

MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

Carol and Michael Patton: "We Heard Many Good Things About Menlo Commons"



TGN: Carol, tell us about your background.

Carol: I was born and raised in Oakland. I graduated from Brigham Young University, and then I became a fashion clothes buyer in San Francisco, and then Beverly Hills, for stores such as Saks Fifth Avenue. I eventually moved to Los Altos and became an interior designer with Nieman Marcus. After that I was an assistant to an ophthalmologist. I had two marriages that did not work out. Then one day at Ann's Coffee Shop in Menlo Park I met Michael. We married and lived in a Sand Hill Circle townhouse before we heard so many good things about Menlo Commons that we decided to "downsize" and move here. We had our place here remodeled, including a new kitchen, and moved in last December. We like the location. It's so very friendly here, and we feel this is a safe place to live.

TGN: Michael, what is your history?

Michael: I was born in Texas, but our family moved to California right after that. I spent my first 7 years in California during the war. My father was an Ob-Gyn. I graduated from the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine. After internship and being an Ob-Gyn resident at Parkland Hospital in Dallas, Texas, I was in the U.S. Air Force Medical Corps for two years, where I spent many sleepless nights delivering babies, a total of 787. My most memorable experience in Ob-Gyn was when I delivered a baby girl in a bulldozer during a blizzard in Michigan! Then I went to Payne Whitney Clinic, Cornell Medical Center in New York City where I spent four years as a psychiatric resident and chief resident - the only non-Ivy League resident in my class. While there I was mentored by Dr. Arthur Shapiro, a psychopharmacologist and an expert in placebo effect, and then Dr. Peter Stokes, a world renowned expert in manic depressive disorder or bipolar disorder. During my third year, I completed a fellowship in psychopharmacology, and co-authored a controlled study in lithium carbonate in manic-depressive illness which was published with a medical journal in 1970. I feel blessed that I had such exceptional training which has served me very well during my 40 years of practice in psychiatry. I moved to California after my residency where I joined San Mateo County Mental Health Services and supervised residents and interns for Stanford University Psychiatric Department for 25 years. During this time I was married twice, having four children and 11 grandchildren, before I met Carol whom I married in 2004. I am still working

part-time as a psychiatrist treating bipolar and unipolar depression. Both run in my family and I have seasonal affective disorder.

TGN: So what do you folks do for relaxation?

Michael: I play golf on Saturdays. I like to read fiction and non-fiction, and exercise. I like to barbecue, and am looking for a chance to do that here. I look forward to a barbecue place at Menlo Commons.

Carol: We both love opera, and theater events - musicals and stage plays. We also love to find good restaurants in the area. I enjoy doing needlepoint myself.

TGN: Do you plan to do any traveling?

Carol: Yes. We are looking forward to taking river boat trips in Europe, and a week in Kauai.

Michael: We have been to Hawaii several times using our Marriot time-share. We can also use that anywhere in the world. For instance, we are planning in October to be in Dana Point in Southern California, where I have a medical seminar to attend. We will be able to use our time share there. Two of my children live in this area, together with six of my grandchildren. My other two children live in Southern California, with my remaining five grandchildren.

Carol: And we need to mention our cat. She is 18 years old, and as a feral cat - she is shy. She is probably under our bed right now. Anyway we have named her "Abigail Adams." How about that for a famous name for a cat?

TGN: That sounds fun! Well, I want to thank you for taking the time to share with me and our readers.



The BBQ is Ready for Summer!



Val Smith shows where the Menlo Commons BBQ is now placed (near the gazebo). It is ready for summer and can be used by following the directions hanging from the side of the unit. Propane will fuel the BBQ. Eventually, Val says the plan would be to put it right next to the gazebo on a concrete slab, keeping it away from a nearby tree. Of course on July 4, it will be ready for the celebration to be held at the Commons Room.

Our Trip to D'lightful, D'lovely, D'licious, Duluth!

By Marilyn and Jim Palmer

We decided to visit our daughter Kristi and son-in-law John in Duluth, Minnesota. We had never been there so this would be an experience. Picking the best time of the year to visit there is important. In the winter and early spring it is cold and snowy there. In the mid-summer it has bugs and heat. So we selected a window of time right after Memorial Day - leaving May 26 and returning June 2. That turned out to be a good choice - no snow and no bugs! The weather was on the chilly side most of the time, but the sky was blue.

Duluth is located a 2 ½ hour northeast drive up from Minneapolis-St. Paul on the shores of Lake Superior. We flew into the Minneapolis airport and spent the first night at the Embassy Suites Hotel, which also turned out to be a good choice. Nice rooms and a fine restaurant called "Woolleys". The menu featured steaks or duck or fish, together with a nice selection of California wines.

Next morning we were picked up by our son-in-law who was in Minneapolis for his car's seasonal snow-tire-change. The weather was clear and the countryside was meadowy, with bunches of trees from time to time. We did not really get close to the Lake until we were close to Duluth.

We were pleasantly surprised with Kristi's and John's place. It was outside the city, on a hill, surrounded by beautiful birch trees. The home had nice window space and spacious rooms. On top of that, it had four fireplaces, one of which was being constantly re-loaded with wood cut from the forest. They owned several acres of trees, so here was plenty to keep the fire going and us warm.

At night and in the morning several deer would gather outside the windows and eat from the grass and some scraps that were out here just for them.

Side trips a few miles north of Duluth we were treated to State Parks at Gooseberry Falls (I called it "goosepimple falls"). Lots of water cascading down to near the Lake Superior. Then there was the Split-Rock Lighthouse. Many ships met their demise in Lake Superior in the 19th century by running into rocks in the snowy or rainy weather. Once lighthouses were put in, safety was restored.

Because of my broken ankle, I was well treated at the state parks (as well as the airport). They had free wheelchairs to offer the disabled and I sure appreciated that.

We ventured forth to a couple of good Duluth restaurants during our one week stay. The food at their home was special - we had barbecued salmon the first day. On the last day it was leg of lamb cooked just fine. In between we had lots of other delicious items.

We managed to have some fun games of Mexican Train in the evenings.

One day Kristi and John went and purchased a wood carved bear - about 4 or 5 feet tall at a place where they made them a few miles up the highway. They asked that it be painted black, and stood it at their front door. It's name we learned later became "Boo-Boo"

We were driven back to Embassy Suites Hotel for our last night by John, and again had some good food and a nice relaxing evening before our plane took off for good old SFO.

While we like traveling, it always is nice to get back home. Thanks to Menlo Commons for maintaining a good place to live for us.

I now refer to Duluth as "d'lightful, d'lovely, d'licious, Duluth". A good place to visit (at the right time of the year)!

