

# Meet Your Neighbors

## Cheryl and Mark Hannon



[Editor's note: For those of you who are not familiar with it, "Meet Your Neighbors" is a series of irregularly produced profiles of residents of Diamond A which I write to help us all get to know each other better. While the profile subjects often participate in a lot of Diamond A activities, sometimes they are newbies to our hill. I hope you enjoy the 2021 installments of Meet Your Neighbors.]

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**Quick quiz:** How many of you can name the Diamond A couple who have a 31 year old parrot that speaks French and (2) also have their own funicular? (For those of you who have just realized their own educational gap, a funicular is an inclined cable railroad on a mountainside. Cheryl and Mark Hannon live in an eagle's nest of a house on Sweet William Court, and the best way to reach their front door is via a 90 second ride on a funicular. Beaver, the parrot, chose Cheryl and Mark to be his guardians 31 years ago when he was just a couple of weeks old. (You read that right; his siblings were playing with each other but little Beaver just wanted to play with Mark and Cheryl.) Beaver is the light of their life.

Cheryl was born and raised and attended college in San Francisco, getting a Master's Degree in Human Resources Organization Development from USF. People often work in jobs that are extensions of their personalities, and, as she is a people person, it is no surprise that Cheryl worked in the human resources field. She worked at several large, high tech companies in Silicon Valley such as Digital Equipment Corporation and Cadence Design Systems. She also led HR for three startups closing down the first, selling off the second and taking the third through an IPO.

Cheryl delights in making people happy; among other "Cherylistic" activities: delivering jigsaw puzzles to neighbors at the beginning of the shutdown, bringing quarts of ice cream to other neighbors later in the Pandemic and then, this past spring, bringing people bouquets of flowers or candy from Tiddle E. Winks. She's a sort of year-round Secret Santa. She also donated a Little Free Library to the Rec and maintains it.

Mark was born in upstate New York and migrated to California during his college years. Clearly drawn to organization and to putting puzzle pieces in place, he started out studying and working in engineering but finally got his BA from St. Mary's with honors in management. While Mark is proudest of his contributions to the infrastructure and quality compliance groups at Genentech, he had the most fun helping Sea World get the Penguin Encounter programs for Arctic Emperor and King penguins up

and running. ( When you see Mark next, ask him about the penguin sex tapes.)

Mark and Cheryl were introduced by mutual friends in 1988 and were married within a year thereafter. It was as if they'd been waiting to meet each other.

Though they had lived in a number of scenic locations—they still maintain a mountain house near Reno because Mark loves to ski and Cheryl loves Mark—when retired they considered a number of places where they could enjoy their retirement years. Sonoma won, and though they had some bumps in the road to getting a place in Diamond A, eventually everything worked out as spectacularly as the incredible 150 degree view of the entire Sonoma Valley and San Pablo Bay from their deck.

As usual, I asked Cheryl and Mark some questions:

**What worries you?**

Mark: Smoke in the air.

Cheryl: Everything.

**Favorite restaurant?**

Mark: EDK

Cheryl: EDK and Wit and Wisdom

**Who cooks/cleans?**

Mark cooks (particularly enjoying making salsa fresca to lighten up the main courses) and Cheryl cleans.

**Early bird/night owl?**

Don't call them too early.

**Significant Diamond A activities:**

Mark: Very active in the Rec and the Grove Street Fire Safe Council, including a vegetation reduction project and the Home Assessment program.

Cheryl: Diamond A Rec board and getting the pickle ball program up and running.

**Professional sports:**

Not so much, except Mark loves the Niners.

**What irritates you?**

Mark: Can't seem to lose the Covid 10.

Cheryl: Wasting time and mean people..

**Bliss moments:**

Mark: Country walks, powder days and spending time with Cheryl.

Cheryl: Hugging those I care about, eating and moving my body.

**Top of Bucket List:**

Mark: Getting to take the Duoro River (Portugal) trip that we had to postpone.

Cheryl: Living each precious moment.

**Favorite Dessert:**

Mark: cheese, fruit, nuts and wine.

Cheryl: she's a struggling-to-reform peepaholic.

**Books on the bedside table:**

Mark: One Good Year by Larry Gaffney; The New Case for Gold by James Rickards.

Cheryl: Fifty Words for Rain.

**What would you dress up as at a costume party?**

Mark: A leprechaun.

Cheryl: I'd be at home, sitting on my couch.

**Favorite Sonoma charities?**

Mark: Impact 100 and Lyon Ranch.

Cheryl: Sonoma Overnight Support and Impact 100.