



G.A.G. RAG

Grantville-Allied Gardens Kiwanis Club

SPECIAL ISSUE

January 2025

www.alliedgardenskiwanis.org



Calvin J. (Cal) Pancheri

March 9, 1925 – December 19, 2024

**Universally Respected Leader and Past Lt. Governor
Split His Impressive Kiwanis Career Across Two Clubs**

Cal Pancheri, whose Kiwanis journey of more than fifty years took him to the edge of glory within the Cal-Nev-Ha District, passed away last month at the age of 99, just three months shy of his 100th birthday. The 1978-79 Lt. Governor of Division 21 spent 28 years as a member of the Grantville-Allied Gardens Kiwanis Club before moving north to Poway in 1999.

Cal, our 1971-72 Kiwanian of the Year and 1975-76 Club President, was widely respected in both of his Kiwanis Clubs as a motivated volunteer, wise leader, and role model. In 1983, he became the only member in our club's history to run for the office of District Governor, falling short of victory by only the narrowest of margins.

As a member of the Poway Kiwanis Club, he continued to earn respect from his peers both as a leader and as a booster of his fellow Kiwanians. He served as the President of that club in 2005-06, then happily sponsored both his daughter and granddaughter into the same club in the following years.

Overall, he spent more than 53 years as a member of Kiwanis and rarely missed an event at the District level. He saw the value of getting involved in Kiwanis beyond just his own club, and tried to spread that message to other club members both in Poway and Grantville. During the 1970s and 1980s, hardly an International Convention or Mid-Year Conference would go by without the Pancheris representing G.A.G. Kiwanis.

"Cal loved attending Kiwanis International conventions to see old friends and travelled the country and the world to do so," remembered **Steve Dreyer**, a past Regional Trustee and Cal's clubmate in Poway for many years. "Until a few years ago, he had had a long unbroken string of appearances."

Cal passed away after a short time in hospice care. News of his passing last month brought fond memories and tributes from several leaders both locally and at the District level, with many citing him as an inspiration.



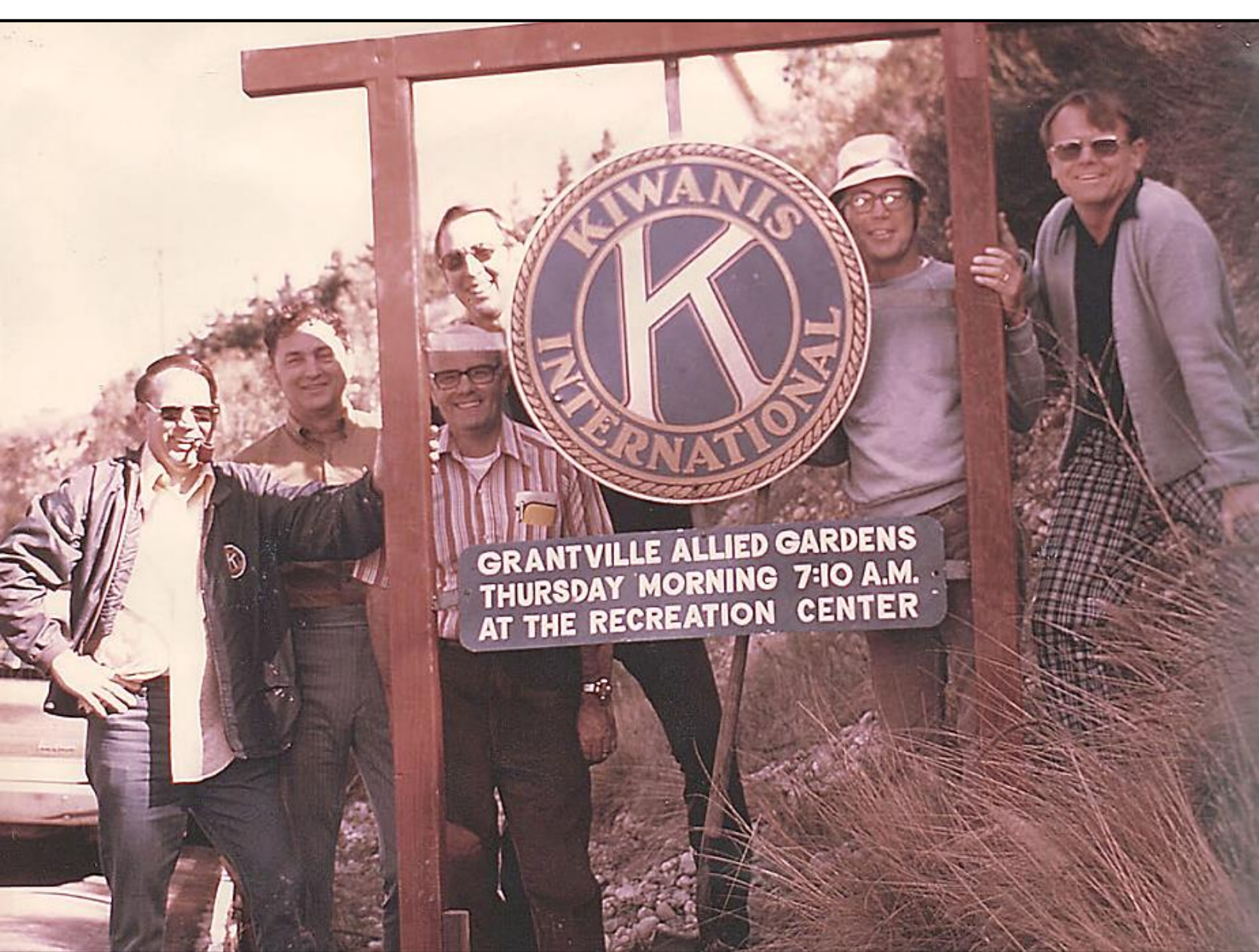
Cal Pancheri, as seen in his 1983 gubernatorial campaign photo. Below is a button from that same campaign.



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This photo from 1975 includes many of the "core" leaders from G.A.G. Kiwanis in the 1970s, as they installed a sign at the bottom of the hill alongside Waring Road. From left to right: **Joe Terwilliger**, **Cal Pancheri**, **Gene Elmore**, **Dr. Floyd Lee**, **John Peterson**, and **Ken Bonatus**.



During the G.A.G. Kiwanis installation dinner at the Imperial House Restaurant in September 1975, incoming President **Cal Pancheri** and his wife, **Patricia**, accept a gift from outgoing (1974-75) club President **Gene Elmore**. At left, looking on, is **Wanda Elmore**.



John Peterson and **Cal Pancheri**, along with a Sponsored Youth volunteer and Cal's wife **Patricia** traveled to Las Vegas in November 1982 for the official visit of District Governor **Harry Rowe**. Cal was campaigning for the position of Governor-Elect at the time.



Cal and his wife, **Florence (Patricia) Pancheri**, seen during his 1983 campaign for Kiwanis Governor. Cal and Patricia were married in 1952 and stayed happily together for 58 years.



Three generations were united on September 18th, 2014, when **Karin Sherr Sullivan** (right) joined the Poway Kiwanis Club. Karin, a former Key Clubber and Circle K member, joined the same club as her mother, **Patti Ryder**, and grandfather **Cal**.

Calvin J. Pancheri was born on March 9th, 1925. Originally from Norway, Michigan (Upper Peninsula), Cal attended Norway High School and the University of Michigan Marquette. He graduated in 1951 with a Bachelor's in Business Administration, Accounting, and Economics. After moving to San Diego, Cal made his living as a pension manager and founded his own company, San Diego Pension Consultants, Inc.

In 1952, he married **Florence Patricia Flannery** of Negaunee, Michigan. During their 58-year marriage, Cal and Patricia raised their three children, **Robert**, **Patricia (Patti)**, and **Thomas**. Patricia preceded her husband in death in 2010. Together, they had ten grandchildren and several great-children.

The entire Pancheri family exhibited the values of Kiwanis, as Cal and Patricia raised their children in the local neighborhood. During the 1975-76 term, the same year in which Cal served as our club President, his daughter Patti broke barriers as the first female Lt. Governor in the history of the Cal-Nev-Ha Circle K District. It would be another eleven years before Kiwanis admitted women as members for the first time.

Cal himself later served as District Administrator for the CNH Circle K District, a position which his daughter now holds today.

Perhaps Cal's proudest moment as a Kiwanian came in 2014 when his granddaughter joined Patti and himself as a member of the Poway Kiwanis Club.



It's Never Too Late: After his wife, **Patricia**, preceded him in death in 2010, Cal enjoyed care and comfort during his golden years from **Thelma Fisher**. Thelma accompanied Cal to numerous meetings, projects, and conventions as a member of the Poway Kiwanis Club herself.

"I was honored to have known Cal for many years. He defined what it meant to be a gentleman and a true Kiwanian. My heart goes out to his wonderful family."

-- **Steve Dreyer**,
Sunrise Vista Kiwanis Club



Left: Cowboy Cal enjoys a drink at a 1981 G.A.G. Kiwanis Halloween party.

Right: Dressing up with wife **Patricia** during the 1981 International Convention in New Orleans.



After nearly 50 years of friendship, longtime G.A.G. Kiwanis pals **Cal Pancheri** and **John Peterson** saw each other one more time at the 2020 Mid-Year Conference in San Gabriel.



Left: Cal Pancheri as he appeared during his term as Lt. Governor in 1978-79. **Right:** A grateful Cal Pancheri reacts as the club votes to support him with a donation to his Lt. Governor's fund.



A flattered incoming President **Cal Pancheri** dons a lei during his Installation Dinner in 1975.



March 2006: Several G.A.G. Kiwanis members traveled to a Poway Kiwanis meeting to celebrate Cal's 81st birthday with an Interclub. *Back row, L-R:* **Boyd Sauter**, **Gene Elmore**, **Al Heck**, **Dave Anfanger**, **Cal Pancheri**, **John Peterson**. *Front row:* **Bill Hoover**, **Bob Frankhouser**.



1983 Circle K Convention Chair **Mark Sears** greets **Cal** and **Patricia Pancheri** during a luncheon at the Bahia Hotel in San Diego.

"Cal was a man to totally respect... and respect him, I did."

-- **John Chandler**, Grantville-Allied Gardens Kiwanis Club



A young **Craig MacDonald** from Patrick Henry High School (now the owner of Hooley's Irish Pub) collaborated with **Cal Pancheri** as the two helped chair the Host Committee for the 37th Annual Key Club International Convention, held in San Diego in the summer of 1980.

Cal Pancheri was one of the most committed and dynamic leaders of G.A.G. Kiwanis from the moment he joined, helping guide the club through its most successful era in terms of both service and club membership.

Cal practically dove into Kiwanis headfirst, joining the Grantville-Allied Gardens Kiwanis Club in June 1971. He was named Kiwanian of the Year just over a year later (1971-72), giving some indication as to the kind of effect he would have on his fellow Kiwanians. During his first year as a member of Kiwanis, Cal also served as the first President of the Western Pension and Benefits Council, San Diego Chapter.

After serving as both club Secretary and Treasurer within this first four years as a Kiwanian, Cal served as our club President in 1975-76, then was elected to serve as Division 21 Lt. Governor for the 1978-79 term. He was just the third Lt. Governor from our club, following **Al Heck** and **Gene Elmore** in that role.

With the possible exceptions of Elmore or **John Peterson**, there was nobody more influential upon G.A.G. Kiwanis in the 1970s than Cal Pancheri. Seeing the value of involvement beyond the club level, Cal and Gene would attend Kiwanis District Conventions and International Conventions on a regular basis. Cal was in Denver for the 1974 Kiwanis International Convention as we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Objects of Kiwanis. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, hardly a convention or Mid-Year conference would go by without representation from the Pancheri and Elmore families.

Cal was also instrumental in supporting Dr. **Ken Forror** of the North Park Kiwanis Club during Forror's term as District Governor in 1979-80.



At the 1980 Cal-Nev-Ha Circle K District Convention in Long Beach, Cal has a conversation with 1978-79 Kiwanis District Governor **Hugh Morgan** of the Berkeley Kiwanis Club.



Cal enjoys a break with Kiwanis pal **Bob Frankhouser** during a fundraising event at the Brown Field Air Show in 1981.



During his term as Lt. Governor in 1978, **Cal Pancheri** has a discussion with past President **Bill Larson** after a Thursday morning club meeting.



Helping to celebrate Cal's fiftieth year in Kiwanis (May 2021) were eight other past Presidents of the Poway Kiwanis Club. *Back row (L-R): Bob Beavers, John Couvrette, Jeff Wilson, Don Janiuk, Sharon Gruber and Steve Dreyer.* *Front row: Beth Galloway, Pancheri, and Liz Carlson.*



Above Left: Cal, dressed in his RSVP uniform as a San Diego Police volunteer, shares a laugh with **Gene Elmore** after a club meeting in 1995.
Above Right: Cal, now with the Poway Kiwanis Club, was reunited with **Wanda** and **Gene Elmore** at the Cal-Nev-Ha Kiwanis District Convention in San Diego in 2014. The Pancheris and Elmore's visited dozens of Kiwanis conferences and conventions together over the years.

"I remember him well from DCMs in Division 37. May his memory be a blessing always."

-- Neill Kovrig, Division 21 Lt. Governor, Hillcrest All-Inclusive Kiwanis Club

Following his term as Division 21 Lt. Governor in 1978-79, Cal continued his involvement at the District level, focusing especially on our youth organizations. He served alongside **Craig MacDonald** (Jim's son) to oversee the 1980 Key Club International Convention when it arrived in San Diego for the first and only time.

Still very much in demand for his leadership expertise and his dedication to Kiwanis, and with his wife's blessing, Cal threw his hat into the ring for the office of Governor-Elect for the 1983-84 term. He remains the only member in the history of our club ever to run for this position. During that year, several G.A.G. Kiwanis members traveled long-distance to support Cal at his various campaign stops, in places like Las Vegas, Anaheim, and Pasadena. With the 1983 Cal-Nev-Ha District Convention being held in Cal's adopted hometown of San Diego, he seemed to have had a "home-field" advantage going into the final days of the race. In the end, though, the delegates narrowly elected **Robert "Bob" Mohnsen** of the Palm Desert Club. Cal's brief flirtation with the highest leadership position in the District had come to an abrupt end. Despite the close results, and the thrill of the campaign trail, Cal opted not to run for higher office again.

As remarkable as his legacy has been for both Poway and for Grantville-Allied Gardens, Cal left his mark on a third Kiwanis Club in San Diego County as well. He was instrumental in creating the Tierrasanta Kiwanis Club in 1976. Cal walked door-to-door in the still-new community, along with Division 21 Lt. Governor **Fred Melvin** and G.A.G. Kiwanis member **Bill Hoover**. That club chartered shortly thereafter, and will celebrate its 50th anniversary in two years.

His positive influence extended to our sponsored youth organizations as well. Cal served as District Administrator for the Cal-Nev-Ha Circle K District, acting as the supervising adult for all Circle K district-level activity. Cal was a proponent of student attendance and participation at Kiwanis meetings when that idea could still be considered innovative.

His move to Poway in 1999 was a loss for our club, but a gain for Kiwanis in another neighborhood.

"In 2005, we were looking for a club president in Poway," recalled past Regional Trustee **Steve Dreyer**. "I approached Cal over lunch and asked if he's step up. His response: 'I'll have to ask my wife first.' At age 80, he actively served and had a great year."

In April 2007, Cal and a golfing buddy (who also happened to be in the Poway Kiwanis Club) witnessed a car accident. At age 82, Cal came to the aid of an SUV that had overturned on westbound State Route 52, then rolled down a fifty-foot embankment. There, he found a young woman and her three girls trapped within the vehicle, with the driver semi-conscious. He was able to call 911 and help free the woman and her children from the vehicle as paramedics arrived.

"Anyone would have done it," he later told the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. "Somebody needed help and I was the logical person."

All in a day's work for Cal Pancheri, a Kiwanis superhero who lived his life in service to others.



With Regional Trustee **Steve Dreyer** looking on, **Cal Pancheri** receives his fifty-year Legion of Honor certificate from 2019-20 District Governor **Timothy Cunningham**. Dreyer and Cunningham served with Pancheri in the Poway Kiwanis Club.



Delegates from Division 37 to the 2018 Kiwanis International Convention in Las Vegas included (L-R) **Joyce Handa**, **Beth Galloway**, **Steve Dreyer**, **Cal Pancheri**, and **Thelma Fisher** of Poway, and at right, **Dave Schmitt** of the Hidden Valley Escondido Kiwanis Club. Cal rarely missed a Kiwanis Convention!



Cal was one of five Poway Kiwanis members recognized with a Cal-Nev-Ha Foundation Distinguished Service Award in 2018. From left to right: **Marty Harris**, **Joyce Handa**, **Mike Szoka**, **Thelma Fisher**, and **Cal Pancheri**.



Above left: Cal with daughter **Patti Ryder** while both were members of the Poway Kiwanis Club. Both father and daughter have also served as District Administrator for the Cal-Nev-Ha Circle K District; Patti still holds that position today. **Above right:** Cal blows out the candles for his 95th birthday celebration, surrounded by friends and fellow members of the Poway Kiwanis Club, just prior to the pandemic in March 2020.



May 27th, 2021: Celebrating Cal's 50th year as a member of Kiwanis were (left to right) Region Trustee **Steve Dreyer**, 2021-22 Division 31 Lt. Governor **Valerie Crawford**, 2019-20 District Governor **Timothy Cunning**, Pancheri himself, 2020-21 Division 21 Lt. Governor **John Crawford**, and 2021-22 District Governor **Margo Dutton**. The Poway Kiwanis Club presented Cal's 50-year Legion of Honor certificate at a special dinner that night.