



McHENRY
MUSEUM

& Historical Society



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A
Living
History

Newsletter

November 2022

Every two years, November signifies a time of elections. It is elected officials who affect change in policy which can alter our day-to-day lives. For this edition of the MM&HS Newsletter we would like to document the life of one of our biggest supporters, outgoing Modesto City Council Woman, Jenny Kenoyer. This is her living history.

Jenevieve Martin was born in Patterson, California on April 27, 1935. She was born at home as her mother did not have time to make it to the hospital in Modesto. Her father Timothy (1903-1980) was born in the Madeira Islands in Portugal. Timothy was two years old when the family immigrated to the United States, and first settled in Hawaii, Her Grandfather Manuel Martin (1883-1932) worked in shipping, and moved to Martinez, California and eventually settled in Patterson. Jenny's Mother Bertha Delort Martin (1910-1974) was a native of Louisiana. It was in Louisiana her parent's met at a ball while her father was stationed in the Navy. They returned to Patterson when Tim's father Manuel was tragically killed in a car accident in 1932.



Jenny Kenoyer



When Jenny was five the family settled in Modesto at 327 Spruce Street. Eight of them lived in this small house. Jenny helped her family by cutting fruit. While attending Roosevelt Junior High School, Jenny was voted yell leader. Years later, while attending Modesto High School, she wanted the same title once again, a male dominated position. She ran in her junior year and lost. The following autumn she received the most votes, but the school had a runoff and Jenny lost. Come Spring she won with ninety-five percent of the vote and won and became the first female yell leader at Modesto High School and in the conference. No photos exist of her as yell leader, but the school still uses one of her yells to this day, "M-O-D-E-S-T-O!" After graduation, she worked in a cannery and at Sears.

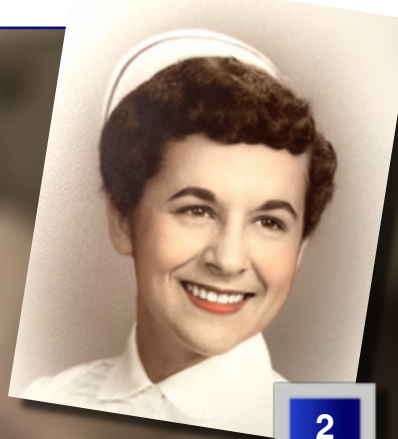
With the encouragement of a friend, she applied and was accepted to San Jose State University and the San Jose School of Nursing. She graduated in 1956 and worked as a registered nurse for the next forty-eight years.

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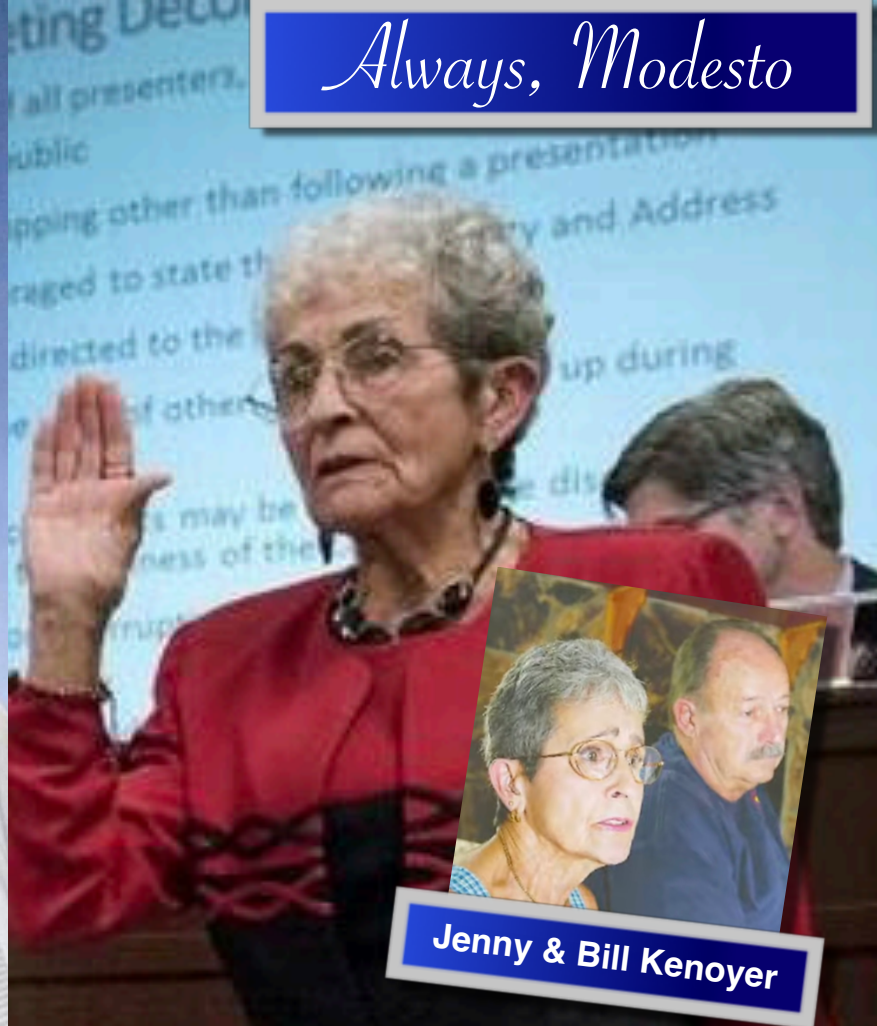


Parents, Tim & Bertha Martin

Following graduation, she worked in San Luis Obispo. Her sister became ill, and Jenny moved to San Jose to help her and worked at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, until 1959, when she returned to Modesto. She returned to Modesto to care for her maternal grandmother, Marie Delort (1881-1966). The year she returned; she met the man who changed her life. While taking care of her grandmother, she worked for the county hospital. It was suggested she join the Air Force Reserve. Jenny had no intention of being in the reserves, she wanted to join the true Air Force, her plan prior to her grandmother's illness. A friend of hers knew the local recruiter, Preston "Pat" Ketchum (1911-1985), twenty-four years her senior. Pat was interested in signing up a nurse, he looked for her at the hospital, and kept missing her, after running into her at church in April, 1959, Pat took Jenny for coffee and married six months later on October 10, 1959. Together, they raised five children. Pat was an incredible father, he retired from the Air Force and worked in a credit union but retired after a heart condition slowed him in 1973, forcing Jenny to go back to work full time, his condition continued to deteriorate, Pat Ketchum passed away in 1985. She continued as a surgical nurse at Stanislaus County Hospital until 1987 and worked at Doctors Medical Center until 2004 also working for city hospital. After a twelve-hour shift, her routine included a two-mile run. She never missed any of her children's games, Jenny only ever slept three hours a night. She only missed one of her son's football games as she had jury duty. She fully retired after marrying her second husband William Kenoyer (1936-2007) and retired from nursing soon after.



Ketchum Family



Jenny & Bill Kenoyer

How long has Jenny been civic-minded? A very long time. In the mid-1970s she advocated to get the canals fenced, those close to schools, to keep children from falling in. She collected over 800 signatures on a petition and sent it to the Modesto Irrigation District. When she is passionate there is no stopping her. Following the death of her second husband, in 2008, Catholic Charities asked her to work in a program called Golden Agers for Progress (GAP). There was a need for homebound seniors and disabled people who needed transportation. She started attending Stancog meetings over the next several years to get funding for transit. By 2010, a program was started to help homebound seniors, the Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA), She helped this program by helping start a non-profit named MOVE.

After two prior failed attempts to run for Modesto City Council, Jenny defeated incumbent Stephanie Burnside with the help of Chad and Couper Condit. She attributes her win to walking every precinct and knocking on over four-thousand doors. As she sat on the dais after being sworn in, she thought to herself "Oh my gosh, what did I get myself into? Do I know what I am doing." At seventy-eight, she faced challenges right away, and due to a changing of the general plan, residents of Wood Colony started a campaign to recall her from office. She learned one thing, when you are sitting on the dais during public comment, keep your mouth shut, opening it did not help her.

The more experienced she gained the more she saw what was needed, and she prides herself in studying the statistics, like the issue of the homeless. She has worked with both city and county alike to get an access center and transitional housing for the homeless. It takes a lot of time to bring about new policy. She hopes her last legacy is a stop light at Coralwood Road and McHenry Avenue, she hopes this light will be her final legacy to prevent accidents, something she has been working on with CalTrans and the City of Modesto for twenty-five years. After all her hard work, she wants a present and this stoplight is it.

To list all her accomplishments on the Modesto City Council could take several volumes. This is more the story of a living woman who continues to make history. Nothing was expected of her as a girl other than to get married and have a family, however, Jenny was always ahead of her time. She is currently battling a recurring round of cancer while caring for her disabled daughter and wrapping up eight years on the council. Jenny has no intention of letting her grim diagnosis stop her, and she wants to continue to work on community endeavors once she leaves office. It is ironic her last wish is for a stop light, as it is evident the word "stop" has never been a part of her vocabulary.

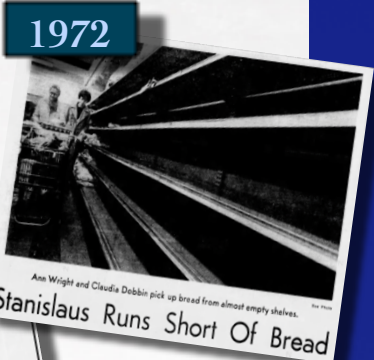
Updates



- On December 3, 2022, we will be hosting the *Children's Holiday Craft Faire* from 11-2pm. Formerly known as "The Dicken's Faire," we will have holiday crafts and cookie decorating for children of all ages.
- On December 11, 2022, from 5-7:30pm we will be holding our Soup Supper for members and their guest, which will feature a holiday sing-along. Invitations will be sent by mid-November, please RSVP by December 5, 2022.
- All issues of our historical magazine *Stanislaus Stepping Stones* have been digitized and are available for view on our website, www.mchenrymuseum.org.
- We would like to welcome new Board Members Karlha Davies and Eric Alvarez.
- We would like to thank our outgoing Board Secretary, Talitha Agan for all her work and dedication to the MM&HS over the years, we wish her well on her new endeavors.
- We would like to welcome our newest volunteer, Jennifer Aoyama. Jennifer has volunteered in the Museum Store most Saturdays for the month of October.
- We would like to publicly thank our members and donors to our organization on our website, if you are a lifetime member and would not enjoy this public recognition, please send an email to david@mchenrymuseum.org.
- Our Board of Directors met on October 25, 2022, our next meeting is at 4pm on November 22, 2022, in the McHenry Museum basement.



It Happened in November...



- In November 1922, Paradis Ford Co on Ninth Street in Modesto listed the price of a brand-new Ford at \$393. Today that would be a steal for holiday shopping.
- Fifty years later, in November 1972, the City of Modesto was suffering a bread shortage, market's all over the city had empty bread shelves, something all of us had to get used to again during the pandemic.
- Ten years ago, in November 2012, as many of us were trying to shop for the holiday's many of us were not worried about bread, but the line of protestors outside our Raley's Supermarkets. In a good old fashioned-strike union workers chanted at customers as a deal was being reached with corporate management.

