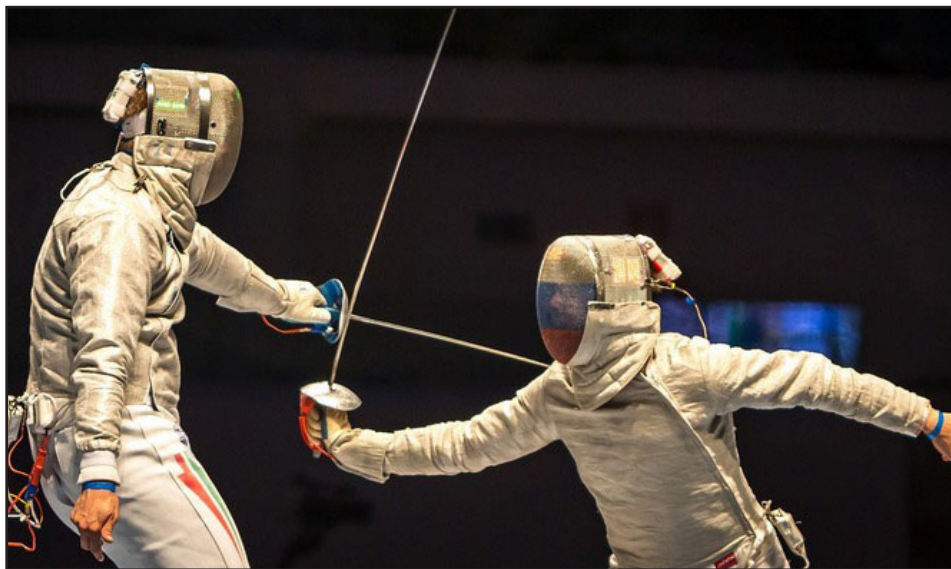
**2012: Gold - December North American Cup (Veteran 60-69)**

In 2022, I took home a bronze medal when the Worlds were held in Croatia. I retired in June 2024. In July of 2024, I won the U.S. National Championship in 70's Men's Epee and again in April of 2025, I won my age group in Los Angeles.

With a strong finish at the National Championships in Milwaukee this summer, I should again be a member of the U.S. Veterans National Fencing Team. As a member of the U.S. National Team for 2025, I can go to Bahrain to defend my 2024 Gold Medal.

In October of 2024, I won the Men's Epee gold medal in the Vet-70 division at the World Veteran Fencing Championships held in Dubai.

So, as you can see, I have been stay-



ing pretty active in my early retirement years.

In Spring 2025, I returned to PCC to teach one course. Yes you guessed it, Fencing. But even with all of my fencing success, I feel blessed and humbled.

The stronger fencers are usually at the international competitions, but

national competitions aren't easy. I train at the Fortune Fencing Club in Monrovia.

*"For Taylor, the journey to a first world title required physical preparation and mental focus — and he looked to the U.S. Olympic fencing team for inspiration."* This excerpt is from a release by USA fencing





# Father Greg Boyle, the Founder of Homeboys Industries, Visits PCC

By Rob Lee

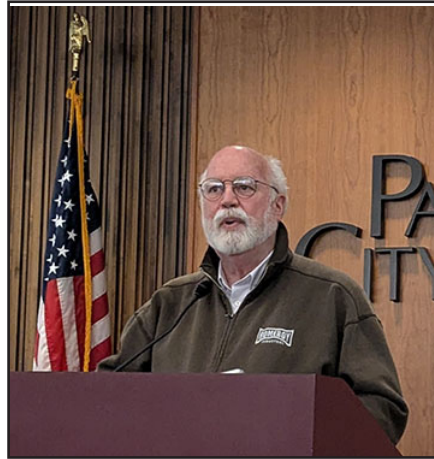
The Retirees Association and CORE cosponsored a program featuring Father Greg Boyle, founder of Homeboy Industries in 1988. Homeboy is the largest gang intervention program in the world.

A group of retirees visited Homeboy industries a few months before on an excursion. They were so impressed that they wanted PCC students and staff to learn more about Homeboys. At the time, Alan Lamson suggested that we invite Father Boyle to share his message of hope. Alan pursued this idea tenaciously, and the next thing we knew, Father Boyle agreed to come to PCC on March 11.

Father Boyle's schedule is extremely tight, so having him agree to speak at the college was a big deal. Father Boyle is known worldwide for his work with gangs. He is also a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Joe Biden. That medal is considered the highest civilian honor in the United States.

Before the event, Alan proposed the idea that we should provide copies of Father Boyle's latest book, "Cherished Belonging: The Healing Power of Love in Divided Times." The PCC Foundation offered to pay for 100 copies: 50 for CORE students and the rest to be given to the first 50 people who attended the event. Vroman's Bookstore in Pasadena agreed to sell the books to the college at a discounted price.

At the event, the first speaker was Ivy Navarete, a Homegirl who made her way to Homeboy industries after



10 years of incarceration. Homeboy gave her a job in the legal department, and she also was able to obtain stable housing. Ivy has now completed two semesters at PCC, and she encouraged all of those present to finish their education, no matter how hard it is.

Then, Father Boyle shared his stories of hope, garnered from over four decades of working with L.A. gang members. He said he started in the poorest parish in city, located between two housing projects which contained rival gangs. He shared how his first effort was to create a school for gang members, followed by helping to find jobs for them.

Because almost no local employer was interesting in hiring gang members, Homeboy ended up opening its own businesses, including maintenance, landscaping and a bakery.

Father Boyle said teaching gang members how to be loving and accepting of others thus created kinship

which has led to the dismantling of old gang rivalries.

He shared how over the years, he has presided over more than 263 funerals, and each one has been heart-wrenching. Even though there have been many struggles over the decades, Homeboy Industries remains the largest and most successful gang intervention program in the world. More than 10,000 people come to Homeboy each year, seeking work and hope.

After Father Boyle spoke, Eduardo Chavez shared his story. Eduardo spoke about how another inmate told him about Homeboy Industries. When he went there, "Father G" immediately offered him a job at the Homeboy Art Academy. Eduardo has two jobs and is proud that he can now pay rent for the first time. His entire family has been affected by his changed life. Father Boyle's message is more relevant today than ever!

A recording of the event is on <https://www.youtube.com/live/aR-9HGChv4Y>





# In Memoriam

## Norman Abbey, A Pioneer in Graphic Arts

Norman Craig Abbey passed away at 88 on Feb. 9, 2025, surrounded by his children and grandchildren. Words can hardly capture the depth of this remarkable man.

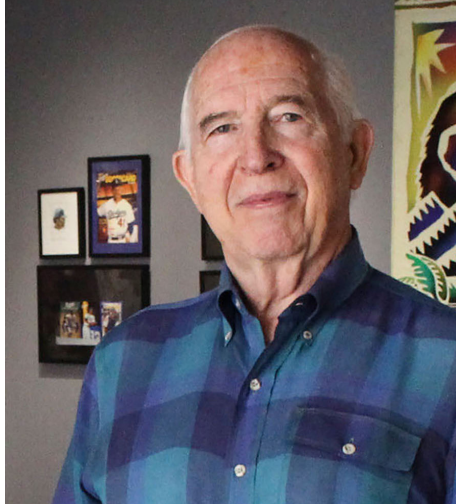
Born Nov. 6, 1936, in Pasadena to Frank and Bernice Abbey, Norman's life was filled with creativity, intellect, and a profound love for his family.

He excelled in drawing, painting, athletics, and academics, always balancing his artistic pursuits with scholarly excellence.

After attending Washington Junior High and Muir High School, he graduated from UCLA with a B.S. in Art, where he was a proud member of Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity.

At UCLA, Norman met the love of his life, Patricia Ann Lambert. After graduation, Norm moved to Karlsruhe, Germany, to teach art at the U.S. Army base. Pat moved over after she graduated. They married in Basel, Switzerland in 1961. They later moved to Paris, where Norman painted cubist cityscapes at La Place du Tertre by night while teaching by day.

Their daughter, Karen, was born in 1962, and shortly after, they returned to the U.S. and settled in Altadena when Norman was offered a teaching position



at Pasadena City College.

Beyond teaching, Norman's career as an artist flourished. His work earned recognition, and a painting of his is in the permanent collection at the Cal State Long Beach Museum.

His creativity extended into the business world too, where he became a pioneer in graphic arts, founding one of the first professional graphic design firms. His clients included The Huntington Hospital, the L.A. Zoo, the Dodgers, MCA, African Travel, and many more.

The Abbey family grew with the births of Craig in 1965 and Michael in 1971, and that's when the family moved to La Canada.

Throughout his life, Norm inspired his family and friends with his boundless passion and curiosity. Above all, he was a devoted father, his love for his family unwavering.

He was the quintessential world traveler, an avid tennis player, and a pioneer in the digital age, creating the first computer lab at PCC and mastering Photoshop before most had even heard of it.

After Norman lost Pat in 2014, he met Sally Feathers. They spent 10 years traveling, appreciating art, laughing, and singing together.

His wisdom, creativity, and adventurous spirit will live on in the hearts of his family and all who were fortunate enough to know him.

His legacy of grace, humor, and kindness is reflected in the countless lives he touched as a beloved friend, teacher, mentor, and artist.

We are forever grateful for the time we shared with Norman, and we take comfort in knowing his spirit will continue to inspire us. If you want to see a sample of his work, just look at the "Staying Connected" logo on the front page. He designed it for the newsletter.

## Susan Miller, a Confidential

By Cindy Smith

I was hired to work in H.R. as a Confidential Tech in 1994. I was introduced to all the Confidential Executive Assistants on campus when I was promoted to that position about a year later. That's when I met Susan Miller. My initial impressions of Susan were that she was warm, welcoming, approachable and friendly, and time proved me right.

The first time I visited her office, I was blown away with the number of tchotchkes that decorated her personal workspace, and it seemed that each item had a story behind it. I learned that Susan hosted an annual Halloween party at her home.

She would either describe or show me new items that she planned to add to her decor for the current year's event.

On the next workday after her party, the event was typically described as "over the top," "beautifully decorated,"

and the "best party of the year," but I suspect that Susan had the most fun of all.

Our relationship as colleagues gave way to us sharing personal bits and pieces of our personal lives. Susan's priorities were always crystal clear to me: her grandchildren.

They faced challenges from multiple sources, but it was Susan's personal mission to make sure that they were protected at all costs.

I admired her tenacity and the sacrifices she made to ensure that they were happy, healthy, educated, safe and loved.

Susan never struck me as being someone who was easily ruffled. In fact, I never saw her get angry or lose her patience with anyone, even though there were times when no one would have blamed her even if she had.

She was a colleague that the Confidentials could count on to put things in perspective when we experienced challenging times on campus.



Whether it was a funny comment or even with a calming, soft-spoken statement that was just good sense "food for thought," Susan knew just what to say.

We are better for having met, having worked together and having known each other. She had a positive spirit whose aura was bright, and heaven is truly a brighter place with her in it.



# Pasadena Village—A Place for Seniors

By Elizabeth Polenzani

Looking back on my life experiences, I realize I need to continuously try new things, especially meeting new people. So, every five years or so, I find myself joining and becoming involved in a new group. In early 2022, this led Tom and I to the Pasadena Village. Our children and their families lived in the area, we were active in different groups, but it was time to reach out to meet new people and discover new activities.

Joining the Pasadena Village was our solution. So now, a few times a week, we are involved with Pasadena Village activities and volunteer projects. Since many of the events are held at members' homes, we are blessed with a house that can accommodate smallish groups..

Let me introduce you to the Pasadena Village (PV)

On any given Friday morning you may encounter a gaggle of active agers walking through your neighborhood. These spirited seniors are on a mission—getting their steps in while exploring different neighborhoods in and around Pasadena. If you are more adventuresome, join Pasadena Village Hikers as they hit the trails of our local mountains.

On the first Tuesday of every month, a group of men meet on the Brookside Restaurant patio for brunch. They enjoy the food, but more than that, they enjoy the camaraderie and conversation. Men's Time is a chance for the men in the group to share what is on their minds. No Topics are off limits.

Whether it is gathering for happy hours, participating in the Great Decisions forum, joining the Ping Pong Pals, or preparing for the artist/gardening group, the PV has something for you.

And Tom recently went on the Village four-day trip to Death Valley. There is something for everyone in the village.

The last Thursday of the month finds the PV Book Club gathering. During the past few

months, the group has been reading about the "troubles" in Northern Ireland with "Say Nothing; and then "Traveling" to Asia with a discussion of life under the North Korean dictatorship thru the eyes and words of "A Girl with Seven Names."

With an office and gathering space at the Flintridge Center, Pasadena Village is a gem of an organization for older adults. It's not a senior center per se, though it overlaps with some activities the senior centers offer. It's also not a senior living residence, though it offers many benefits of communal living.

In the Venn diagram of senior life, Pasadena Village is the sweet spot where the two overlap. It's the best of both worlds.

One active Villagers says, "In addition to participating in Village activities, I met a fellow Villager who has become a regular walking partner, and he also helps me solve the world's problem at coffee after our walk. I am also able to call an expert gardener for advice for my new gardening remodel. I now meet six times a year for lunch with a small group whose spouses have also passed away. I am a volunteer driver who provides rides for Villagers. The sum of all these things has filled a gap in my life and made my life enjoyable."

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## ***There's Something for Everyone at the Pasadena Village***

This local nonprofit organization was founded more than a dozen years ago by a small group of Pasadena residents with the mission of supporting each other as they navigate the joys and challenges of aging. It is run by Villagers for Villagers, which makes it unique.

Pasadena Village is part of the National Village Movement that promotes the formation of communities of people who pool resources by paying membership dues and volunteering their skills and time to support the Village infrastructure and to assist one another.

The local Pasadena Village boasts more than 250 Villagers ranging in age from 57 years old to 100 years. Throughout its expansion, it continues to stay true to its vision, inviting older adults to thrive through new friends, meaningful experiences and involvement in our wider community.

In a current PV newsletter, this was posted: It's important for me to publicly thank you. Since THE FIRE, the Village has held my hand in so

many ways. When I needed comfort, someone was there, when I needed material and financial assistance, the Village was there.

In countless ways the staff and Villagers have made it possible for me to acknowledge a profound loss and to find new possibilities for a future yet imagined.

Thank you each for the many ways you have lived the mission of the Village—helping this Villager age in

several places while navigating life changes. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

For more information, check out the website at [www.PasadenaVillage.org](http://www.PasadenaVillage.org) or call the office (626- 765-6037). If you want to meet a great bunch of Seniors—interesting folks from amazing backgrounds who are good listeners, come from all religions and political backgrounds, consider joining the Village.



## **Mel Donaldson Shares His Journey From the Segregated South Through Today**

**By Mel Donaldson**

Following my teaching in the Black Studies Department at UC Santa Barbara from 1980-1984, I joined the PCC English Department from 1987-2004. While teaching at PCC, I won a "Dean's Lecturer-in-Residence" at UCLA, which awarded me a visiting position to teach in the university's English Department and Writing Programs from 1991-1993.

From PCC, I continued my campus years as a professor in the English Department at CSU-Los Angeles, from 2004-2019.

I had a parallel life as a writer-author. I published in various genres, including the books, *Cornerstones: An Anthology of African American Literature* (1996); *Black Directors in Hollywood* (2003);



*Masculinity in the Interracial Buddy Film* (2006); and *Hip Hop in American Cinema* (2007).

Additionally, my short stories and essays appeared in various publications, including *Upscale*; *Obsidian*; the *African American Review*; *The Independent Film and Video Monthly*; the *Words of Wisdom Journal*; the *Full Moon Literary Journal*; *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul*; and *Upscale* magazine.

In 2017, I wrote, produced, and directed my original play, titled *Shout*, which was mounted at the Fremont Theater in South Pasadena.

Finally, my new book—*Dream Warrior: Passages of a Creative-Scholar* (2025)—is my autobiography, published and available through Sunbury Press and Amazon.com. My website is [www.meldonaldson.com](http://www.meldonaldson.com). Check out that website because there is so much more about his life than we could fit here,



# Pasadena City College's First Ever Rose Float Marked the School's 100th Anniversary



*Retirees volunteered to decorate the college's first ever float in the Rose Parade this year. PCC has always been a part of the parade, but this is the first time that PCC sponsored a float. The entry marked the college's 100th Anniversary. When an organization enters a float in the parade, the group has to round up people to do the decorating. Retirees and even the college president spent their days between Christmas and New Year's making sure the float was ready for the big day.*



## It's Not Holiday Time Yet, but We Want You To Save Some Dates Before Your Calendars Get Full

Our Holiday mixer in December has become a very popular affair with retirees, so the board has decided to add a Halloween mixer for double the enjoyment. (No, you don't have to dress up, but those who want to are encouraged to do so.) Bonnie Shimasaki will be hosting both mixers at her home located at 1715 Homet



Road in Pasadena. Anyone who has gone to the Holiday get-togethers know what a fantastic job she does

decorating her home for the season. She has also agreed to work her magic on Halloween.

The Halloween mixer will be on **Monday, Oct. 27 from 2 to 5 p.m.**

If you haven't been to a mixer before, this will be the perfect time to start. They are always casual get-togethers where friends and colleagues spend a relaxing afternoon.

You'll have plenty of time to do some gift shopping before the Holiday mixer. This year it will be on **Dec. 11 from 1 to 4 p.m.**

A third thing to add to your calendar is a tour of the Pasadena Playhouse. Our reservation is for

**Sept. 19 from 9 a.m. to 11.**

Just so you know, because the theater is so old, there is a lot of walking and stairs to climb in the Playhouse.

Postcard notices will be mailed out with additional details about the events. Please add those dates to your calendar and plan to join other retirees at the mixers and the Playhouse.

