

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Gerry Gilchrist: Finding Happiness in Life



TGN: Gerry, tell us about your teaching career.

Gerry: I became a teacher after graduating from the University of Tennessee and attending the University of Michigan where I studied for a masters degree in speech and drama. Becoming a teacher was my "life's love". I taught in junior high school and later in high school. I liked the kids so much. I have had such good experiences working with young people. I first taught at Grosse Pointe, Michigan, where I was head of the junior high school English department. I also was involved with the community theater there, directing plays. Later, after I was married, my husband and I moved West and settled in the Bay Area. I got a job at Carlmont High School first, and later went on to Cubberley High School in Palo Alto where I taught for eight years. That was great! I still get email correspondence from my former students there. I would have seminars in the homes of different students, and I took a group to Lake Tahoe on an overnight. (At a class reunion in 2000, some of my Cubberley students told me how much they had enjoyed me as a teacher). After that I moved on to teach humanities, art and literature at Palo Alto High School. I retired from teaching in 1985.

TGN: What is your family background?

Gerry: I was born in Ashville, North Carolina. My grandfather was a Presbyterian minister in the Appalachian Mountains. My family moved to Detroit where we lived during World War II. My father had been in the advertising business, but when the war came he got a job at Oak Ridge, Tennessee. It was secret government work, but he said it had to do with "splitting atoms".

TGN: What have you been doing since you retired as a teacher?

Gerry: I got a divorce from my husband in 1985 and our home in Mountain View was sold. I took a job at the Stanford Museum (now the Cantor Art Center) where I was employed until 1991. During that time I was active in the Stanford singles group, and eventual became its president. That is where I met Joe Gilchrist, and we were married in 1990 and moved to San Mateo in 1994. We had a good time traveling

together to places like Hawaii, Mexico, England, France and Italy. He passed away in 2000.

TGN: What have you been active in since then?

Gerry: I joined the compassion center at Avenidas Senior Center in Palo Alto. I became active playing bridge - social bridge not the serious kind. I continue being active at the Cantor Art Center on the tours committee, conducting tours within the U.S. I also have become active in the Congregational Church and am a deacon there. I have lived in several locations nearby - including Oak Creek Apts. and a unit on Sharon Park Drive. Finally in 2010, I moved here to Menlo Commons. I was tired of moving. I love it here.

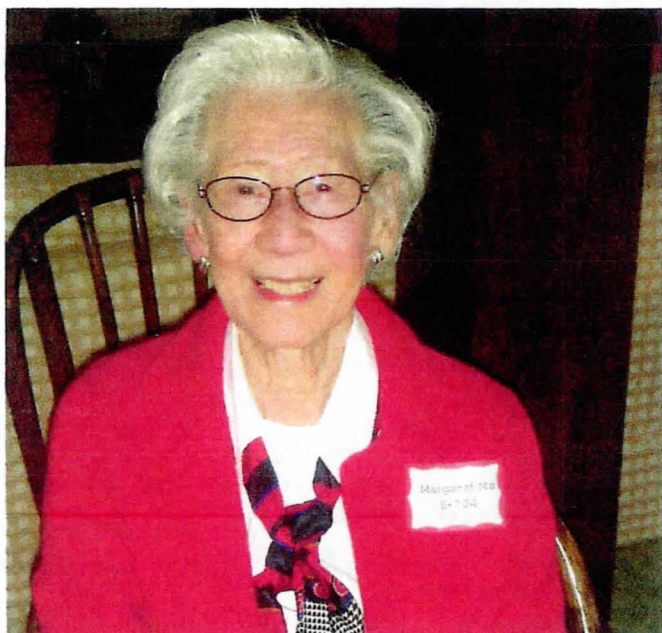
TGN: Sounds like you have been living a happy life!

Gerry: There have been difficult times, but in reviewing my life I can remember again the joyful life I have had, regardless of failures and sadness. There was the magic love of my parents. Also my heroes were my two grandfathers. My mother's father was a doctor - great personality, bridge player. My other grandfather was a guest preacher at the black church behind their home when he retired. I have a romantic side - I want to explore art, music, reading, dining, walking, dancing, and praying. I have a feeling that this emotion has been good because I can feel - and that helps balance me whenever disturbing things happen.

TGN: Thanks for sharing with us, Gerry.



Spring Fling: Celebrating the New Season



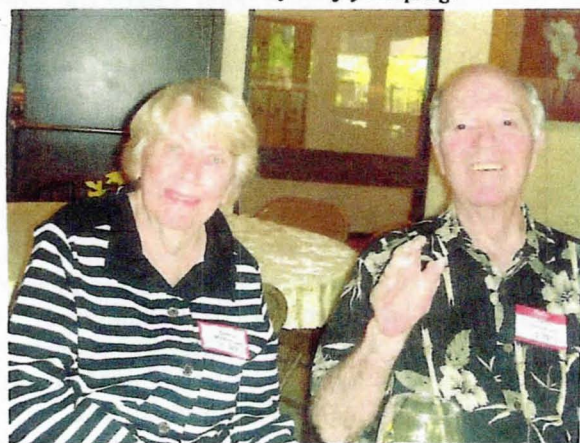
Margaret Ma - decked out for the springtime!



Betty Smith - ready to enjoy the spring!



Gwen Leonard and Ingrid Rogers - serving up some yummys!



Gloria Dawson and Jerry Wilkerson - the season has arrived!



Ryoko Winter sipping for springtime



Carmen Zuk and Ruth Wise - sharing the good times



Ann Mueller re-filling refreshments