

Cathedral City – Frank Sardone

Frank, 72, was born and raised in Jersey City, New Jersey. In 1965, Frank enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served a tour of duty in Vietnam until 1967.

Frank then enrolled in a four-year vocational technical program for electrical work through the union. He was a journeyman electrician for over 40 years.

After 31 years on the East Coast, Frank moved to the Coachella Valley in 1979, and spent 30 years with Local Union 440.

Frank was the general foreman on the Diamond Valley Lake reservoir near Hemet. During the excavation of the dam, the largest mastodon ever found on the West Coast was unearthed. For a while, Frank's work site became a fossil site and he saw the animals that roamed the earth in prehistoric times.

Frank spent the last 10 years of his career as a foreman and general foreman. He retired in 2008.

Frank began volunteering with the Cathedral City Citizens on Patrol (COP) seven years ago. He enjoys the camaraderie among his fellows COPs and the opportunity to give back to his city.

Frank has previously been the secretary and vice president for the COP program and is currently in his second term as president. Frank's supervisors commend the fact that he is always in good spirits, willing to do whatever is asked of him, demonstrating "selflessness to his community and its citizens."

His advice to younger generations is to stay in school and plan for your future and career.

Frank met the love of his life, Linda, in 1969. They will celebrate their 50th anniversary in 2019. His wife, a breast cancer survivor, has made the greatest impact on his life.

In his spare time, Frank enjoys nature photography and bike riding around the desert. He cherishes a road trip he and Linda took up the coast to Oregon, Washington and Canada in 2016.

Frank and Linda have two daughters and two grandchildren.

Coachella – Baudelio P. Sanchez

Baudelio, 81, was born in the town of El Colomo, in the state of Jalisco, Mexico. He and his eight siblings were raised in El Colomo and La Huerta. Growing up, he lived in the countryside and worked in field labor.

In 1965, Baudelio married Refugio. After 12 years of marriage, they had two daughters born in the same year. In 1976, Baudelio and his family immigrated to the U.S., settling in Los Angeles. After the birth of their third daughter, Baudelio and his family moved to the Coachella Valley.

When Baudelio first moved to the Coachella Valley, he lived in Thermal. He was offered a job in irrigation of crops such as alfalfa, cotton, broccoli, cauliflower and cucumber. After working at the farm for five years, Baudelio moved on to Foster-Gardner, Inc., where he worked for eight years.

After being in the irrigation workforce, Baudelio was offered a job at The Quarry in La Quinta where he trimmed trees and kept the greens well maintained. Baudelio worked at the golf course until he retired at the age of 63.

Baudelio loves his community of Coachella, his home since 1988. He enjoys volunteering at the Eleanor Shadowen Senior Center, located in downtown Coachella. He has been going five days a week, Monday through Friday, for several years now.

Baudelio helps out a lot at the senior center. He always offers his help to others: carrying items, cleaning up and walking with seniors. When the F.I.N.D. Food Bank truck comes once a month, Baudelio assists in unloading and distributing 200 bags of food items.

Baudelio walks every day. He enjoys attending his community church, working on his garden, reading, word search puzzles, and a good nap after a day at the senior center.

Baudelio loves his family and appreciates his wife, Refugio. They have been married for 54 years. It is always fun for them to travel to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico to visit family.

Baudelio has four daughters, and six grandchildren. His advice to today's younger generation is to have respect for one another.

Baudelio, de 81 años, nació en el pueblo El Colomo en el estado de Jalisco, México. Él y sus ocho hermanos se criaron en El Colomo y La Huerta. En su niñez, él vivió y trabajó en el campo.

En 1965, Baudelio contrajo matrimonio con Refugio. Después de 12 años de matrimonio, tuvieron dos hijas, las cuales nacieron en el mismo año. En 1976, Baudelio y su familia emigraron a los EE. UU., estableciéndose en Los Angeles. Después del nacimiento de su tercera hija, Baudelio y su familia se mudaron al Valle de Coachella.

Cuando Baudelio se mudó al Valle de Coachella, vivió en la comunidad de Thermal. Le ofrecieron trabajo en un riego de cultivos de alfalfa, algodón, brócoli, coliflor y pepino. Después de trabajar en la empresa agrícola cinco años, Baudelio se fue a trabajar a Foster-Gardner, Inc., donde trabajó ocho años.

Después de estar en la fuerza laboral de irrigación, a Baudelio le ofrecieron un trabajo en The Quarry en La Quinta, donde podaba los árboles y daba buen mantenimiento a los campos. Baudelio trabajó en el campo de golf hasta que se jubiló a los 63 años.

Baudelio ama a su comunidad de Coachella, que ha sido su hogar desde 1988. Disfruta ser voluntario en Eleanor Shadowen, el Centro para las personas de la tercera edad, ubicado en el centro de la ciudad de Coachella. Él ha estado yendo por varios años, cinco días a la semana, de lunes a viernes.

Baudelio ayuda mucho en el centro. Él siempre se ofrece ayudar a otros, llevando artículos, la limpieza y caminar con otros compañeros. Cuando F.I.N.D el camión del Banco de alimentos llega una vez al mes, Baudelio ayuda a descargar y distribuir 200 bolsas de alimentos.

Baudelio camina todos los días. Le gusta asistir a la iglesia de su comunidad, trabajar en su jardín, la lectura, cruzigramas, y una buena siesta después de un día en el centro.

Baudelio ama a su familia y aprecia a su esposa, Refugio. Han estado casados 54 años. Siempre es divertido para ellos viajar a Puerto Vallarta, México a visitar a su familia.

Baudelio tiene cuatro hijas, y seis nietos. Su consejo para la generación más joven es que se respeten mutuamente.

Desert Hot Springs – Larry Buchanan

Larry, 70, was born in Spokane, Washington and was raised in Priest Lake, Idaho.

Larry attended Eastern Washington University and received his bachelor's degree with dual majors in political science and urban planning in 1971.

From 1971-1977, he served in the U.S. Air Force and provided nuclear weapons security in the U.S. and for four years in Canada, in the Arctic.

Afterward, Larry began his 30-year career with Kaiser Permanente at its headquarters in Oakland. In 1980, he attended Kaiser University through the University of California, Berkeley and received a certification in advanced management.

Larry negotiated labor contracts, including the national labor contract in 2005. Larry was recognized with an Excellence in Management award from the Northern California Medical Group.

Larry was active in the Northern California KP Pride LGBTQ Employee Association since its founding. Larry led the association as president and helped secure domestic partnership benefits for the association's 13,000 members and added transgender recognition in the HR employee policies.

Larry retired from Kaiser Permanente in 2009. In retirement, he moved to the Coachella Valley and became ingrained in Desert Hot Springs community activities.

Larry loves reading, specifically Tom Clancy mysteries. He volunteers at the Desert Hot Springs Library and helps run its used book store. Larry is passionate about the library and serves on the Friends of the Desert Hot Springs Library and on the board for the Library Advocates.

Larry is a member and past president of the Desert Hot Springs Historical Society. He serves the city as a Planning Commissioner, and as its current chairman.

Larry is active in the Desert Hot Springs Rotary. In 2018, he was recognized as the DHS Rotarian of the Year for his service to the community.

In his free time, Larry enjoys searching for pre-1900 postage stamps. Larry has collected stamps since he was a child. His collections include stamps from the Kingdom of Hawaii, pre-Confederation Canada and the German colonies.

In 2008, Larry married Ernie, his partner of 25 years. Larry has two sons, three grandchildren, and two dogs and one cat.

Indian Wells – Shelly Fraser

Shelly, 72, was born in Stockton, California and grew up in Lodi, California.

Shelly is an artist with a background and career in commercial print advertising, having worked with Anderson Lithograph, which was one of the largest printing companies in California. For over 25 years, Shelly earned the distinction of continually being the company's top producer.

Drawn by the sunshine of the desert, Shelly and her husband, James, retired to Indian Wells in 2004.

In retirement, she has pursued her passion as an artist, interior designer and community volunteer. Since 2005, Shelly has volunteered at the Desert Regional Medical Center in Palm Springs.

One of Shelly's most rewarding accomplishments is her time with the Desert Regional Medical Center Auxiliary Foundation, the hospital's not-for-profit fundraising and charitable outreach arm. The Auxiliary's primary funding comes from the hospital's gift shop and other fundraisers throughout the year. Shelly is extremely proud that they were able to give out \$28,000 in "volunteer scholarships" and \$50,000 to other local charities.

Shelly has also volunteered for three years in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). On one occasion, a newborn set of triplet girls was brought into the NICU. Each baby needed her own bed. Upon their release, their parents put them all in one bed to take some photos. This was the first time since their birth that the girls had been with one another. Shelly was moved and will never forget how the girls interacted; it was evident they knew one another by how they touched and looked at each other.

Shelly has volunteered over 10,000 hours through her various activities at Desert Regional Medical Center and in the gift shop.

Shelly frequently takes college classes to accumulate more knowledge and experience to apply to her passions. She attended San Francisco State University in 1982.

In her spare time, Shelly enjoys helping her friends decorate their homes and painting abstract pieces with bold, bright colors in her garage-converted studio.

Shelly stresses to people to make sure to have fun along the way, take adventures and trips frequently and not leave your bucket list for when you retire.

Shelly has a kitty named Oliver that she and James adore.

Indio – Nettie Washington

Nettie, 74, was born in New York City and grew up on Barbados, and in New York and New Jersey.

From 1962 to 1964, Nettie enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. As her service was ending, she met Willie while they were both stationed in Texas.

They married and, after Willie's 20-year military career, they retired to Willie's hometown of Tulare in California's Central Valley.

Nettie attended Merced College and received an associate's degree in speech and library technology. She went on to attend California State University, Bakersfield to study liberal arts and teacher credentialing. Attending college while raising her family is among Nettie's proudest achievements.

Nettie began working as an employer relationship representative at Tulare Adult School in 1990 and moved into career counseling after earning career counseling certification from the University of California, San Diego.

In 1992, Nettie was elected to the Tulare City Council. During her three terms on the City Council, she was elected to the chairmanship of the National League of Cities, Leadership Council. She served on the City Council until 2004.

Soon after, Nettie retired and moved to the Coachella Valley. On the recommendation of a friend, who compared it to her church in Tulare, Nettie and Willie tried Southwest Church on their first Sunday in the desert, and have continued to worship there ever since.

At Southwest, Nettie and Willie are hosts of the 9:30 a.m. Sunday service. They greet, seat people, collect the offering, answer questions and help the congregants. They volunteer in any project the church is involved in, such as community clean-ups. Nettie is also part of the grandparent ministry.

In her community of Sun City Shadow Hills, Nettie has helped out in the library and has volunteered as the neighborhood watch captain. She has served as president of the California School Employee Association Retiree Unit and president of the Friends of the Indio Senior Center, a position she held for four years.

In her spare time, Nettie is a paper crafter. She makes greeting cards, memory books and journals for her friends and family members. She is a quilter and a food adventurer. She will try any food at least once. She also enjoys reading biographies. Michelle Obama's biography is currently on her nightstand.

Her advice to younger generations is to take the time to find out who you are as a person and what your values are and to then live by them.

Nettie and Willie have three daughters, five grandchildren and a Yorkie named Toby.

La Quinta - Juan Salas

Juan, 71, was born in El Centro, California. At nine months of age, he moved to Indio and has resided in the Coachella Valley ever since.

A graduate of Indio High School, Juan is a veteran who served our country in the U.S. Army. His active duty service, from 1967 to 1970, included a tour of duty in Vietnam.

Juan graduated from College of the Desert in 1973 with an associate's degree in industrial arts and drafting. While at College of the Desert, he married his wife, Teresa.

Juan worked for Imperial Irrigation District for 27 years as a distribution planner.

Juan and Teresa moved to La Quinta in 1971, before it became a city, and raised their three sons in La Quinta. Juan started volunteering in the PTA at Jackson Elementary School and served as president of the PTA.

Juan served on the City of La Quinta's Planning Commission when the city was quite young. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the PGA West development.

Juan served as past president of Indio Sunrise Rotary.

For the past three and a half years, Juan has volunteered as the instructor for the Riverside County Office on Aging "Fit After 50" exercise class at the Desert Recreation District's La Quinta Community Fitness Center.

Since Juan began instructing Fit After 50, the class went from two sessions with 15-30 attendees per week, to now six sessions with an average of 75 attendees per week.

The Desert Recreation District's Fitness Coordinator credits this increase in demand to Juan and the positive fitness atmosphere and amazing social experience he creates throughout the class. The group can often be found at the local pizzeria after class.

Juan's favorite vacation spot is Carlsbad. He often takes road trips with a 1989 Volkswagen van that he rebuilt. He wants younger generations to know that life is precious and to take each day as it comes.

In addition to their children, Juan and Teresa have two grandchildren.

Palm Desert – Margaret “Peggy” Leo

Peggy, 78, was born in Nyack, New York and was raised in Pearl River, New York. Peggy’s father was an Italian immigrant who came to the United States while Ellis Island was still operational.

Peggy received her bachelor’s degree in liberal studies from the State University of New York at Oneonta in 1962 and later received her fifth year teaching credential and language development specialist, needed for ESL, in 1990 from California State University, Northridge.

At the age of 22, Peggy became a teacher. She taught for over 45 years everywhere she’s lived: New Jersey, Washington, Virginia, Texas, LA and the Coachella Valley.

In 1993, her husband, Bob, was offered the job of executive director of the Palm Desert Chamber of Commerce. Bob’s job brought them to the Coachella Valley and Peggy began teaching second grade at Hoover Elementary School in Indio. She was with the Desert Sands Unified School District for 20 years.

During her time at Hoover Elementary, Peggy began teaching homeless students in the after school program. She had a microwave in her classroom and received support from the local Costco and Ralph’s stores with food. She knew that her students went home on a full stomach.

During these classes, she would also teach the students English. She strongly believes that anyone can overcome obstacles. The advice she offers the younger generations is to follow your dreams, and if you work hard, whether to learn a language or a trade, you will overcome all obstacles. You can do anything you would like, but you need to work for it.

When Peggy was five, her parents took her to Rockefeller Center at Christmas time to a Carmen Cavallero show. Afterwards, they went to Macy’s and she found a piano in the toy department. Her parents were blown away that she was able to replay the same songs they had just heard at the concert. For her eighth birthday, her parents surprised her with a baby Grand piano.

This propelled Peggy into her passion for music. Since then, she also has taught choir after school. She continues this passion by bringing music to the lives of seniors at the Joslyn Center, singing in the Joslyn Singers choir.

Peggy serves on the Joslyn Center board of directors and on the fund development and emergency preparedness committees. She is also an active member of the Go-4-Life Program, the exercise program at the Joslyn Center. She enjoys her interactions with other seniors and enjoys making the center a pleasant and exciting “home away from home.”

Since moving to the Coachella Valley, Peggy has volunteered with St. Margaret’s Episcopal Church. She assists in its “Neighbors to Neighbors” program. The food and clothing distribution program serves over 1,100 people per week.

Peggy and Bob will be celebrating 57 years of marriage in 2019. They have two sons and five grandchildren.

Palm Springs – Dr. Diane Ross

Diane, 81, was born and raised in Detroit.

Curiosity with how things work came naturally to Diane early in life. When she was a child, her father let her take apart an old alarm clock to figure out what made it tick. That fascination would stay with her throughout her career and into today.

Diane did her undergraduate studies at Wayne State University and received a bachelor's degree in physical education in 1959. Diane taught physical education classes for five years, but wanted to do more. She enrolled in the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and received her master's and her doctorate degrees in kinesiology in 1965 and 1973, respectively.

Diane then began her career as a professor of kinesiology at California State University, Fullerton from 1973 until her full retirement in 2001. Her research focused on how movements are learned and remembered, and how movements become automated.

Diane and her partner, Arta, moved to the Coachella Valley in 2000. They had a condo in Palm Springs and had frequently visited. They figured, why not retire here? Diane and Arta were together for over 33 years before her passing in 2012.

Teaching brings great joy to Diane, personally and professionally. Seeing the learning, improvement and transformation in each student is her great satisfaction.

To this day, Diane works as a teacher, teaching seniors iPads and iPhones twice a month at Inter Valley Health Plan in Palm Springs. It is free to any senior who wants to come in and take the class.

Diane applies her teaching craft in her volunteer work at the Mizell Senior Center. On Tuesdays and Fridays, she instructs the "Fit After 50" course. She enjoys being active and helping others when it comes to being physically active and doing the proper exercises that can help with posture and balance. She also teaches this class on Wednesdays at Inter Valley Health Plan.

Diane is on the Palm Springs Unified School District's oversight committee for construction bonds. She is also an active member in her neighborhood association.

From 2002 to 2016, she volunteered with the Riverside County Registrar of Voters and worked every election during that time. Fortunately, the same group of people worked with her for about 25 elections.

In her spare time, Diane watches The Metropolitan Opera through live broadcasts at the Regal Theater in Palm Springs or at the Century Theater at the River. She also enjoys reading, bird watching and nature photography.

Diane's advice to younger generations is to be active and stay active, physically, but also keep your mind sharp. She encourages today's youth to be interested in the things around them and to ask "why?"

Rancho Mirage – Claudia Fausett

Claudia, 75, was born in Salt Lake City and grew up in Salt Lake City; Pocatello, Idaho; and Portland, Oregon.

Claudia attended Long Beach State College, majoring in speech and drama from 1961-1963. She met her husband of 58 years, Richard, in 1961.

She went to work for Bank of America to support her husband through graduate school in Berkeley. After graduate school, they moved back to Southern California.

After working in the banking industry, Claudia transitioned to sales with Harter's Distributing. Claudia worked with her clients on a personal level and was twice recognized as salesperson of the year. Claudia retired with Harter's in 1999. She also managed a jewelry store for four years in Beverly Hills.

During the Northridge Earthquake in 1994, Claudia was visiting a friend in Orange County. When she drove back home, she had not realized the Santa Monica freeway had collapsed. Fortunately, her home did not sustain much damage. She went to check on her elderly neighbor across the street. Thankfully, she had fallen asleep in the living room that night because a large mirror had fallen onto her neighbor's bed. Claudia believes that had her neighbor been asleep in her bed, she would have died.

In the aftermath of the quake, people had no electricity for days. Stores were closed. The Northridge Earthquake was the catalyst for Claudia's involvement in emergency preparedness as she realized that no one was prepared for a large scale natural disaster.

Since then, Claudia has been very active in various emergency preparedness organizations. Claudia spent three years on the City of Rancho Mirage Emergency Preparedness Commission. She currently chairs the Mission Hills Community Emergency Preparedness Taskforce in her community.

In her free time, Claudia enjoys playing Hearts with her friends, volunteering and golf.

Her advice to younger generations is to set goals for yourself, but to retain perspective. If something does not turn out how you expected it to, look ahead and see what you could do differently if it were to happen again. She also encourages today's generation to be who you want to be, not what other people try to make you.

Claudia and Richard have been Rancho Mirage residents for the past 15 years. They had previously frequently visited friends and visited for the beautiful golf courses. They joined Claudia's brother and sister-in-law, who retired to the valley.

Claudia has one son and the best daughter-in-law a mother could ask for.

Riverside County – Cathy Claborn

Cathy, 72, was born in New Hampton, Iowa. She spent some time in Iowa, and also grew up in Sacramento and Orange County, California.

Cathy earned her undergraduate degree in English at California State University, Fullerton in 1968. She earned her master's degree in 1978 at California State University, San Bernardino in education/counseling.

Cathy came to the Coachella Valley over 50 years ago to teach in the Desert Sands Unified School District. She taught for 19 years at the elementary school level and was a school counselor for 18 years in elementary and middle schools.

For her outstanding work, Cathy was twice named teacher of the year and received recognition from Walmart Stores, San Diego/Riverside County. She retired in 2004.

For the past 13 years, Cathy has volunteered with the Coachella Valley History Museum in various capacities. She organizes and schedules the school tours, serves as a docent, and helps where she is needed most. Cathy also volunteers at the Indio Performing Arts Center as an usher.

She is part of Delta Kappa Gamma, Theta Epsilon Chapter, a group of women educators that raises money to provide scholarships to teachers and students going into teaching. One of her favorite volunteer activities is going to several school sites on Dr. Seuss Day and reading to the classes.

Cathy and her husband, Bill, love to travel. They have been to Canada and Mexico numerous times and Europe three times, and have visited 49 states, and have yet to visit Vermont. Her hobbies include reading and her book club. Cathy also likes to hike the Indian Canyons and collect china dishes and Christmas decorations.

Her advice to the younger generation is to work hard in school, believe in yourself and believe that it is okay to ask for help. She also encourages everyone to reach out to others who may not have a lot of friends or support. Cathy's family and career have made the biggest impact in her life.

Cathy and Bill have been married for 50 years. They reside in Bermuda Dunes.

The Claborns have two wonderful children, Barrett and Robyn; daughter-in-law Heather and son-in-law Ben Wallman; two grandchildren, Tyler and Kayla; and Timo Kaisla, who they have welcomed into their family. Timo, of Finland, lived with Cathy and Bill as a foreign exchange student during his senior year at Indio High School in 1986. He is now 50 and they often visit each other.

Riverside County – Rosa Lucas

Rosa, 73, was born in Los Angeles, California and raised in Beverly Hills.

Rosa's nearly lifelong passion for peace and justice took root in her volunteer and civic work from an early age. As a teenager, she did door-to-door voter registration drives in Watts in support of the Rumford Fair Housing Act.

She stayed politically active through college, as a grassroots organizer in the peace, civil rights and free speech movements of the 1960s. She organized the L.A. contingents for the peace marches in San Francisco and the March on Washington. Working with the National Lawyers Guild, she did legal defense work for people arrested in the demonstrations.

Rosa attended the University of California, Berkeley, studied abroad at the University of Madrid, and graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1968 with a bachelor's degree in Spanish language and literature.

Rosa then returned to college and attended Santa Monica College where she received her associate's degree and RN certification in 1973. She graduated from the Charles Drew Postgraduate Medical School as a Family Nurse Practitioner in 1977.

Rosa has followed the adage: "think globally, act locally." Driven to provide health care for all, it is in our community, her home since 1985, where Rosa has made an immeasurable impact in expanding health care access to the medically underserved.

Rosa brought the Flying Medical Volunteers to the eastern Coachella Valley 25 years ago. The Flying Doctors come on an annual basis to provide free medical and dental services.

Rosa was instrumental to the founding of the Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine (CVVIM). Former Supervisor Roy Wilson and Dr. Ron Hare assisted in securing funding for CVVIM, the first "free clinic" in the eastern Coachella Valley and in Riverside County.

Rosa is a volunteer team leader for CVVIM's Homeless Medical Outreach project. They go into homeless encampments with backpacks filled with medical supplies and provide medical and behavioral health services with a team of medical professionals and community volunteers.

Rosa has also worked to open the school-based clinic at Coachella Valley High School and a Federally Qualified Health Center in Oasis. For almost 20 years, Rosa served on the Advisory Board of Headstart for Desert Sands and Coachella Valley Unified School Districts (CVUSD). She became CVUSD's medical consultant for Head Start and Early Childhood Programs in 2006.

For the past ten years, Rosa has been a Family Nurse Practitioner at the Eisenhower Urgent Care Clinics.

Rosa has one daughter and one son, two grandchildren and a Persian cat, Pearl, named after Janis Joplin.

A guiding principle in Rosa's life is a quote by Archbishop Desmond Tutu: "Start where you are at, do all you can, remain appalled."