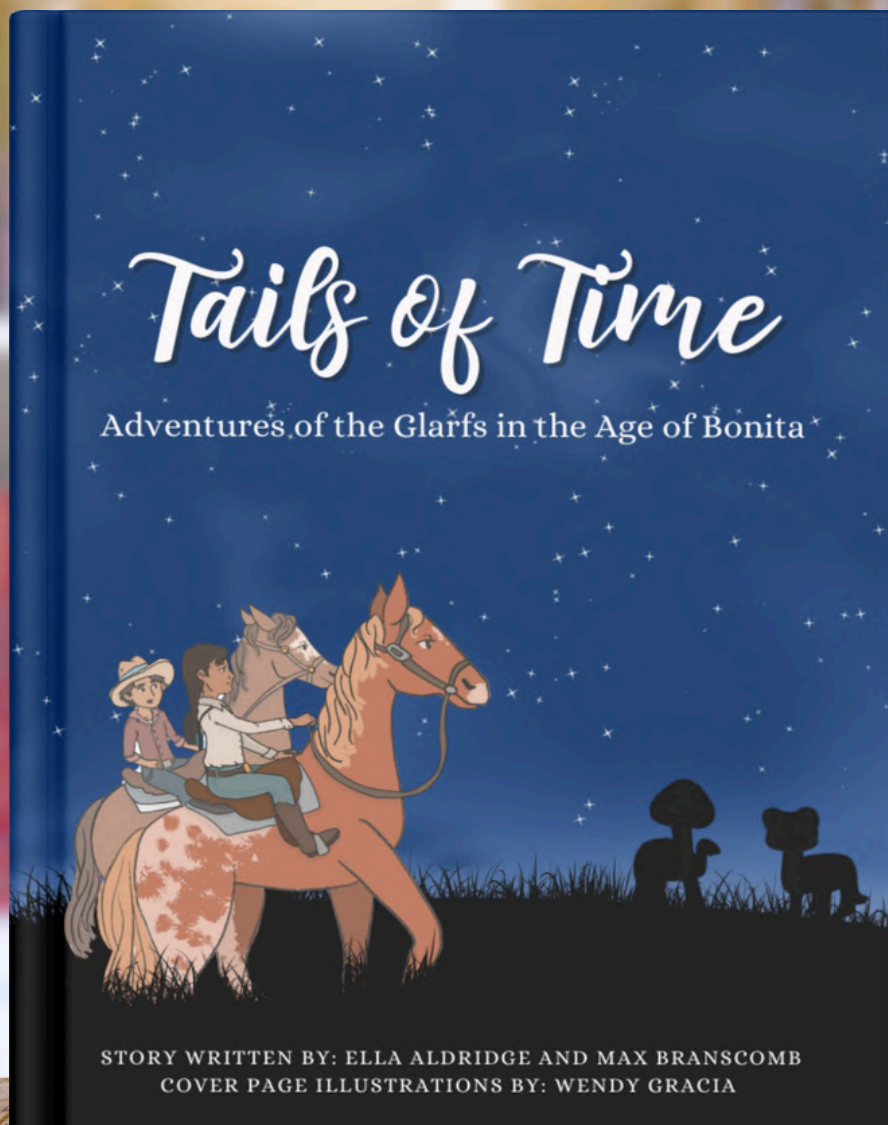


# THE TOWNE LOCAL **Bonita**

MARCH 2025 | ISSUE 5



## **CHAPTER 1 PREMIER**

Our 12-part story of history, adventure, and Bonita!

## **THE COX FAMILY**

Interview Part 2 of 3:  
Bonita Memories

## **ELLA ALDRIDGE**

The New Official  
Song of Bonita

— **YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY MAGAZINE** —

[www.TheTowneLocalBonita.com](http://www.TheTowneLocalBonita.com)



# Table of Contents

<b>WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR</b> .....	<b>4</b>
--------------------------------------	----------

<b>A SPECIAL THANKS TO</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Our business partners	

<b>SINGING, ACTING, WRITING</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Ella Aldridge makes history	

<b>FOR THE LOVE OF HORSES</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Local Realtor Andrea Goyette	

<b>EXPERT ADVICE: TAX TIPS</b> .....	<b>14</b>
Koala Financial	

<b>TAILS OF TIME</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Debut of our 12-part children's story	

<b>POETRY CORNER: UPCOMING EVENTS</b> .....	<b>22</b>
April is National Poetry Month	

<b>SERVICE RUNS IN THE FAMILY</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Greg, Cheryl and Elizabeth Cox	
Reminiscing About Bonita	
(Part 2 of 3)	

All content remains the property of The Towne Local Bonita LLC and cannot be used without expressed written consent from Jeff Bettger. All interviews were conducted by and all articles were written by Jeff Bettger unless otherwise noted.





# Up Your Marketing Game

## Creative Solutions for Your Business

Your Marketing Ninja with over 10 years of experience in event planning, marketing, website/graphic design, and everything in between.



### Event Planning & Coordination

Promoting and executing marketing strategies for conferences, webinars, and other events.



### Social Media Management

Creating, scheduling, and analyzing content for platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn.



### Website Design and Optimization

Building user-friendly, visually appealing websites with a focus on user experience.



### Photography

Designing and managing email campaigns to drive engagement and sales



### Brand Strategy Development

Crafting brand identities, messaging, and positioning strategies.



### Graphic Design

Designing promotional materials like logos, brochures, and social media graphics.

**LET'S TRANSFORM YOUR VISION INTO REALITY TODAY!**



*Kim B. Skulavik*

Text/Call: 909.293.8771

Email: KBeesCreative@gmail.com



# WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR

*Can you feel it? That special feeling! That feeling of Spring!*



**JEFF BETTGER**  
PUBLISHING DIRECTOR

The days are getting longer, and the temperatures are getting warmer. To celebrate, we are bringing you this very special issue of The Towne Local Bonita.

Beginning this issue and running for the next 11 issues, we present “Tails of Time: Adventures of the Glarfs in the Age of Bonita.” I asked Dr. Max Branscomb and Ella Aldridge to create this cliff-hanger story of Bonita’s history and “seat of your pants” excitement in the tradition of old-time radio serials. The result is great for all ages!

By the way, Ella Aldridge also happens to be the writer of the recently named Official Song of Bonita! Did I mention she is only 16 years old?

We also present Part 2 of 3 of our acclaimed interview with Greg, Cheryl and Elizabeth Cox. If



*Book cover illustration by Wendy Gracia*

you missed Part 1 in last month’s issue, you can find it (and all past issues) at [www.TheTowneLocalBonita.com](http://www.TheTowneLocalBonita.com)

In our Business Spotlight section, don’t miss our exclusive interview with local equestrian and Realtor Andrea Goyette.

Did you know that April is National Poetry Month? Check out a couple of free, local poetry events on April 6 (Chula Vista Civic Library) and April 26 (Bonita Museum).

Tax season is upon us. Ben Koala, from Koala Financial, provides some expert advice that may save you money on your taxes!

**IMPORTANT UPDATE:** Last month we featured star Bonita signer/songwriter Kieler Avery. This month, Kieler has been nominated in the category of Best Pop Song for the 2025 San Diego Music Awards! You can vote for Kieler at [sandiegomusicawards.com](http://sandiegomusicawards.com) Go Kieler! We are proud of you!

## Meet the Team



**Jeff Bettger**  
Publishing Director  
[Jeff@TheTowneLocalBonita.com](mailto:Jeff@TheTowneLocalBonita.com)



**Eddie Flores**  
Photographer  
[eddie@lovelifephotography.com](mailto:eddie@lovelifephotography.com)



**Kim Skulavik**  
Creative Director  
[kim@thetownelocal.com](mailto:kim@thetownelocal.com)



# THANK YOU TO OUR *Business Partners*

*Need a service? Consider these excellent local businesses. Find their ads throughout this issue. To learn even more about their services, see more photos, and read an interview with the owner, go to our website at [www.TheTowneLocalBonita.com](http://www.TheTowneLocalBonita.com), scroll down, and click on their logo! Support your local businesses! Are you interested in advertising your business in future issues? Contact us!*

## ANDREA GOYETTE REAL ESTATE

- 🌐 [homesbyandreagoyette.com](http://homesbyandreagoyette.com)
- 📞 (619) 559-5591
- ✉️ [homesbyandreagoyette@gmail.com](mailto:homesbyandreagoyette@gmail.com)

## GREAT CLIPS

- 🌐 <https://app.greatclips.com/>
- 📞 (619) 869-8590 (Terra Nova Plaza)
- 📞 (619) 397-0506 (Eastlake Village)

## LOVE LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

- 🌐 [www.iLoveLifePhotography.com](http://www.iLoveLifePhotography.com)
- 📞 (619) 48-5781
- ✉️ [eddie@ilovelifephotography.com](mailto:eddie@ilovelifephotography.com)

## BONITA POINT AUTO CARE 76

- 🌐 [www.bonitapoint76.com/](http://www.bonitapoint76.com/)
- 📞 (619) 421-7600
- ✉️ [bonitapointautocare76@gmail.com](mailto:bonitapointautocare76@gmail.com)

## KBEE'S CREATIVES MARKETING

- 📞 Call/Text
- 📞 909.293.8771
- ✉️ [KBeesCreative@gmail.com](mailto:KBeesCreative@gmail.com)

## MICHAEL DULLEA, RESIDENTIAL LENDER

- 🌐 [www.netlendinginc.com](http://www.netlendinginc.com)
- 📞 (619) 890 - 3614
- ✉️ [mdullea@netlendinginc.com](mailto:mdullea@netlendinginc.com)

## CUTTING EDGE RESTORATION

- 🌐 [www.CuttingEdgeRestorationInc.com](http://www.CuttingEdgeRestorationInc.com)
- 📞 (877) 875-1235
- ✉️ [clientcare@CuttingEdgeRestorationInc.com](mailto:clientcare@CuttingEdgeRestorationInc.com)

## KOALA FINANCIAL

- 🌐 [www.Koala.CPA](http://www.Koala.CPA)
- 📞 (619) 475-5542
- ✉️ [info@koala.cpa](mailto:info@koala.cpa)

## PRAECELUS PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

- 🌐 [www.PRAEHOMES.com](http://www.PRAEHOMES.com)
- 📞 (877) 772-3466
- ✉️ [info@praeohomes.com](mailto:info@praeohomes.com)

## DIGNITY MEMORIAL

- 📞 Delia Pearsons
- 📞 (619) 888-3095
- 📞 Call for an appointment

## LAW FIRM OF JOHN ALTOMARE

- 🌐 [www.johnaltomarelaw.com](http://www.johnaltomarelaw.com)
- 📞 (619) 407-4097
- ✉️ [ja@johnaltomarelaw.com](mailto:ja@johnaltomarelaw.com)

## YAVORSKY PROPERTIES

- 🌐 <https://shorturl.at/ngrrhh>
- 📞 (619) 267-7900
- ✉️ [BonitaRE@aol.com](mailto:BonitaRE@aol.com)

## YOUR BUSINESS FEATURED HERE

- Reach your target audience
- High-quality engagement
- Enhance Visual Impact

HELP CLIENTS  
FIND YOU

Email Jeff at  
[Jeff@TheTowneLocalBonita.com](mailto:Jeff@TheTowneLocalBonita.com)



LET THESE BUSINESSES  
KNOW YOU SAW THEM IN  
THE TOWNE LOCAL  
BONITA MAGAZINE

SINGING, ACTING, WRITING

# ELLA ALDRIDGE MAKES HISTORY

*Written by: Dr. Max Branscomb*

When Ella Aldridge took the audition stage she was in full command. Her cold read was perfect, her singing strong and confident, her fundamentals excellent.

She was marvelous. She was 9.

And it was her first ever audition.

Her mother asked the gob smacked director if there were parts for a nine-year-old girl. He said no, but there soon would be because he was going to rewrite the show and create one for the wunderkind he had just encountered. Ella was cast in her first play and Bonita got its first glimpse of one of its most talented citizens.

In January, 16-year-old Aldridge again defied her age when she dazzled an audience packed into the Bonita Historical Museum with her song “Home in Bonita.” The gathering of community leaders unanimously voted it the Official Song of Bonita, California. Former San Diego Symphony Orchestra conductor Dr. Jahja Ling called it “a pretty song for a pretty community.”

“That was such an amazing moment,” said Aldridge. “I could not believe it when all those great people raised their hands to choose my song. I tried hard not to cry, but I couldn’t help it. It was such an overwhelming feeling of joy.”

Aldridge has brought joy to tens of thousands of



theater goers and radio listeners since her 2017 debut in the Bonitafest Melodrama “Bonita Vista by Two.” She has played major parts ever since, including an electrifying performance in the title role of “Ms. Sweetwater Valley,” based on the true story of a Miss Bonita pageant winner stripped of her title because she was 17 days too old to represent Bonita in the Fairest of the Fair. Last September she played the iconic role of Sadie, the star-crossed daughter in “Thin Skins and Hayseeds.”

Her performances in those shows – unbeknownst at the time – prepared Aldridge to write “Home in Bonita.” She made her public debut as a singer-guitarist in “Ms. Sweetwater Valley” when her character played a rousing gospel song for her talent competition. She crushed it.

In “Thin Skins and Hayseeds” she sang the opening number while playing guitar. It was the closing number she was not singing that was problematic. Shortly before opening night, the director unexpectedly axed the song in the middle of a rehearsal. He asked Aldridge if she would like to collaborate on a new closing number.



As always, Aldridge seized the opportunity. Her mother invited the director to their home on a Sunday morning to work on the song. He had chord changes and some place holder lyrics for a chorus, but not much else. He asked Aldridge if she had anything.

Under a shady tree on her patio she played “Home in Bonita.” He was gob smacked again.

On opening night the usually unflappable Aldridge confessed that she was “terrified, but also super excited” to perform “Home in Bonita” as the closing number before an audience of 300.

She crushed it.

As the audience roared, some members of the community clamored for “Home in Bonita” to become Bonita’s official song.

## A REMARKABLE YEAR

January’s coronation of her song was the latest in a string of accomplishments by the junior musical theater major at the San Diego School of the Creative and Performing Arts in Paradise Hills. In 2024 Aldridge:

- Starred in the title role of “The Little Mermaid”
- Danced in “Guys and Dolls”
- Chaired the Bonitafest Youth Committee
- Played Sadie in “Think Skins and Hayseeds”
- Starred as Colmillos the Jaguar in “Journey of the Skeletons”
- Was named one of San Diego County’s 25 Most Remarkable Teenagers – the only performing artist honored
- Was honored by the County Board of Supervisors with “Ella Aldridge Day”
- Was honored by the Chula Vista City Council for contributions to the performing arts

Congressman Juan Vargas honored her in February with a Congressional Proclamation.

Vargas Field Representative Edgar Gonzalez called Aldridge “a community treasure. (The) proclamation reflects just a fraction of the appreciation she deserves.”

“I’m so happy that so many people like my song,” Aldridge said. “It’s an amazing feeling.”

“Home in Bonita” came to Aldridge on a late summer Sunday morning.

“I was looking out my window on a warm, breezy morning,” she recalled. “I saw eucalyptus trees swaying and imagined Bonita’s lovely hillsides. I thought about what I saw and how it made me feel. The song needed to be gentle and reflect the beauty of Bonita’s physical traits and its people. That’s what I was trying for.”

## THE GIRL IN BLACK

Growing up in the 2010s there were lots of talented women singer-songwriters Aldridge



### BONITA POINT 76 AUTO CARE

Your local, family-owned auto care center. In business since 1992! Emissions & Smog Testing. Brakes. Auto Air Conditioning. General Auto Maintenance and Repair. Cars, SUV's, trucks, and Commercial Vehicles. (Across from Bonita Vista High School)

GIVE YOUR CAR A CHECK UP.



Visit Our Website or Call  
[www.BonitaPoint76.com](http://www.BonitaPoint76.com)  
619-421-7600



Our Location  
1495 East H Street, Chula Vista



*Front left to right: Tim Evans, Kieler Avery, Alexis Luna, Ella Aldridge, Syara Platero*

heard, but she most loved her mom's show music and dad's classic rock. A poster for the British Invasion icons The Who is tacked to the ceiling of her bedroom, she said, and she loves Bob Dylan and Neil Young. Her earliest favorites, though, were Johnny Cash and June Carter. Her very first time on stage was in kindergarten, inspired by the Man in Black.

"My mom dressed me head to toe in black and I sang 'Ring of Fire,'" she said. Aldridge caught the bug and the performing arts inhabited her soul. (She stole the show in November when she sang a version of "Ring of Fire" as Colmillos the Jaguar in "Journey of the Skeletons." San Diego theater critics praised Aldridge for her gracefully fierce feline.)

She attended the Performing Arts School at Allen Elementary where she played her "dream role" as Peter Pan. It was a turning point in her life.

"Playing Peter Pan taught me as a very young child what you have to do to prepare for bigger roles," she said. "You need to know the backstory to know how to approach the character."

Her friend Rachel Allen convinced Aldridge to

audition for the 2017 Bonitafest Melodrama.

"I remember being really nervous," she said. "I was afraid no one would read with me, but everyone was really nice and some of the older actors helped me out. When I started singing all my fears subsided."

Being cast in the Melodrama was "a very important moment in my life," she recalled.

"I felt so honored to be cast with people like Tanya Carr and Shae-Lin (Carr) who were so mentoring," she said. "There were so many talented people and they were all so nice to me. They showed me how to behave like a professional actor, to develop professional habits. All that changed my mindset. I thought 'Someone sees something in me!'"

Playing Pep Pep, the head cheerleader's little sister, gave her the opportunity to perform with the lead pack in the football musical based on the opening of Bonita Vista High School in 1969.

"Tanya and Shae-Lin taught me that it is okay to take risks and to fail while you are searching for your character," she said. "They taught me about



process and that it is okay not to land it the first time. I developed confidence in the process.”

In the 2018 production of “Thin Skins and Hayseeds” and its sequel, 2019’s “Green Heroes and the White Dove,” Aldridge played Martha, an immigrant girl who became a member of the lima bean and cattle family based on the Lansley Clan. Her roles were comedic, but her characters had an inner fortitude that allowed Martha to adapt and persevere. In “Green Heroes” Martha was part of the superhero tandem Pickle Man and Pickle Girl who told her young male counterpoint that “it’s sexist that you’re Pickle Man and I’m Pickle Girl. I should be Pickle Woman!”

“Martha was a proto-feminist and I was proud to play her,” Aldridge said. “Even though I was 10 years old I saw Martha’s strength and her advocacy for women. She was a sassy feminist who fought for what she wanted. That inspired me as an actor to consider what a character wants.”

COVID forced the Melodrama off the stage in 2020 and 2021, but the project adapted as a radio program – the first in San Diego County to move to the airwaves. Aldridge starred in the productions



*Front left to right: Yana, Ella, and Brady Aldridge. Photo by Rodney Regala.*

“Nursing a Grudge” and “Really Fast Food” broadcast on KOGO Radio. Recording the musical comedies during a global pandemic was challenging, she said.

“We were all masked up and the microphones were spread all over the (Sweetwater Community) Church to record,” she recalled. “It was my first radio experience. It made me realize that voice over acting is so different than stage acting. On stage you can use your face and body to enhance the character and get the message across to the audience. On radio those elements are not available. It is how you use your voice with inflections and tones to get your character across. It was an eye-opening experience. I felt stuck at first, but we all figured it out.”

In 2022 the Melodrama returned to the stage with an in-person version of “Really Fast Food” and Aldridge had something of a coming out. Even though she was only 14, she was cast in a lead role with actors several years older. She played Elizabeth, a rich girl whose father wanted to teach her a lesson in humility by making her work in a hamburger joint. Snooty Elizabeth, after thinking only of herself for most of the story,



*Front left to right: Kieler Avery, Jeff Bettger, Maestro Jahja Ling, Ella Aldridge, Mayor John McCann, former Supervisor Greg Cox. Photo by Rodney Regala*

stunned her nemesis with an astonishing act of selfless generosity that causes him to see another side of the “poor little rich girl.”

“Elizabeth had an amazing character arc,” Aldridge said. “She was the spoiled rich girl who does something surprisingly altruistic at the end. Playing her got me to really think seriously about characters and how real people behave. It was a huge step forward in my development.”

Similar to the “Home in Bonita” scenario, the director added a last-minute song to “Really Fast Food” for Aldridge and the talented bass Alexis Luna. Aldridge’s part of the duet was a heartbreaking realization that Elizabeth had acted cowardly and betrayed her friends. Audience members in the front rows had tears streaming down their cheeks as Aldridge glided across the front of the stage, mournfully watching her principled peers picketing the malevolent corporation that took over a local Bonita business, realizing she had chosen the wrong side.

COVID was not finished with Bonita just yet. Trevor Braaten -- the play’s leading man and Elizabeth’s opposite – fell ill and missed nearly three weeks. The production was delayed and Aldridge had to rehearse alone. That is when her director noticed another aspect of her genius.

“When Trevor got sick I had to continue my work without the leading man to play off,” she said. “When I step on to the stage, I step into a different world. Even though Trevor wasn’t there I could fully visualize him there. Everything around me just fades away so I can see the world of the show and the person there. I know how he moves and what he says. I could see and hear my duet partner in the love song. It is so helpful being able to visualize. It is such a great tool.”

Aldridge said she remains grateful to Braaten and the older teens and young adults in “Really Fast Food” for embracing her.

“That may have been the most scared I had ever been,” she said. “That cast was amazing and they were all older than me. I was a little intimidated and had imposter syndrome. Trevor was 18 and the leader of the Music Machine. I remember being really scared of him at first. Lily Hobson was in that cast, and Kieler (Avery) and Alannah (Mora). Trevor was really nice to me and I still really appreciate that. It was transformative. Once we started, I realized it wasn’t Trevor anymore, it was (his punk rock character) P.S. Parker. We don’t need to be scared or intimidated on stage. It’s not us anymore, it’s our characters.”

Later, Aldridge wanted Braaten singing next to her when she performed “Home in Bonita” for the panelists in January.



*Young Ella ready to perform "Ring of Fire"*



“Trevor helped so much to make the song work in ‘Thin Skins and Hayseeds,’” she said. “I’m glad he could be with me when we sang it at the museum and the church for the debut.”

Aldridge helped write the last two productions of “La Pastorela,” the edgy but spiritual Mexican-flavored rhyming Christmas shows produced on KNSJ Radio 89.1. She is also co-authoring “Tails of Time,” a serial story that will appear in The Towne Local Bonita magazine for the next 12 issues, then collectively published as a book. She would like to be a writer-director-actor like Lin Manuel Miranda, Spike Lee or Greta Gerwig.

“I want to learn to do it all,” she said. “That way I can explore topics I am most interested in and develop my own projects.”

After graduating from SDSCPA in June 2026 Aldridge plans to attend an Ivy League university with a strong performing arts program or an East Coast conservatory to study acting, songwriting and directing.

“I am so thankful for all the encouragement I have received growing up in Bonita. I’ve had so many great teachers and so many nice people who supported me. No matter where I go, Bonita will always be in my heart.”



*Ella Aldridge as Colmillos the Jaguar in "Journey of the Skeletons."*



## LAW FIRM OF JOHN ALTOMARE


- WILLS & TRUSTS
- LIVING TRUST ESTATE PLANS
- TRUST ADMINISTRATION
- PROBATE
- CORPORATIONS-BUSINESS LAW
- NON-PROFITS

(619) 407-4097

JA@JOHNALTOMARELAW.COM  
JOHNALTOMARELAW.COM

➔ EMAIL OR CALL TO SCHEDULE  
AN INITIAL CONSULTATION

Legal Advertisement – Advertisement of Legal Services.




GLEN ABBEY  
MEMORIAL PARK & MORTUARY

*Every Detail Remembered™* | **Dignity®**  
MEMORIAL

GLEN ABBEY MEMORIAL PARK & MORTUARY

FD# 1371 COA# 429

LET’S HAVE THE DIFFICULT TALK SO YOU CAN  
ENJOY THE PRECIOUS MOMENTS



DELIA PEARSONS

PRE-PLANNING CONSULTANT

CELL: 619.888.3095

DELIA.PEARSONS@DIGNITYMEMORIAL.COM

LIC. # 4343870

CONTACT ME FOR A CONSULTATION  
SE HABLA ESPAÑOL



# For the Love of Horses: Local Realtor Andrea Goyette

## **Growing Up as Andrea Goyette**

I was born & raised in New York City in a 6-story apartment building. Despite being surrounded by concrete, I somehow developed a love for horses. I walked dogs and babysat to earn enough money to occasionally go horseback riding. My mom would drive us an hour to a riding stable on Long Island. Later, when I went away to college in upstate NY, I was a wrangler at several dude ranches. On the weekends and during the summers, I would lead trail rides and was paid for it! The best of both worlds! I received my BA degree from the University at Albany.

## **The Perfect Horse**

My experience taking riding lessons as a youth, then working as a wrangler, naturally led me to wanting my own horse! After college, I developed a knee condition that didn't allow me to ride for many years. My mom and I attended a breed demonstration at Belmont Park Racetrack. That was the first time we set eyes on the breed of horse we had never heard of – the Paso Fino. They were so smooth, with no posting needed and no need to primarily use your knees as with other breeds. I was thrilled to find a gaited horse breed suitable for riders with bad knees or sore backs.

My mom and I drove eight hours to upstate New York to view and ride a Paso Fino. I purchased my first horse, a white blue-eyed Paso Fino named Valor. Little did I know, this would be the best therapy for my knees. Within the first year, my knees became very strong riding my Valor. That year, I boarded and rode in Queens in NYC where there were parks and greenbelts to connect the various parks. I was a strange sight to see for the parkgoers as no other horses rode there except horses from my boarded 10-stall barn and the NYC police horses. The next year, I wanted to move where the weather allowed for riding all year round. I found a job as a National Sales Manager for a radio station. Valor and I then made our move to San Diego!

## **Moving to Bonita**

I lived in a rented condo in Fashion Valley and boarded Valor in Rancho Penasquitos for five years. I researched many equestrian places and decided to move to Bonita because of the equestrian community, the extensive trail system, and the cooler weather for riding horses. Once I moved to Bonita, I realized how lucky I was to choose such an incredible place. I purchased my home a few years later. I discovered that Bonita has a beautiful trail system that wraps through the center of Bonita.





*I also volunteered as a Bonita trails advocate and worked on trail issues with Supervisor Cox's office.*

home. I have a strong desire to make it the best experience possible for them. I take pride in over exceeding their expectations by getting them the best price on their home or helping first time buyers negotiate added extras.

### For the Love of Helping

My clients love working with me because they know I care about them personally and that we work as a team to accomplish their real estate goals. Here are some of the accolades my clients have written in my 5-star reviews! They have written that I am very professional, knowledgeable, detailed oriented, and supportive throughout the entire process and beyond. I give insightful advice. I go above & beyond expectations. I communicate every step of the way, answering questions to keep them informed. I deliver exceptional service. I have been told that I am personable and hardworking and that I look out for the best interests of my clients. Call me today for all your real estate needs!

With an inland coastal breeze and moisture from the ocean, Bonita stays green all year round. Whether riding horses, walking, biking, jogging, Bonita has great recreation for everyone. Coupled with the small-town country feel, Bonita is a unique and special town! I love the split rail fencing, 2 golf courses, great restaurants, the esthetics of the county feel with the retail stores, a Starbucks, and a fantastic museum and library. Driving around Bonita gives you the vibe of a local country community, a wonderful place for families, great weather, and lots of greenery. It has it all!

I also volunteered as a Bonita trails advocate and worked on trail issues with Supervisor Cox's office and County Trails Coordinator Marianne Vancio. I have been a very involved member of the Bonita Valley Horseman and was President twice for several years. Maintaining trails and not losing trails is the primary focus of the club.

### Switching Careers

After many years in the Media industry selling advertising time for radio & television stations, I wanted to follow my heart and passion for helping people attain their dreams as a homeowner. I often attended open houses just to look at various homes, architecture, and furnishings. While thinking about making a career change, I realized my love and passion for real estate, coupled with my sales experience and strong negotiating skills would lead me to an enjoyable and successful career in real estate.

I took the college level classes and passed the exam on the first try! I love the real estate industry and love helping clients sell and purchase their homes. I enjoy working with first time home buyers, sellers who want to upgrade or downsize, and families who need to update and sell their elder parents'

**Great Clips®**

That fresh haircut feeling—faster

Spend less time waiting and more time on what matters to you.

**ONLINE check-in**

Download our app or visit [greatclips.com](https://greatclips.com)

**TERRA NOVA PLAZA**  
386 E H ST (CLOSE TO CVS)  
CHULA VISTA CA 91910  
619-869-8590

**EASTLAKE VILLAGE MARKETPLACE**  
970 EASTLAKE PKWY (TARGET / LOWES CENTER)  
CHULA VISTA CA 91914  
619-397-0506

1

## Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)

At 70½+, donate up to \$108,000 (2025) tax-free annually from an IRA directly to charity. QCDs count toward RMDs and reduce adjusted gross income, offering greater benefits than itemized deductions due to higher standard deduction thresholds since 2017.

2

## Investment Income

Long-term capital gains and qualified dividends are taxed at 0%, 15%, or 20%, depending on income. High earners (\$200,000+ single/\$250,000+ married) face an extra 3.8% Medicare surtax. These rates are lower than the 37% top ordinary income tax rate.

3

## Roth IRA Conversions

Converting a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA incurs ordinary income tax on converted amounts but offers tax-free growth and withdrawals. Benefits include avoiding RMDs and reducing future tax liabilities.

4

## Saving to the Max

For 2025, contribute \$23,500 to 401(k), 403(b), and 457(b) plans (\$7,500 catch-up for 50+). Ages 60-63 can add \$11,250 super catch-up. Combined deferrals, employer contributions, and after-tax savings can reach \$81,250.

5

## Gift Tax

In 2025, gift up to \$19,000 (individuals) or \$38,000 (couples) tax-free annually. Gifts exceeding this require Form 709 but no tax applies unless lifetime gifts exceed \$13.99 million (2025). Unlimited gifts are allowed to spouses, charities, or for direct tuition/medical payments.

## Preparation and Planning for the Good Life

- Income Tax
- Accounting
- Financial Services



**619-475-5542**



**Koala.CPA**



5012 Central Ave., Suite J  
Bonita, CA 91902

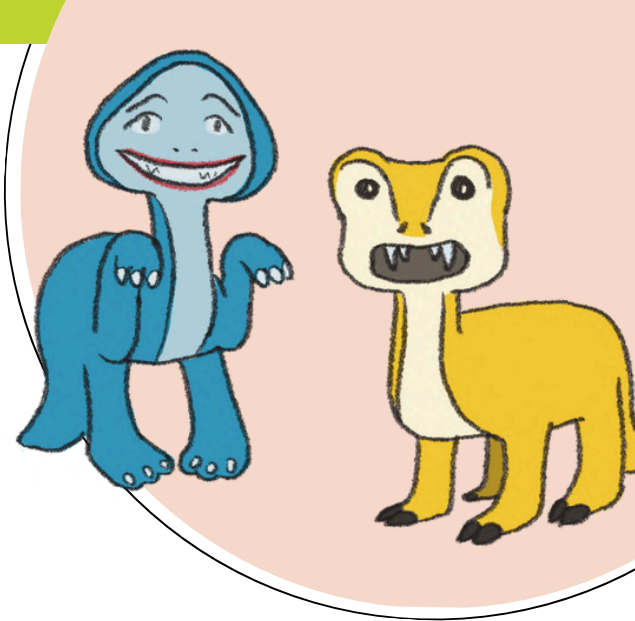
BOBBI KOALA,  
CPA, EA

BENJAMIN KOALA,  
CPA/PFS, CFP®, CLU®

**KOALAFINANCIAL**

AN ACCOUNTANCY CORPORATION





# Tails of Time

Adventures of the Glarfs in  
the Age of Bonita

Story written by: Ella Aldridge and Max Branscomb  
Cover Illustration by: Wendy Gracia

## CHAPTER 1: TWICE UPON A TIME

Dulce smiled as she heaved her saddle over the back of Cheyenne, her spirited appaloosa mare. It felt good to have the morning chores done as the piercing sun made its way past Mt. San Miguel. Accu-weather said Southern California was in for a Santa Ana and the morning air was already crackling with static. Sparks fell like diving fireflies from Cheyenne's sandy blonde tail as Dulce brushed her.

"Whoa now, baby," she cooed softly. "Almost done."

Cheyenne flipped her head and huffed as Miguel latched the gate of the exercise ring and sauntered up with his young chestnut stallion, Bandito. Miguel thought the patch of white around the pony's eyes and forehead looked like a bank robber's mask.

Bandito returned the head flip and the horses locked eyes briefly. Dulce knew the horses spoke to each other, but she was clueless as to what they may have been on about this hot morning.

“Ready when you are, Miggy,” Dulce said to her 10-year-old brother. Miguel was on the lower side of 5 feet but played bigger. His fearlessness was fueled more from youthful exuberance than real courage, and he could find trouble blindfolded.

Dulce, though just 14, was foreshadowing a statuesque young woman. She was taller than all the freshman boys at Bonita Vista High School, but she was okay with that because it helped make her a fierce volleyball player. Her friends called her “*La Martilla*” – the Hammer.

She could smell bacon and toast wafting from the diminutive ivory house that looked a shade of brown from all the dust. San Miguel Equestrian Center was a horse-lover’s heaven and dawn to dusk dust. Mamacita was probably whipping up desayuno for herself and Papa, but she and Miguel ate earlier. Miguel balanced on the top rail of the patio and leapt on to Bandito like that guy in “Yellowstone.” He slid off the other side and landed hard in the dirt as Bandito huffed and flung his head with annoyance.

“*Orale, baboso!* I’ve told you not to do that,” scolded Dulce. “You’re gonna bust your head.”

Miguel dusted off his backside with his grey cowboy hat.

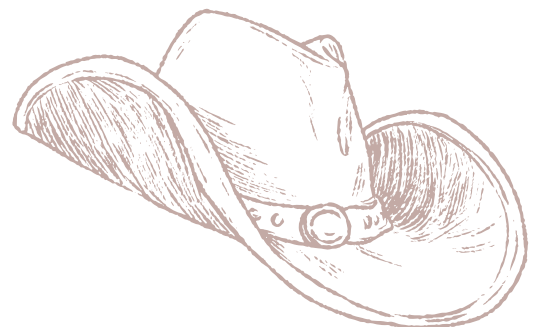
“It’s not my head you need to worry about,” he said.

Dulce rolled her eyes as she had so many times before following her brother’s antics.

“*Vamos muchacho,*” she said as she flicked Cheyenne’s reins. “The library opens soon.”

San Miguel Road was quiet as it usually is early on Saturday morning. An SDG&E truck passed them heading east to the power substation, probably checking up on things prior to a Santa Ana wind event. Sunnyside School was locked and still.

Dulce and Miguel guided Cheyenne and Bandito across the blacktop and down on to the dirt trail hugging the riverbed. Dulce was striking in her ebony High Desert felt western hat, complete with a colorful hand-beaded hatband from the Huichol Indians of Jalisco, a gift from her indigenous *abuela*. Up the way a mother Bobcat with brick





tinted fur and a menacing expression led her kitten across the trail into the brush lining the Sweetwater River. Dulce chuckled because the little cat with the tiny tail was trying to look tough like her mom but was too cute to pull it off.

“Probably hunting gophers in the Highlands,” Dulce shouted over her shoulder to Miguel.

“Naw,” he replied. “Digging through the trash at 7/11.”

Dulce wrinkled her nose at the thought, but with her next breath inhaled the intoxicating fragrance of baking cakes and frying donuts from Hans and Harry’s that reached across the road and down toward the Sweetwater River like a whiff of sugary temptation.

“Sis, let’s get snacks,” shouted Miguel from the rear guard.

“They’re not open, *hermano*,” she said, though she had the same idea. “Maybe on the way back.”



It was a pleasant ride to the library, though the rising sun was getting to be uncomfortably warm on their backs. Every time Dulce brushed her onyx hair from her eyes or stroked Cheyenne’s neck she was jolted by static electricity.

“*Hijole!*” she yelped. “Sorry baby.”

Cheyenne and Bandito knew the drill. They were tied to a post on the shady side of the library and free to nibble at the grass and brush while the kids were inside. Caroling birds sang their morning praises from fragrant eucalyptus trees,

their powerful aroma unlocked by the heat and spread through the dry air. Bandito was happy to be on the other side of the towering golf course fence, safe from crooked golf balls.

Entering the library was like walking into a two-story refrigerator, only full of books instead of tortillas de maize, milk and eggs. Miguel sighed happily and smiled as he entered the cool sanctuary of wisdom. He was drawn to a display of Spider-Man comics honoring Southwestern College alum J. Michael Straczynski, the famous writer who would be in next week to sign autographs.

Dulce went straight to the reference desk with a bold request.

“Good morning,” she said politely as she hung her lovely black hat over her back. “My teacher at Bonita Vista told me there is a special room in the library with information about the Bonita glarfs.”

Occupied with something that must have been very important, Mr. Baker the librarian replied without looking up.

“You mean those dinosaur statues down the street?”

“Yes, sir,” answered Dulce. “Rumbi and Rangui.”

“We don’t have a local history room, if that’s what you mean,” he said. “There’s one at the Chula Vista Library.”

Dulce’s shoulders slumped.

“We have something better,” Mr. Baker said, done with his task and suddenly more chipper. “We have a whole museum! They have a lot of information on the glarfs.”

“That’s awesome!” Dulce said. “Thank you so much.”

“My pleasure, young lady, but I don’t think it’s open yet,” Mr. Baker said as he dragged another piece of paper beneath his restless pen.

Dulce was glad she was tall when she was in the library because she could gaze over the shelves of books and DVDs and see the top of Miguel’s head. Today, though, he was planted next to the hardcover Spider-Man comics.

“*Chispas*, Miggy, you’re supposed to be doing homework,” Dulce said. She surprised herself a little because for an instant she sounded like her mom.

“Maybe this is my homework,” he said without looking up. “Maybe I’m doing a book report on Spider-Man.”

“Don’t blame me if you repeat the sixth grade,” Dulce said, her lips pursed, her head shaking slightly. “Come on, chavalito, I need to go to the museum.”

“The dude said it’s closed.”

“Maybe I’ll get lucky,” Dulce said.





Dulce rattled the locked door of the Bonita Museum and Cultural Center and muttered under her breath. She was about to walk away when a petite grey haired woman unexpectedly opened the door. It was a smiling face Dulce and Miguel recognized from the Bonitafest.

“Hi kids!” said Daryl Hern, the friendly former elementary school teacher. “We’re not really open yet.”

“Okay,” said Dulce, with a hint of resignation.

Mrs. Hern reconsidered the rules and pushed the door wide open.

“It’s too hot to stand around out there for an hour,” she said. “What brings you here today?”

“I’m working on a report about the glarfs,” said Dulce dutifully. “I want to find out things about them no one else knows.”

Mrs. Hern’s forehead wrinkled and her eyebrows flattened over her glasses. “What we have in our collection is everything we know.”



Miguel was rubbing his hand over the back of a stuffed badger, but he was listening.

“Maybe there are secret plans about the glarfs,” he said as he moved his hand over to a stuffed coyote. “Maybe there is a treasure inside or a nuclear reactor.”

Daryl smiled and lifted Miguel’s hand off the coyote’s back because he was not supposed to touch it.

“Probably not,” she said, “but you can look for yourself because we do have Jerry’s original drawings and plans.”

Jerry Gauss was the gifted teenage artist who created Rumbi and Rangui in 1959 as presents for his parents. He called them “glarfs,” which meant “dwarf dinosaur.” Since Jerry made up the word, it could mean whatever he said.

Rumbi and Rangui were rock stars in the Sweetwater Valley and they were rocks. Concrete, actually, but rock hard and ready to ride. Kids played on them, grownups took pictures with them and newspapers wrote about them.

The glarfs seemed nearly as famous as President Eisenhower or Elvis Presley.

Mrs. Hern vanished, then reappeared from a back room with a box big enough to hold a sheet cake. Dust poofed off the top when she dropped it gently on the table.

“Here’s some of Jerry’s stuff that we did not put out on display,” she said as she waved at dust hanging in the air. “Not a whole lot of people have seen this. His sister Nancy donated it.”

Dulce reached for the lid, but Mrs. Hern told her to go wash her hands first. Miguel giggled smugly because he had dead badger and coyote fur on his hands but did not have to wash them.

Dulce’s heart beat a little faster as she opened the box and peered inside at some photos. Jerry and Nancy. Jerry and his mom. Jerry and his pretty prom date. All posing with Rumbi and Rangui.

Underneath the photos was yellowed paper folded in equal sixths like an old bath towel. Dulce’s chocolate eyes widened as she made a sudden gasp.



## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT WITHOUT THE DRAMA!

- **FREE Property Analysis!**
- **FREE Consultation!**
- **FREE Set-up!**
- **MOST Competitive Rates!**
- **Multi-Property Discounts!**
- **Military Discounts!**

**CALL TODAY**

TOLL FREE (877) 772-3466  
[WWW.PRAEHOMES.COM](http://WWW.PRAEHOMES.COM)

CA DRE #01889835

“Designs: Rumbi the Glarf” was spelled out across the top in Jerry’s kind of messy but entirely readable penmanship. She spread it over the table with her clean hands.

Rumbi was still a collection of lines but the yellow glarf’s iconic outline was clear. What Dulce did not expect to see was an odd diagram of a strange little machine in his stomach connected to something else in his head.

“What...is...all...that?” Dulce asked, her voice tailing off as the intrigue consumed her. “This is insane!”

Jerry Gauss had created something utterly remarkable, but what it was nobody knew!

*To be continued in the next issue...*



## Meet the AUTHORS & ILLUSTRATOR



**Dr. Max Branscomb** is an outstanding mentor and teacher. He has written and directed the Bonitafest Melodrama since 1978, “La Pastorela” since 1993 and is General Chairman of Bonitafest 2025. He is Professor of Journalism at Southwestern College and faculty adviser to a pair of collegiate Pulitzer Prize publications, the Southwestern College Sun newspaper and El Sol Magazine. For his advice to young writers, see his interview at [www.PagesAndCanvas.com](http://www.PagesAndCanvas.com)



**Ella Aldridge** is an actor and singer-songwriter who is a 2024-25 San Diego County 25 Most Remarkable Teenagers Award recipient. She wrote “Home in Bonita,” the Official Song of Bonita, California. She has starred in the Bonitafest Melodrama and Teatro Pastorela’s annual production of “La Pastorela” for many years. She is a junior at the San Diego School of the Creative and Performing Arts. See her full interview in this issue.



**Wendy Gracia** is a multidisciplinary artist who grew up in Chula Vista. Wendy started as a cartoonist for the SWC Sun and later received her BFA in Drawing + Painting at Laguna College of Art + Design. For this story, Wendy created the illustrations of Dulce, Miguel, their two horses, and the Glarfs. Wendy has also illustrated Silver the Wonder Pony for Bonitafest for the past several years. For more about Wendy’s art, please visit [www.PagesAndCanvas.com](http://www.PagesAndCanvas.com)



# POETRY ACROSS LANGUAGES

A free, family-friendly event celebrating poetry composed in different languages. Guest Poets will present their poem in English and then in their native language, such as Spanish, Russian, French, American Sign Language and even the language of Mathematics!

In association with:



**SUNDAY, APRIL 6, 2025**

2:00-3:30pm (arrive by 1:45)

*Chula Vista Civic Library Auditorium  
365 F Street,  
Chula Vista, CA 91910*

# POETIC INSPIRATIONS: PAINTINGS, LIFE EVENTS & MORE

The Poems of Jeff Bettger  
[www.JeffBettgerPoetry.com](http://www.JeffBettgerPoetry.com)

From where does the inspiration of a poem originate? In this presentation, Jeff will explain how paintings, photos, life events, and historic forms inspire poetry. Join Jeff for a 30-minute overview of his poetry and a display of the paintings that inspire him.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2025**

1:00-1:30pm

*The Bonita Museum & Cultural Center*  
4355 Bonita Rd,  
Bonita, CA 91902



## DID YOU KNOW?

Most California floods are caused by plumbing problems like busted pipes, water heater leaks etc. We can detect leaks before they become serious problems. Let us help you prevent lasting damage.

20 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE | 24/7 EMERGENCY SERVICE | WORKS WITH INSURANCE COMPANIES

Call us at (877) 875-1235 or visit us at [www.CuttingEdgeRestorationInc.com](http://www.CuttingEdgeRestorationInc.com)

## Your Path to **HOMEOWNERSHIP** Starts Here



### Michael Dullea, Broker Associate

Direct: 619 890 3614  
[mdullea@netlendinginc.com](mailto:mdullea@netlendinginc.com)  
[www.netlendinginc.com](http://www.netlendinginc.com)



**NETLENDING**

YOUR LENDER FOR *Life*

NMLS#455330 DRE#02099753



## Yavorsky Properties

*Putting Clients First*

40 years providing Bonita and the Southbay  
with expert Property Management and  
Real Estate Services.

Let Yavorsky Properties Sell or Manage  
Your Home. Call or email me today!



### Suzanne Yavorsky

DRE# 00880803

Cell: 619-267-7900  
Email: [BonitaRE@aol.com](mailto:BonitaRE@aol.com)

4532 Bonita Rd  
Bonita, CA 91902



# ***Service Runs in the Family***

## **PART TWO**

Welcome to the second of our three-part interview with former Chula Vista Mayor and San Diego County Supervisor Greg Cox; former Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox; and current director on the Sweetwater Authority Governing Board, Elizabeth Cox. (If you missed Part 1 in last month's issue, you can find it on our website in our "Past Issues" section). In this issue, Greg, Cheryl and Elizabeth recount some of their favorite memories about Bonita.





GREG, CHERYL AND ELIZABETH

## *Reminiscing About Bonita*

**Jeff Bettger:** *Let's start with something very general. Cheryl, when you think of Bonita, what stands out?*

**Cheryl Cox:** Years ago, a common desire was to raise your family in Chula Vista because it was affordable and hope to move to a larger home in Bonita. Then came along Long Canyon, Eastlake and then Otay Ranch. As beautiful as those planned communities are, they are not what Bonita has always been. Bonita is knowing your neighbors, knowing what they do for a living, knowing if they need your help, and knowing they will watch your dog when you go on vacation. That's the image that I have always had of this smaller community that safeguards its reputation and never wanted to be part of Chula Vista. Bonita has always felt good on its own. Bonita still has the notion of being rural. A safe community where people care about each other.

**Jeff :** *Thank you, Cheryl. Given your background in education, I wanted to ask you, do you know why they built Bonita Vista High School so far away from Bonita Road?*

**Cheryl:** Probably because that's where land was available. Ten acres are needed for an elementary school, 25 for a middle school, and 50 acres for a high school! The three elements of a school are classrooms, playground, and parking. When planning an elementary school, you estimate the number of students, you calculate how many classrooms, and you know that a classroom typically measures 30 feet x 30 feet. Then add offices, a library, an auditorium, a playground for kindergartners and a larger one for the rest of the students. The space needed for an elementary school is relatively small compared to a high school that needs offices, classrooms, auditorium, library,



fields for football, soccer, and track and field practice. And parking. Lots of parking. In the 1960s, Sweetwater Union High School Superintendent Joe Rindone chartered a helicopter to fly east from the Sweetwater Union High School District offices on Fifth Avenue to see where a community college could be built. He looked over the territory where Southwestern College currently is. At the time, it was south but it could have been called Southeastern College because it was east of Interstate 5. (I-805 was built in the 70s).

**Greg:** Chula Vista High School was the first high school in Chula Vista, Hilltop High was second, Castle Park was third and along came both Bonita Vista and Montgomery. Southwestern College started in 1961 on a half-day session.

Students met at Chula Vista High School in the afternoon and then they moved to their own campus, probably in 1962 or 1963. Bonita Vista High School was built in 1966. I think the first students were there in 1967. As I recall, they started out with eighth, ninth, and tenth grades, and then added another and then another the following years. Somewhere in that time frame, Bonita Vista Junior High was built. Eventually, Eastlake High and Olympian High were built as the population grew.

**Jeff:** *Elizabeth, what was it like growing up in Bonita?*

**Elizabeth:** I grew up in Chula Vista, in the same house my parents bought as young teachers when they were first married, behind Hilltop High School. Bonita Vista was a rival to Hilltop High in volleyball, which was my sport of choice, among other sports. That was always quite a strong rivalry! I remember coming to Rohr Park to see the horses, feed the ducks, and ride the little train that goes around. My sister and I have fond memories of visiting The Old Bonita Store with our grandparents and watching fresh tortillas being made on site. And I remember the restaurant called Tomatoes, which is now Romesco's.

**Cheryl:** That reminds of that movie by Steve Peace and John DeBello.

**Elizabeth:** *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes* in which tomatoes go on a rampage while splattering innocent victims.

**Cheryl:** Yes, one scene was filmed in the Sweetwater Valley. In the scene, killer tomatoes are coming through the open space where a little boy is sitting with his dog. They hear something and the little boy looks at his dog and asks "What do you think that is?" and the dog turns to him and says out loud, "I don't know, what do you think?" It's a charmingly classic movie that got all sorts of Rotten Tomato awards. Watch the movie now and try to pick out the sites where it was filmed.

**Elizabeth:** Dad, since we are on the topic of tomatoes, tell Jeff about your childhood tomato-picking job.

**Greg:** When I was in high school, I looked for any job I could get. There weren't enough people to pick tomatoes, so four or five of us from Chula Vista High School went down to San Ysidro to pick tomatoes. It was such hard work. I remember coming home after the first day, getting in the bathtub and aching all over! When I got out, a ring of green scum was all around the bathtub. The next day we went back, being paid \$1.20 an hour. I remember sitting on a bucket, counting to 30, putting tomatoes in this bucket and thinking to myself, "I just made one penny." At the end of the second day, one of the guys in our group started a tomato fight. Needless to say, we all got fired. I'm still not a fan of tomatoes.

**Jeff:** *I realize that we've barely mentioned horses yet. It's almost impossible to talk about Bonita without bringing up horses.*

**Greg:** Bonita is very proud of its equestrian history and yet there are not as many horses in Bonita as there once were. I remember when sculptor Mehl Lawson did a large, commissioned sculpture of a horse for a rancher in Montana. Trying to think of something that would commemorate the equestrian history of Bonita, I sat down with Scott and Barbara Scott and we decided to check with Mehl. We asked him if, after doing the casting for his commission, could he do a second one for us? The rancher paying for the first one said it was okay. The County provided \$25,000 and the community raised the other \$25,000 to place the horse sculpture at the entrance to the Bonita Museum. It's a nice way to commemorate the equestrian history of Bonita.

**Cheryl:** You also can't do a story of Bonita without talking about the Proctor Valley Monster and the Glarfs. The Proctor Valley Monster was alive and well when Greg and I were in high school, but maybe over time he has retreated! Then the Glarfs came along, then needed repairs, and now the Glarfs have been refurbished. This community likes what it's done well in the past and as a community wants to keep doing it.

**Jeff:** *Elizabeth, what other fond memories do you have?*

**Elizabeth:** I remember coming to Bonita with my mom and maternal grandmother in the 1980s. A frame studio in the Vons shopping center had picture frames as far as the eye could see, floor to ceiling of those little triangle corners, sorted by colors, textures, and finishes. It was amazing and beautiful and overwhelming all at once. You could spend an hour there picking your frame and matting. My mom's a big fan of Sister Corita Kent and had several of her prints framed there.

A funny story we recently recalled at a family dinner was when in the late 1990s, my mom was ready to call the Chula Vista Police about her missing children when we weren't home at the appointed time after volleyball practice. I was a senior and Parliamentarian of the School Site Council, Senior Class President, and varsity volleyball captain. My sister was a freshman on the JV team. Mom drove to Hilltop High and searched the



parking lot for my car. Then she drove to City Hall and looked again. In a panic, she called the principal and volleyball coach who both came looking for mom's Missing Daughters. We didn't have cell phones or email back then. We pulled into the driveway at home not too long after. Relieved, our mom asked, "Where have you been?" We had signed up for an evening stress management workshop at Hilltop High. We had put the event on the weekly calendar we kept on the fridge, but our mom had forgotten to look.

**Jeff:** *Thank you Greg, Cheryl and Elizabeth for sharing your memories! We will conclude our three-part interview with the Cox family in the next issue of The Towne Local Bonita as we discuss their careers in public service and the history of some of the large civic projects in Bonita.*



**TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE!**

**Look forward to our 3rd installment of this remarkable interview series.**

# Riding Toward Your Dream Home

As a proud Bonita resident for 30 years and a dedicated real estate agent, I understand our unique community and have a winning reputation for helping clients achieve their real estate dreams. Whether you're buying or selling, I'm here to deliver expert service!



**Andrea Goyette**  
**REALTOR® | DRE #02113148**  
619-559-5591  
homesbyandreagoyette@gmail.com  
homesbyandreagoyette.com



**COLDWELL BANKER**  
**WEST**

© Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® and the Coldwell Banker Logo are registered service marks owned by Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC supports the Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Acts. DRE #01481919





## LOVE WHAT YOU READ? STAY CONNECTED!

For past issues, current events,  
and further details on our business  
partners, visit our website at  
[www.TheTowneLocalBonita.com](http://www.TheTowneLocalBonita.com).

Have friends & family living outside of  
Bonita? No worries!  
They can read each issue online.



**San Diego's 5-Star Photographer for  
Unforgettable Special Events**



[www.iLoveLifePhotography.com](http://www.iLoveLifePhotography.com)  
text at 619-948-5781

Official Photographer of The Towne Local Bonita