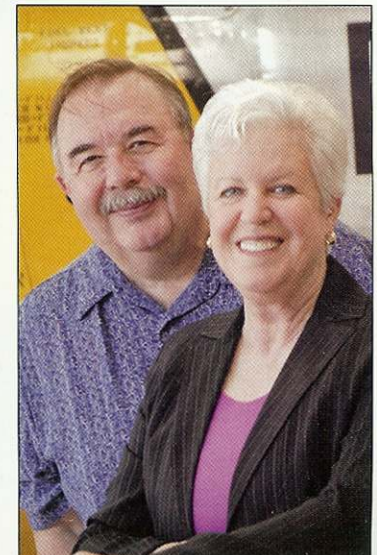
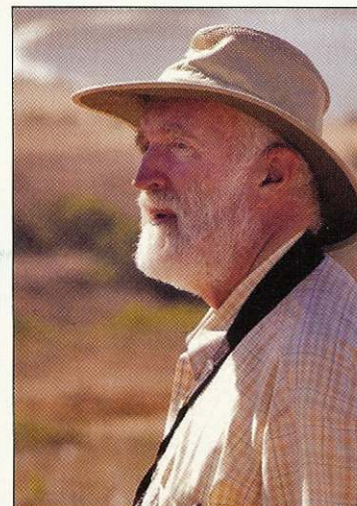
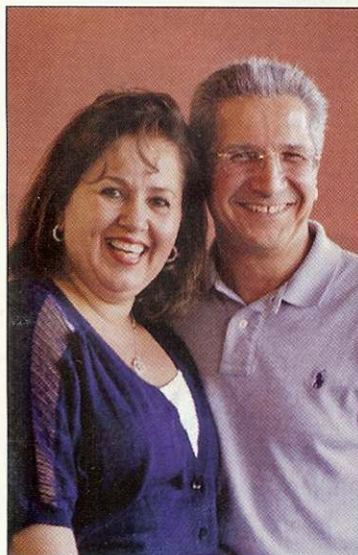
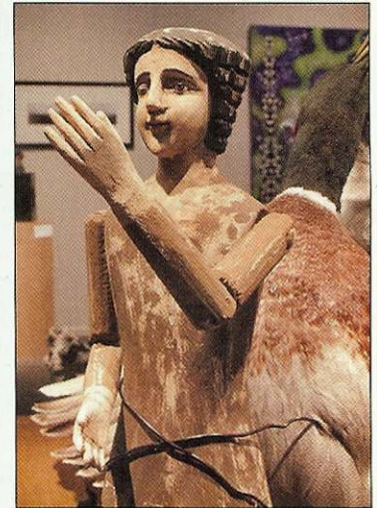
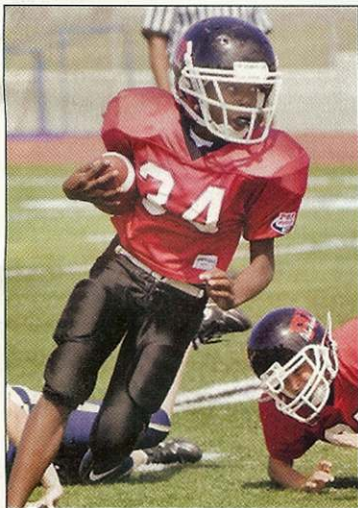
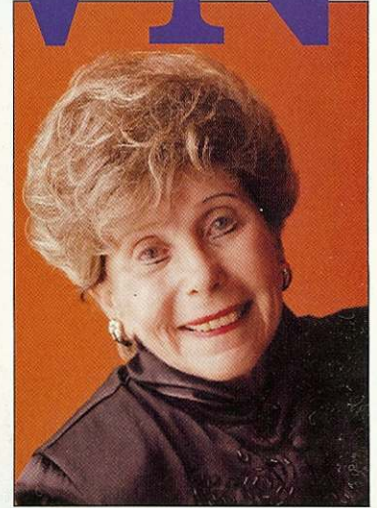
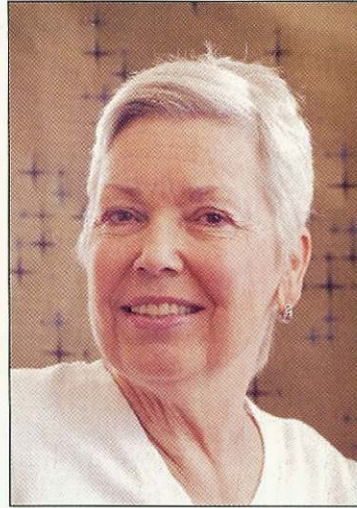
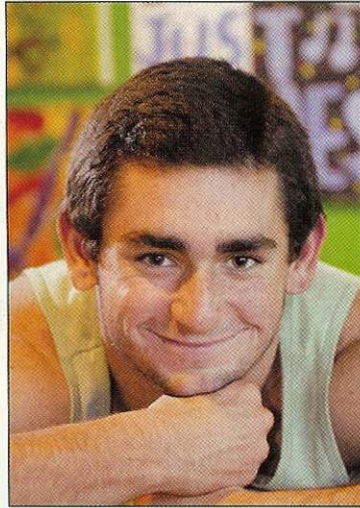


OUR TOWN

A Palos Verdes Peninsula News Special Annual Publication



2011 Movers & Shakers of the Hill



Tom Underhill, Peninsula News

Shaw's heart still beats with passion for city

By Ashley Ratcliff

When Ann Shaw moved to the Peninsula in 1966 with her former husband, she was at home doing what was ingrained in her since childhood: serving the community.

Some four decades later, Shaw, 75, continues to proudly wear the title of a civic leader.

"I've been brought up to be aware of what was going on. My parents were very community-minded," she said.

Shaw quickly latched on to a group that shared her enthusiasm for local issues.

"I really believed in the idea of local control. It came from being in the League of Women Voters [of Palos Verdes Peninsula] and believing in their stand on local issues," she said. "It just seemed like the right thing to do.

"1966 was a time when the people in the community were starting to bristle about the development," Shaw added.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors was the local government, and then-Supervisor Burton Chace was of the opinion that a landowner should be

allowed to develop his or her property to the highest use, Shaw recalled. She became the league's spokeswoman in the late 1960s and testified directly before the Board of Supervisors to protest the county's plan that would have allowed high-density development along the coastline.

"They pat us on the head and told us to go home," Shaw said with a laugh.

When Save Our Coastline was formed in 1969, Shaw represented the league on SOC's committee.

"I really believed in it," she said, adding that there were several failed annexation attempts prior to SOC's formation. "It became apparent that the only way to gain local control was to have the unincorporated area become a city."

Concerned citizens pounded the pavement, circulating a petition for incorporation, but the plan encountered challenges.

"The thing was, at that time, everybody's vote was weighed by how much land you owned," Shaw said. "The landowners could essentially veto it because they had so much more weight behind their vote."

This attempt was unsuccessful but not

enough to quell the activists' desire. The group pressed onward down the "agonizing" road to incorporation.

"There were really dark moments when you thought you were going to lose it all. You worked so hard and it didn't seem like it was going to pan out, but [then there was] the ultimate triumph," she said.

SOC members then challenged the state incorporation law on the "one man, one vote" principle with the state Supreme Court in *Curtis et al v. the Board of Supervisors*. In September 1972, the court unanimously ruled that the law was to be changed. Ninety percent of voters turned out for the election to incorporate and RPV gained cityhood on Aug. 23, 1973.

The next step was to elect five individuals to serve on the inaugural City Council.

Shaw became a close friend with the late Marilyn Ryan, who at the time served as the local LWV president, and the two were running mates. Of the 24 candidates, Shaw, 38 at the time, came in ninth place. Ryan, who earned more than 6,000 votes, ultimately was selected as RPV's first mayor.

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Tom Underhill, Peninsula News

Ann Shaw, Rancho Palos Verdes' second female mayor, continues to be active in the community. She currently serves as president of Peninsula Seniors.

SHAW

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"We ran a joint campaign because we had the same friends and we had to draw on the same base," Shaw said. "She won and I didn't. ... Marilyn was an extremely bright, articulate woman. She got the city off to a great start."

But Shaw would soon find a new role in municipal government. She was appointed to RPV's first Planning Advisory Committee — now known as the Planning Commission — and served as chair of the first commission in March 1976.

"I always felt that she was on the right side of most efforts. ... She was really raring to go when she came into this smaller community [at] a time when everything was being formed," said longtime friend Barbara Gleghorn, who handled public relations for the first SOC campaign. "She jumped right in and did more than her part to influence what was happening."

Shaw was elected to City Council the following year. In addition to battling the politics of running a campaign, Shaw had to push through the public perception that there was only one "woman's seat."

"It was a different era. ... I

don't think women were looked at as being quite as capable," Shaw said. "It was just a very transitional period. Certainly, things were changing rapidly."

"But I do remember thinking when three women were on the council (she, Barbara Hein and Jacki Bacharach) how much more respectful the men became," Shaw said with a laugh.

During her tenure, land use was a major issue, Fred Hesse Community Park was acquired and Shaw was instrumental in working with the county to obtain the funds to bring Abalone Cove Shoreline Park into the public domain.

Shaw remained on council until March 1983, when she relocated to Chicago. Shaw returned to RPV in 1994, settled into her Via Borica home that she has owned since 1971 and picked up where she left off.

A proposal to build a golf course at the City Hall site at Upper Point Vicente circa 1998 was met with resistance from residents, Shaw said, who preferred maintaining habitat restoration and public trails for the public's enjoyment. SOC II formed and was successful in averting the project.

It was then that Shaw met

environmentalist Jim Knight, a current planning commissioner, and served as treasurer for his 2009 campaign for RPV City Council.

"She was very organized and knowledgeable, not only about running a campaign, but just about city politics in general," Knight said. "She's really a pleasure to work with. I highly respect her understanding of the political process and RPV."

Aside from city government, Shaw served as Peninsula Seniors' president in 1999 and 2000, and resumed the role last August.

The former Public Use Master Plan Committee member said she will remain active in the community as long as she is able and will continue to have interest in the issues facing RPV. Shaw has strong opinions about current development proposals.

"She comes to City Council meetings and still gives her opinion of what she feels would be the right direction for the city to go. ... That's very admirable," Knight said.

Hopes for the future

In many ways, Shaw said the community is the same as it was when she arrived more than four decades ago.

"I love Rancho Palos Verdes because it is a city that was created by its own citizens. ... It's just a really exciting idea to take charge of the destiny of your community," the Flint, Mich., native said.

"The city was really formed on the ideas of open space and low density, and I think that those concepts have been honored. ... Maybe one of the things that's kept the city as true to the values that it was founded on has been that many of the people are still living here. But this will change," she added.

That is why Shaw offered the following advice to future city leaders: "Listen to the constituency and weigh the information. ... I think that good government means that you've studied an issue and given it a lot of thought."

Shaw, a certified financial planner and former National Security Agency cryptanalyst, in June was honored on the 45th annual Older Americans Recognition Day, but the accomplishment she is most proud of is being involved in the incorporation of RPV and its continued growth.

"I feel like a mother," she said with a laugh. "It's sort of like you gave birth to it and you're raising it. When you look back on one's life, it's just like, 'Wow!'"