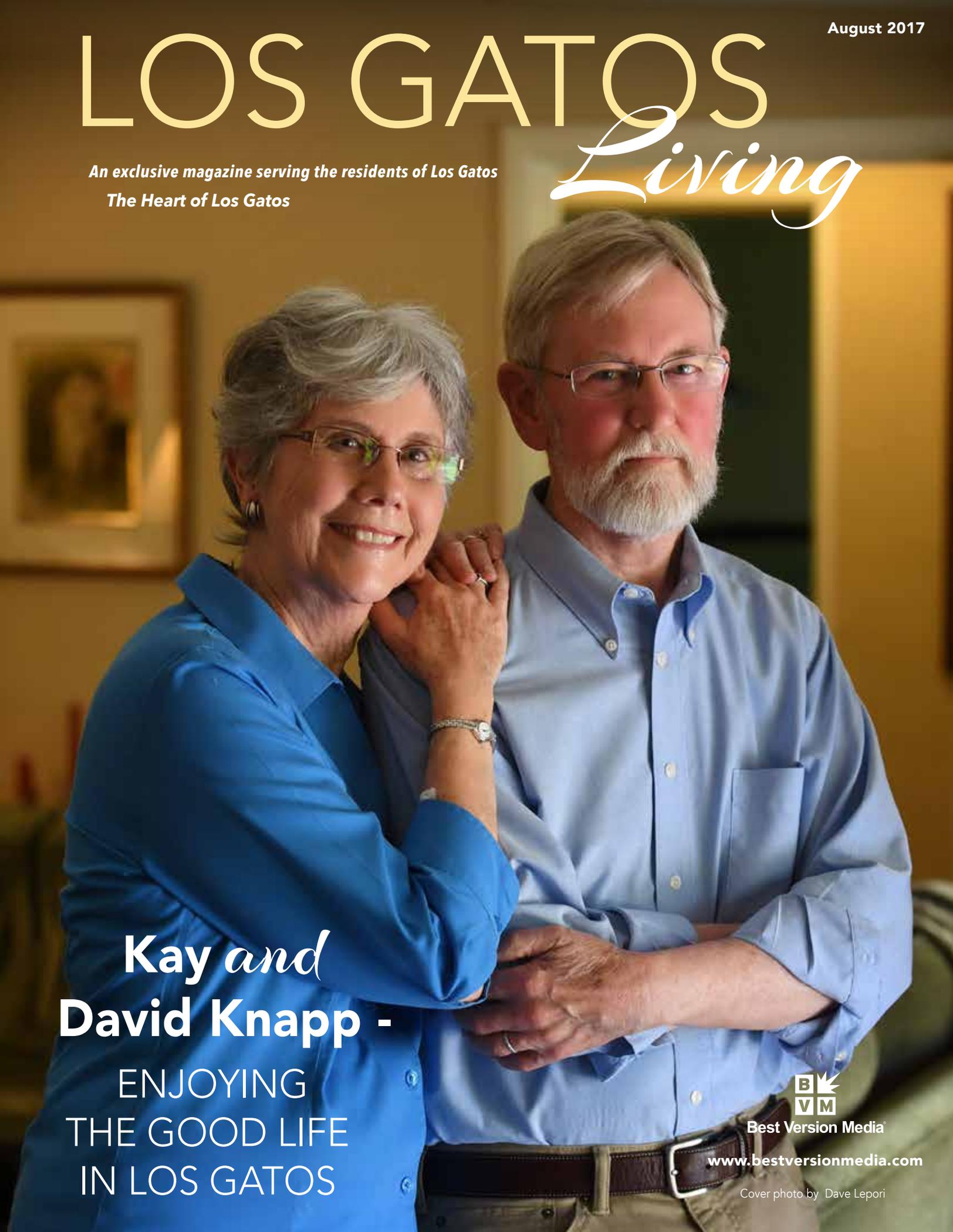


LOS GATOS

Living

An exclusive magazine serving the residents of Los Gatos
The Heart of Los Gatos



**Kay and
David Knapp -**

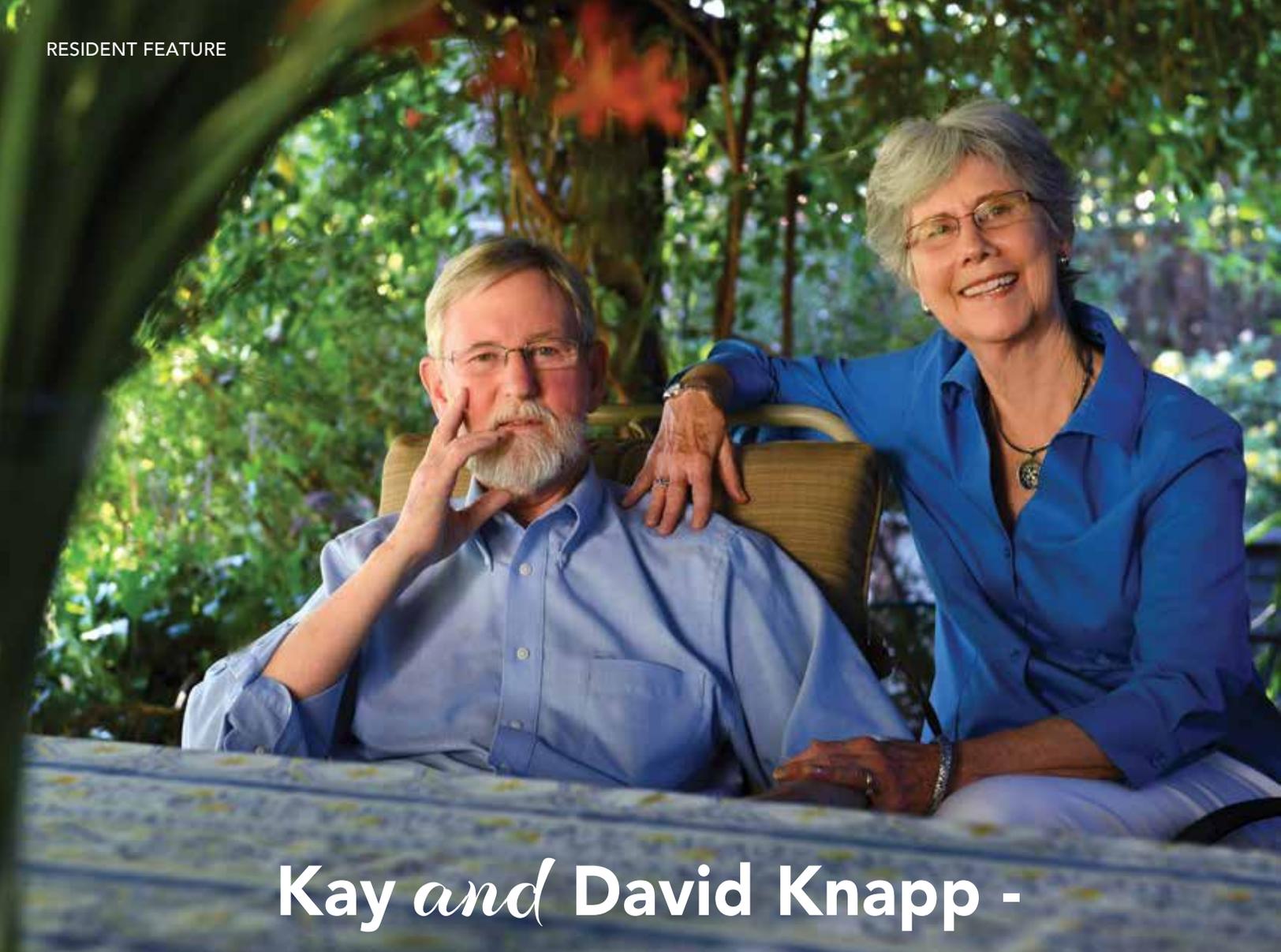
ENJOYING
THE GOOD LIFE
IN LOS GATOS



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Cover photo by Dave Lepori



Kay and David Knapp -

ENJOYING THE GOOD LIFE IN LOS GATOS

By Genevieve Laucher

David Knapp, who many may know as a former Los Gatos Town Manager, is also an Air Force veteran, avid reader, and loving husband, father, and grandfather. He has enjoyed living in Los Gatos since 1990 and being involved in the community.

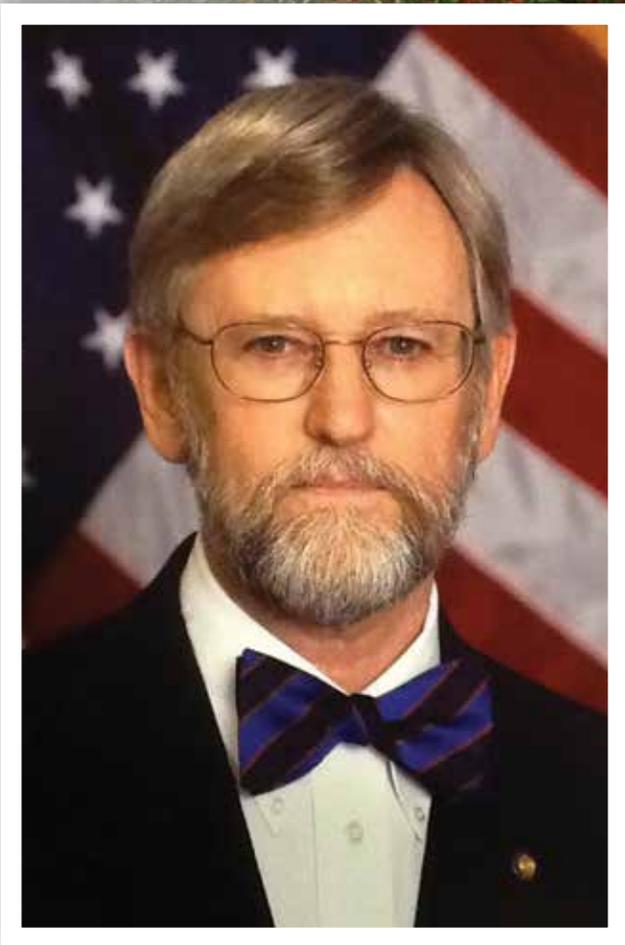
Dave and his wife, Kay, both grew up in San Antonio, Texas. They met as young kids and were always friends, and began dating as teenagers. When Dave went away to college, they wrote to each other every day, and they were married after Dave finished a year of graduate work in psychology in 1963.

The same year, Dave was drafted to the military and went to officer training school for the U.S. Air Force. Although his degree was in philosophy, the military sent Dave for a year of electrical engineering training. He found it to be a very interesting field. As the 26th NORAD (North American Aerospace Defense Command) Division Electronic Counter Measures Officer, he supervised officers in designing and developing electronic

equipment to counteract the effects of enemy jamming, or blocking, on RADAR and communication systems.

After three successful years in this role, the Air Force invited Dave to stay on and promised to send him anywhere in Europe. He and Kay were eager to travel, and they went to live in Ramstein, Germany. Kay, a teacher, was able to find a job teaching elementary school there in Germany. Dave served as the Chief of Defense Systems Evaluation and assessed defense systems in Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. On the weekends and vacations, Dave and Kay enjoyed traveling all over Europe, including taking the train to Paris for the weekends.

Dave thinks back on his time with the Air Force as a wonderful experience. He enjoyed getting to meet and work with many talented people with a strong sense of duty, and he found the work itself fascinating. Unfortunately though, going around the RADAR sites and getting asbestos caused him to develop



mesothelioma, a cancer of the lungs, later in life. He is currently undergoing treatment, but he keeps his positive attitude and speaks very highly of his military experience.

Dave's last assignment with the Air Force was in San Diego, where there was a problem with multiple RADARs overlapping. He came up with a solution and fixed the problem in just two months.

Returning to the U.S. brought big changes for the Knapps. Dave took a career test and found that public administration would be a good fit for him. The test was right—Dave spent 44 years in public administration and thoroughly enjoyed it. He and Kay had moved to San Diego in 1970, and he began working for the City as the Assistant Director of the Model Cities Department. Kay worked as a speech therapist for the school district.

Additionally, Dave and Kay welcomed their two sons in 1972 and 1974. Their older son, Steven, is now a physicist in Highland Park, Illinois. He was in the Peace Corps in Fiji before getting a job assembling lasers, and worked his way up to senior design engineer. Their younger son, Michael, works in finance in Glen Ellen, Illinois, close to his brother. Michael helped take the company Knowles, which was a division of Dover, public, and now is the VP of Knowles.



While in the service, Dave earned an MA in education and an MS in systems management. He found these very useful in his career in public administration. He learned some theories that helped him in management, including preparing people for difficulties and how to get through them without giving up.

From his experience with the City and his masters programs, Dave knew that he wanted to be a City Manager. The one piece of knowledge he was missing, however, was finance. He worked his way to the finance department, where he became the Assistant Financial Management Director. This gave him the experience he needed to be

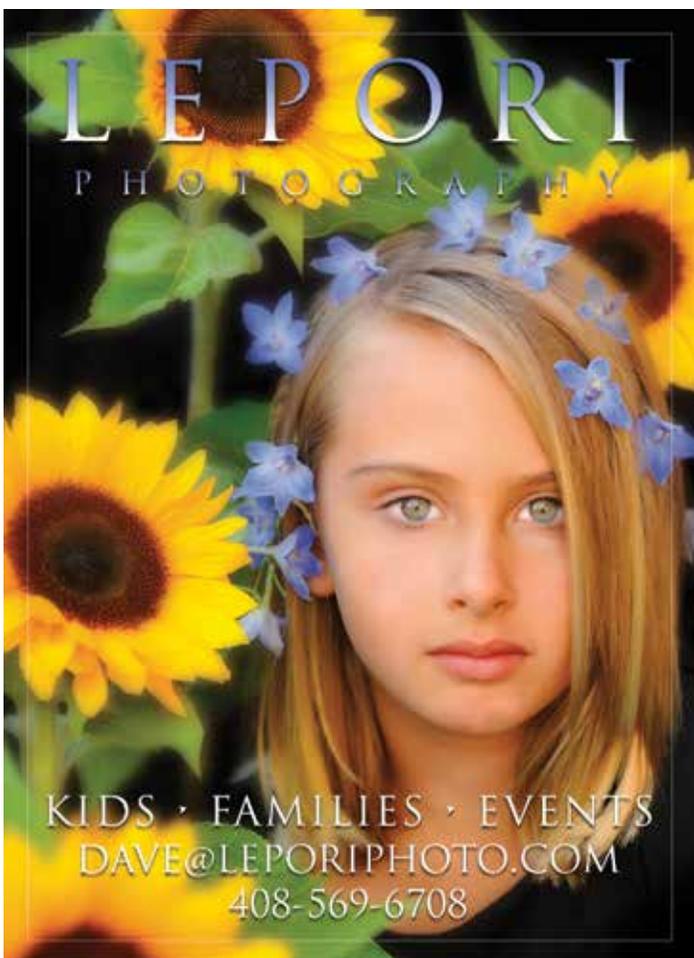
hired as the Assistant City Manager for the City of Boulder, Colorado in 1979. He was later promoted to City Manager in Boulder.

After eleven years in Boulder, the Knapps were excited to move back to California when Dave accepted the position of Town Manager for the Town of Los Gatos! He was in this role for a very busy ten years, from 1990 to 2000. Dave enjoyed being kept occupied and being able to improve various things for Los Gatos residents. He found that the fundamental value of customer service really helped his career, and he enjoyed interacting with all the residents.

One of the more interesting experiences in Los Gatos was the arrival of the Brazilian soccer team to participate in the World Cup. The team had been scheduled to stay in the Claremont Hotel in Oakland, however, the coach was concerned that the team would be too easily distracted by the thousands of Brazilians who routinely follow the soccer team whenever it travels. The team came to Los Gatos to have lunch at Marcellos, a restaurant formerly on Village Lane. The waiters there were mostly Italian young men who instantly recognized the Brazilian soccer stars and became very excited. The coach began looking around Los Gatos and discovered Villa Felice Lodge and restaurant which had only one entrance and a very steep slope on the backside. We put up a 24 hour a day police guard at the only entrance to Villa Felice. Upon winning their game on the 4th of July, a huge party ensued in downtown Los Gatos. Tens of thousands of visitors created a standing room only party which lasted most of the night.

Dave spent the next twelve years as the City Manager for the City of Cupertino. Instead of accepting a raise one year, he chose to go to Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government Program for Senior Executives. There, he reconnected with his passion to work with diverse groups of people. In Cupertino, two-thirds of the residents are either immigrants or children of immigrants, and Dave wanted to help people see this diversity as an advantage. He saw how different people from different backgrounds can come up with better solutions to problems.

Dave and Kay lived in Cupertino during this time but kept their house in Los Gatos, which their sons both rented. Kay worked as a reference librarian for the county. They temporarily moved again to Highland Park once their sons had settled down in Illinois, where Dave took another City Manager position and enjoyed being close to family. Steven has two sons and Michael has one son and one daughter, so it





was great for Dave and Kay to be close to their grandchildren.

Dave retired from public administration in 2014, and he and Kay moved back to their Los Gatos home. Kay is busy with various organizations—she volunteers at the Echo Shop in Saratoga, was on the Los Gatos Foundation Board of Directors, and was on the vestry for St. Luke’s. Dave was a Rotary International member and sat on several committees. Dave and Kay always love spending time with their two grown sons and wonderful wives, and they delight in their marvelous grandchildren. Los Gatos is lucky to be home to such a positive, intelligent, and dedicated couple!

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