

Autumn
September 2026
Volume 42, Issue 3

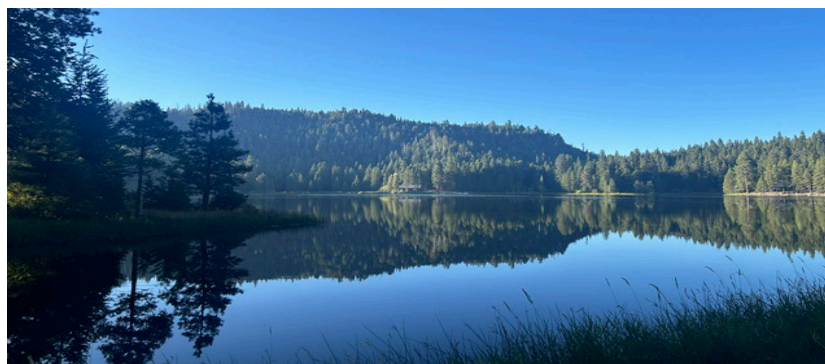
McCoy Chapter
98th

Anniversary
1928-2026

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Summer Traditions - Family Camp



Submitted by: Julie Wesolek, McCoy Alumni Board Member

It was Summer of 1989 when I was introduced to Family Camp as the new health and fitness director at the Palo Alto YMCA. **Dave Thornton**, our CEO, and **Debbie Garber**, the Youth and Family Director, decided part of my orientation would be to go to camp and lead exercise classes. So away I went. It was quite a shock, very rustic - especially the staff sleeping arrangements, and absolutely gorgeous. It was a fantastic way to really get to know why families would line up at 6am on registration day hoping to get a spot for Week 1 or Week 2.

Sequoia Lake was donated to the YMCA in the late 1800s when logging was the main activity in the area. The Golden State YMCA (ymcacampsequoialake.org), currently hosts five camps situated around Sequoia Lake at the entrance to Kings Canyon/Sequoia National Forest. Two camps are resident youth camps, Gaines and Redwood. Two are now designated family camps, Tulequoia and Sequoia. Camp Millwood is a skateboard camp sponsored by Tony Hawk that draws teens from all over the country.

The Palo Alto Y had been renting camps at Sequoia Lake for youth resident camp and Family camp programming starting in the 1970's. The lake is the high point with canoes, kayaks, SUPs, rowboats, fishing, swimming areas and docks. There's close access to hiking trails with waterfalls, Grant Grove and giant Sequoias. Besides the incredible night skies, the weather is fantastic with warm days and cool evenings.

The cabins are basic; there is a meadow peninsula that allows for tent camping

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Coming Events

Exploratorium Visit
San Francisco - Oct 22

Holiday Luncheon
Harry's Hofbrau,
Redwood City - Early Dec





Henry J. McCoy
1847 - 1921
First General Secretary
San Francisco YMCA
1881 - 1915

Y Alumni Mission Statement

The mission of the YMCA Alumni Association is to enable members to promote a nurturing worldwide Christian fellowship that provides educational, social service and charitable opportunities.

The Real McCoy is the official Newsletter of the McCoy Chapter of the YMCA Alumni Association.

It is published four times a year: Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. Articles and news for inclusion should be received by the 1st of the month of publication.

Submissions may be sent to Pam Sheble by e-mail (see emails in next column) or mailed to Pam at 2730 Sequoia Way, Belmont, CA 94002.

Family Camp (Cont.)

for families as well. All meals are served buffet style in the dining hall. The bathrooms are . . . adequate. I soon realized it wasn't the facilities that were the draw.

It's 2003, and I now had a family and we all headed for our first week of family camp. **Chris**, my husband, needed a bit of persuading and wondered what we would possibly do for a whole week in the wilderness. We were quickly embraced by the staff and the other campers and soon were singing, hiking, dancing, swimming, rowing, crafting, playing frisbee golf, gaga ball, and ping pong, and cranking the churn for ice cream, and building a boat out of popsicle sticks. My girls, **Bethany**, 5 and **Annie**, 8, were welcomed by the staff (most of whom are volunteers - former camp counselors of Debbie's). These staff members planned activities for the kids (zorch, bullfrog sighting, snipe hunting). For the little ones, there was Sapling Center and Kids Club so the older folk had free time to hike, nap or swim the lake. All throughout the week there was intentional engagement with each youth and family to make sure they were having a great experience and felt connected. As a participant you didn't realize it: It was seamless, organic, but I know from conversations with Debbie that this was the "secret sauce" that made family camp unique.

A casual observer might not notice the draw of this camp, the heart that keeps families coming back year after year. Now those early campers are coming back with their kids and starting the cycle again. They come from wherever their life has taken them. This year campers came from Japan, New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania. Here's why I think it has survived. It's the perfect antidote to our



One of the favorite evening activities - making smores

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(continued on page 2)

crazy-paced tech-heavy lives, and divisive political environment. It's a screen free environment; People share their talents and passions by leading classes, workshops, or just informally teaching someone a new skill, game, skit, or craft. Kids have newfound freedom to roam and parents know to keep an eye out for the kids.

Mostly it's time. Camp is unhurried, you can have that deep conversation that makes you feel completely accepted.

You can get to know someone, learn their stories, share your truth. You can support one another through life's changes and challenges.



Julie's daughter Annie and her youngest, Juliet, 2 1/2 churning ice cream

It worked on us, we drank the Kool-Aid and came back year after year. From 2004 - 2017. During Covid we had a virtual campfire with over 45 families tuning in to share memories, sing songs and see each other.



Julie's granddaughter Gracie shows off her boating regatta trophy

That morphed into a hybrid camp experience with a group of volunteers led by former campers and Y staffers, Debbie Garber and Jeff and Missy. They negotiated with Golden State YMCA to add a week of camp that would allow for all of our camp traditions led by volunteers with their staff handling all the logistics. It's a great way to move the traditions forward. As a mom, this was the best vacation ever.

No kitchen duties for a full week and no food arguments. It was fun to get to know new families over a meal. The kids felt so much autonomy choosing to eat with their new friends. Isn't that the greatest gift for a parent - to see your kids make friends. Now since 2024, the joy is twofold as I see my daughter revel in her own little family discovering the beauty of nature, sharing connections with friends and swapping parenting tips, and allowing my granddaughters create special memories with "Ama and Papa."



Julie and Chris Wesolek, daughter Annie and family



The Garber Family and Volunteer leaders Jeff and Missy (Debbie in center with pigtail)

Family camp has had a huge impact on our family and we enjoy our week creating a community that is built on respect, caring, honesty and responsibility.

Next year's camp is Week 9, July 31 - Aug 6th. **Come join us, there is something for the whole family!** If you would like more information on Sequoia YMCA's Family camp, please contact Julie Wesolek at jwesolek@gmail.com.

Lines from Lee

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— By
Lee Muckey
Chapter President



September, 2026

I just returned from the first Wave (a week-long serving group) of volunteer YMCA Alumni members working to build a Twig - what the YMCA calls its small branch - in La Plant, South Dakota. The Twig will serve the 150 residents of La Plant, a town 50 miles from the Y's main facility in Dupree. It will provide programs for the students of a regional school, children in a foster care home, as well as adults and seniors who live in/near La Plant. It was a wonderful opportunity and honor to serve on our National Service Project and learn so much about the Lakota native American culture.

You of course already know that the motto for YMCA Alumni is "Connect, Travel and Serve." Your McCoy Chapter Board has been working hard on events to help connect our members with each other. See the invitation in "The Real McCoy" and your email about the event at one of the Bay Area's iconic Exploratorium.

The National Board has contracted with Go Travel to provide many cruises, tours and other travel opportunities. If you haven't seen information in Connection and other National YMCA Alumni communications about travel opportunities, take a look at the YMCA Alumni website (www.ymcaalumni.org).

I'm hoping that in the near future, our McCoy Chapter will also engage in some sort of service effort, whether it be an annual project, a series of relationships with YMCAs across our region, or some other effort to serve our YMCAs and/or communities. I'd love to hear of any service ideas you might have for the McCoy Chapter!

Labor Day signals the unofficial end of summer. I hope yours was exciting, enriching and fun!

Lee

Lee Muckey, McCoy Chapter Chair

**DO NOT REGRET
GROWING
OLDER; IT'S A
PRIVILEGE
DENIED TO
MANY.**



PSYCHICBLAZE.COM

**I was at lunch with an old
friend & pointed at two
elderly ladies across the
room and said, "That will
be us in 10 years."
She said,
"that's the mirror".**



**OLD AGE IS LIKE A PLANE
FLYING THROUGH A STORM.
ONCE YOU ARE ABOARD
THERE IS NOTHING YOU
CAN DO ABOUT IT.**

GOLDA MEIR

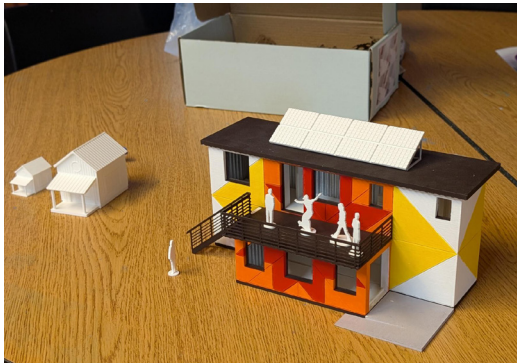
HUMOR LIVING

National Service Project

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National Service Project Nears Completion

Work has begun on the second phase of YMCA Alumni National Service Project #1, the building of a "Twig" (small branch) for the YMCA of the Seven Council Fires.



Mock Up Model of a completed Twig

Two "Waves" (one-week volunteer construction groups) have been completed, and two more remain. Twenty-five volunteers will have turned three shipping containers into a YMCA program center in La Plant, South Dakota, a town of 150 people 50 miles from the main YMCA in Dupree on the Cheyenne River Lakota Reservation. By the end of September, YMCA Alumni will hand over the keys to the Twig, and National Service Project #1 will be finished.



"The Twig is unique in so many ways," said Lou Falk, chair of the National Service Project Standing Committee. "Building a YMCA from shipping containers is a first, and the facility will include an apartment for a staff member to reside, since the Twig is so far away from the main office of the Y."



The Standing Committee has raised more than 1.1 million dollars for the total project, including four tiny homes and the Twig. The highly successful project will help the YMCA to extend its program reach significantly in a region with extreme unemployment, high poverty rates and a population density slightly over one person per square mile.



One of the finished Tiny Homes is now occupied.

Submitted by : Lee Muckey

Member News

Don and Sue Anderson (Honolulu, Hawaii) Sue reports "We have just finished a down-stairs master bedroom and office addition to our two-story house. Hopefully we can age in place."

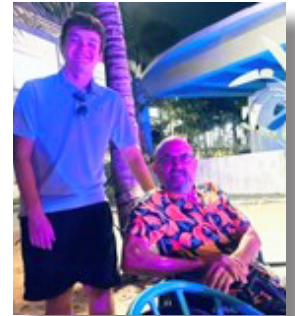


Pictures are of Don who was keynote speaker at the 100th Anniversary of the Cebu YMCA, Philippines in June. He also attended the WFYR and YMCA World Council meetings in Toronto in July. Finally, we are both excited and looking forward to attending the September Y USA General Assembly in New Orleans, where Don will be inducted into the YMCA Hall of Fame."



Larry and Erlene Benevento (Visalia, CA) Larry and Erlene traveled to Hendersonville, TN where their son Seth lives. Together with son, daughter-in-law, three grandsons, great-grandson and one grandson's

grandson's girlfriend - they flew to the Dominican Republic. This family time together had long been planned. (An all-inclusive resort). Several days before the trip Larry hurt his back. Everyone agreed this should not put an end to quality time together. So, since there were three healthy strong grandsons to carry luggage, push the wheelchair, and wait on Papa, the trip was a success. Larry and Erlene had met the great grandson only once before and he was shy. Alas, Larry couldn't even entice him to ride in the wheelchair.



Grandson Reed with Larry

Lanny and Jackie Couvillon (Novato, CA) Lanny checked in "I can tell you the last 2 years I have tested the vow of "in sickness and in health" - triple bypass, laminectomy and nephrectomy. All of that and one year of infusions for stage 4 urothelial cancer. My most recent scan shows no evidence of disease. Not cured but nothing seen."



Left: Jackie and Lanny in Hawaii last winter.



Lanny at lunch with his old Y buddies - Mike Maxwell, Bud Sheble, Greg O'Brien and Thom Martin

Lanny Couvillon (cont.)

I have been undergoing hospital procedures to determine if my heart is healthy enough to undergo one more surgery to repair a damaged tricuspid valve. Will know soon.

Meanwhile, every few months I have lunch at Perry's in San Francisco with old Y colleagues. Pictured with me are **Mike Maxwell, Bud Sheble, Greg O'Brien** and **Thom Martin.**"



Terry Horak (Fresno, CA) Terry sent this. "A warm welcome to **Emil Vielhaben** from Munich, Germany as he joins my family such as it is (dog, two cats, two chickens and a horse!). Emil is my 21st student that I've hosted. It's a fantastic experience for both of us. It all started in 1983 when I hosted my first student

through Y's Men International YEEP program. I still keep in touch with him today and visited him in Sweden last summer. If you would like to find out more about hosting an exchange student, please reach out to me at: **thorak@att.net**

Enjoy the picture of Emil."



Bill and Sherry Hubartt (Shingle Springs, CA) On August 1st, family, friends, and former colleagues gathered together in Incline Village, Nevada, to celebrate the lives of **Carl and Mary DuBois**. Mary passed away in February of this year; Carl passed in May. The celebration was held in the community hall of the Incline Village residences where Carl and Mary lived for a number of years earlier in their lives.

They both loved the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Carl with his access to backpacking, and Mary with her

love of skiing. So it was fitting that they were remembered, and their stories were told in Incline Village with a view of Lake Tahoe in the background.

The first and foremost celebration was of the family that they loved so much,. They were very proud of raising two sons who both went on to successful careers as airline pilots.



Carl's oldest son Rick and wife Mary



Younger son, Dave DuBois with Bill and Sherry Hubartt

And Even More Member News

Bill and Sherry Hubartt (cont.) Carl and Mary were then blessed with three grandchildren and two great grandchildren. The incredible slide presentation had pictures of both Carl and Mary in their childhood, and then also of their life together and their growing family. The two sons each told many stories of their parents, which of course included the ever present humor of the family, as well as the joy.



Sue and Bob Murrillo and Bud and Pam Sheble
after enjoying lunch at the celebration

Former colleagues and long-time friends **Bud and Pam Sheble** were there, as were three men who were participants of Carl's first Jr. Hi-Y program he organized at the East Oakland YMCA. Many more friends and colleagues sent cards and messages, being unable to travel due primarily to age issues. The attendance was testimony to a life well lived by both Carl and Mary, impacting many lives on their journeys.

Donna Roper (Guerneville, CA) "At the end of June, after the annual League of Women Voters convention in Columbus, Ohio, (Donna second from left), I took a trip to the old family homestead in Prince Edward Island, Canada. I was there in time to celebrate Canada Day on July 1st.

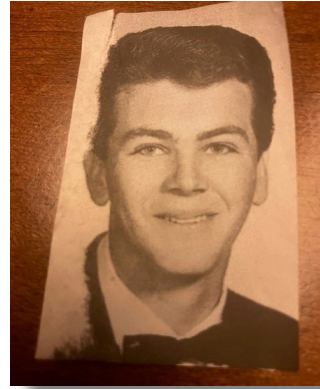


After eight lobsters, home-



made bread and lots of pastries, I gained five pounds and headed home to California."

Greg and Chris O'Brien (Petaluma, CA) "I attended My 60th Tamalpais High School reunion. We were a class of 400 students but only 70 attended. Unfortunately over 80 had passed away. Still a great time. My next door neighbor as a student was there. He ended up playing pro ball for New England Patriots. My twin girlfriend and her sister also attended, but I couldn't tell them apart when they kissed me. This is my 60-year high school graduation picture! In



high school, I got into some trouble and was assigned to work my probation hours for the Marin YMCA. This turned out to be a life sentence."

Bud and Pam Sheble (Belmont, CA) – Bud took time out from his family's annual vacation in Laguna Beach to travel to Sacramento with his son Matthew to be present at the 50th Anniversary Celebration for the California Conservation Corps. Bud served as State Director of the CCC for eight years during the 80s, appointed by Governor Deukmejian. Bud received a plaque to commemorate his service to the CCC. Back at the beach, the Sheble family had, at times, 18 in attendance enjoying the weather and family time together.



Bud has spent time in Laguna every year since he was 17 - yes that is 70 years! Pam's first visit was on their honeymoon 63 years ago.

John & Liz Youngberg (Lodi, CA) They took a RV on 3-week trip up the Oregon coast to escape Lodi, California August heat wave! They visited Gold Beach Honey Bear Resort & Seaperch in Yachats, Oregon!



A Day of Discovery at the Exploratorium

Join Us on October 22nd!



The Y Alumni community has always been fueled by curiosity, camaraderie, and a love of learning. This fall, we're bringing all of that together for a special one-day outing to the Exploratorium in San Francisco.

If you haven't visited in a while, the Exploratorium is no ordinary museum. It's a hands-on laboratory of science, art, and human perception, a place where you don't just look at exhibits, you interact with them.

Touch, twist, listen, observe, experiment... it's designed for people of every age who still enjoy discovering how the world works.

Great Discounted Admission: Only \$20.

We're able to offer a fantastic admission rate of just \$20 — a savings that makes this an easy “yes” for anyone who enjoys a day of exploration and fun.

Why This Outing Is Perfect for Y Alumni

- **It's social.** You'll spend the day with fellow Y Alums who share your curiosity and sense of adventure.
- **It's stimulating.** Exhibits range from physics and biology to art, sound, motion, and perception.
- **It's accessible.** The museum is fully walk-friendly with plenty of places to sit, rest, and observe.
- **It's flexible.** You can explore at your own pace — in small groups or on your own.

Whether you're fascinated by light and color, enjoy puzzles and illusions, or simply love learning something new, the Exploratorium offers an experience that's both playful and enriching.

What to Expect

We'll meet at the museum entrance late morning, enjoy several hours of hands-on exhibits, and then gather for an optional lunch at the beautiful Bayside café. More exploration after lunch if you wish. The entire day is designed to be relaxed, easygoing, and enjoyable for everyone.

Let Us Know You're Coming

To help us plan, please reply soon and let us know you want to attend. Your response helps us to purchase tickets in advance and reserve a spot for you.

Send us an email:
mccoyforums@gmail.com

Bay Area Retirees Enjoy both a Celebration and a Reunion!

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A celebration of Y Retiree **Sal Cisneros'** 70th birthday provided an opportunity for re-connection with many friends and colleagues. We celebrated with Sal and his family in South Lake Tahoe, a favorite childhood place of Sal's! Lots of hugs, stories and laughter....Y friendships that started decades ago and are lasting a lifetime!



*Sue Steph and Karen Foster
celebrate with Sal and Debbie Cisneros!*



*The whole crew celebrates Sal's birthday in
South Lake Tahoe!*



*Sue Steph, Deane Shokes, Rosanna Gomez and
Kathy Riggins enjoy a wonderful evening in Carson
City with Italian food, great wine, catching up, sharing
memories and lots of laughs. We all worked together
for decades in the SF/Silicon Valley area, and are
now enjoying our retirement years. So much fun to
reconnect after many years!*

McCoy Awards Open Soon for Nominations

These annual awards are a great way to recognize creative, resourceful, and up-and-coming program directors at your association.

The Henry J. McCoy Award was created by the McCoy Chapter Alumni to recognize a program director who has demonstrated excellence in the development, promotion, and operation of a YMCA program. The recipient will receive \$1,000.

Additionally, we are seeking nominations for Outstanding New Program Director Award - this award celebrates an exceptional staff person who has been serving less than 2 years as a program director. This award honors an individual who exemplifies the core values of the YMCA: caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. We seek nominees who are not only passionate about their roles but also show a strong desire to build a lasting career in the YMCA. The recipient will receive \$500.

CEOs and key leaders in our chapter's area will be receiving an email with a link to the nomination forms sometime in early October, 2026. McCoy members can help by encouraging Y staff that they are connected with to nominate a current Y staff person for these awards.

We will be accepting nominations through Monday, January 31, 2027, and awards will be presented in the Spring of 2027.

We look forward to receiving nominations for these two awards from your branches and/or Association!

A World of Opportunity - International Service Update

From the Czech Republic to communities around the world, ISC creates opportunities for YMCA Alumni members to share their experience, talents, and passion while building lasting friendships.

Alena Wenker is from the Czech Republic. She spent over 30 years in the United States working for the YMCA and teaching Russian at local universities in Middle Tennessee. After retiring, Alena became involved with the YMCA Alumni International Service Corps (ISC). She connected with the YMCA in the Czech Republic and helped establish a relationship in the small, picturesque town of **Starý Plzenec**, where the YMCA hosts a day camp and welcomes volunteers to serve as counselors.



Jon, Alena and Kim

Through Alena's leadership, ISC has sent **three volunteers over the past two years** to help children learn English through immersion in fun, engaging daily activities conducted entirely in English.

This year, **Jon Vance and Kim Decker** joined Alena in Starý Plzenec, spending a week as counselors at the day camp. For Kim, returning for a second year made the experience especially meaningful:

Kim Decker said, "Returning to Starý Plzenec for my second year was especially meaningful because I was no longer a stranger—I was returning to friends, familiar faces, and campers who remembered me. I loved watching the children grow in confidence, not only in their English, but in their willingness to try, help one another, and step outside their comfort zones. Being back at camp also reminded me how much I love working with children and creating the kind of experiences that bring people together. I came to share my love of camp and English, but I left feeling that the Czech campers and leaders had given me just as much in return."

This is what the International Service Corps is all about: **sharing our skills and experience while learning from others and building relationships that reach across borders. Our 2026 Support Campaign**

Right now, the YMCA Alumni International Service Corps **current support campaign is underway through November 30, 2026.**



International Service

Tracy Muckey
ISC Representative



Your financial support helps ISC in the following ways:

- Develop and expand international service opportunities
- Provide resources and training for volunteers and YMCA partners
- Foster global friendships and cultural understanding
- Respond to requests from YMCAs seeking expertise and guidance
- Create meaningful service experiences for YMCA Alumni members

Funds raised help cover many of the travel costs for our members serving YMCAs around the world.

We like to think of ISC as a **"WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY"**—an opportunity for YMCA Alumni members to share their talent, experience, and passion with YMCA communities around the globe. **Your support helps make these opportunities possible.** Your financial support helps ISC make experiences like the one in the Czech Republic possible. We hope you will contribute soon.

Please go to the following website to donate:

<https://www.ymcaalumni.org/donate>

Important Websites to Checkout:

Y Alumni Website:

<http://ymcaalumni.org>



Y Alumni newsletter is available online for Y Alumni members 12 times a year. Go to above website and join now.

Y Alumni Travel Club:

<http://www.ymcaalumnitravelclub.org>

YMCA Retirement Fund Website:

<http://www.yretirement.org/default.aspx>

Online readers click below:

[McCoy Chapter Alumni FaceBook Page](#)

Printed copy readers go to:
www.facebook.com and search for
McCoy Chapter Alumni.





**Congratulations and
best wishes to these couples:**

72 Years

Robert & Maria Garcia Oct 17

62 Years

Jack & Caroline Wylie Dec 27

57 Years

Royce & Joyce Starr Dec 16

51 Years

Bud & Marcy Doane Dec 20

45 Years

Richard & Eileen Stolee Nov 28

27 Years

Bill & Sherry Hubartt Oct 9

Rod & Ellie Carpenter Oct 23



*Happy
Birthday!*

**Please let us know your birthday
so we may light a candle for you.**

Jim Daughn	Oct 5
Edith Stratman	Oct 5
Sue Steph	Oct 6
Jo Bagelmann	Oct 9
Donna Roper	Oct 12
Aimee Majer	Oct 12
Georgette Porter	Oct 14
Jan Greer	Oct 16
Jan Dale	Oct 19
Eileen Murray	Oct 22
Mike Murphy	Oct 26
Chris Logan	Oct 27
Bruce Ahlquist	Oct 28
Tracy Muckey	Oct 29
Greg O'Brien	Oct 30
Chris O'Brien	Nov 4
Ron Markillie	Nov 8
John Boore	Nov 9
Don Zerwer	Nov 14
Kelly Vamis	Nov 15
Steve Rogers	Nov 17
Madeline Stiver	Nov 18
Jerry James	Nov 22
Dee Bright	Nov 23
Steven Prather	Nov 28
Sally Huebner	Nov 28
Pat Bergthold	Nov 30
Don Carney	Dec 1
Pam Sheble	Dec 5
Mary Lipscomb	Dec 15
Jane Bostwick	Dec 17
Arnie Leonard	Dec 18
Neil Homer	Dec 19
Joyce Mercer	Dec 20
Jim Lipscomb	Dec 21
Rod Carpenter	Dec 22
Diana Garcia-Zachariah	Dec 24
Carma Gregerson	Dec 30



*We would really like to
acknowledge all wedding
anniversary dates and
birthdays, so please
give us yours next time
you pay your dues, or
send the information to*

**Pam Sheble
2730 Sequoia Wy
Belmont, CA 94002
or via email at
pamsheble@comcast.net**