

UNION CITY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Founded by Myrla Raymundo, MBA

**3841 Smith Street, Union City, California 94587, Tel. (510) 324-3298
Three Components**

**(1) Museum & Artifacts, (2) Oral History (3) Preservation of Historical Homes
Museum Board meets quarterly at the Museum at 7 PM**

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Visit us at www.unioncitymuseum.com/

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Union City Historical Museum is a non-profit organization committed to the preservation, maintenance and protection of, and the education of the public about the architectural, cultural, natural and historical heritage resources of the City of Union City.



Robert A. (Bob) Garfinkle

Alameda native, Robert A. (Bob) Garfinkle, served on the City Council of the City of Union City from 1989 through 1997. Prior to serving on the Council, he served for five years (1984-1989) as President of the Board of Directors of the Union Sanitary District. In 1991, the State Legislature, in an attempt to balance the State's budget, took \$1.2 million dollars away

from Union City. The Council was faced with decisions on how to make up for this lost revenue and keep the City intact. The Council decided that the City's Landscape and Lighting District annual fee could be raised for each residential property. This sparked a recall effort against then mayor Richard (Dick) Oliver and council members Manny Fernandez and Mr. Garfinkle. The recall proponents did not gather enough signatures against Manny, so he did not face a vote of the people. In April 1993, Mayor Oliver lost his election, but on July 27, 1993, Mr. Garfinkle successfully beat back the attempt to recall him by 1 vote out of 10,501 votes. During the time between the Mayor's recall and the July voting, Robert served as Acting Mayor. Three months after the recall

election Robert was re-elected to his second term on the Council.

Mr. Garfinkle and his wife, Kathy, moved from Fremont into a condominium on Sonora Way in El Dorado Park in 1973. In 1976, they moved into a house on Hartford Drive, then into their present home on Monrovia Street in 1986. In 2006, Kathy retired from teaching at Patterson School in Fremont after teaching kindergarten and first and second grades at the same school for 39 years. The Garfinkles have one daughter, Kimberlee, by Robert's previous marriage and in 1985 they adopted a daughter, Annmarie. Robert retired as a Senior Technical writer in 2002, but continues to write as a freelance writer.

Mr. Garfinkle has been a professional writer for over 30 years. In addition to his two astronomy books, Robert has published book reviews, articles, and short stories. He is the author of the international best-selling astronomy book, Star-Hopping: Your Visa to Viewing the Universe (Cambridge University Press, 1994, 1997), a co-author of Advanced Skywatching (The Nature Company; Time-Life Books, 1997), and a contributing author to the Biographical Encyclopedia of Astronomers (2007). Willmann-Bell will be publishing his major lunar observers' handbook (in-progress). Star-Hopping was the Alternate Selection for November 1994 of the Astronomy Book Club.

Astronomy has been Robert's favorite hobby for over 50 years. In 1963 he earned the Boy Scout Astronomy merit badge, along with the rank of Eagle Scout. In college, he passed courses in astronomy. His

formal astronomical training has been augmented by reading many books and articles on all aspects of this vast field and spending hundreds of hours observing the sky. Whether with his family, friends, or strangers, he always enjoys sharing his passion for astronomy with them. Writing books is an extension of that passion.

From February 1996 through July 1999, Robert created the monthly "SkyChart" and "SkyTalk" pages for Mercury, the bimonthly magazine of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific. His astronomical writings have also appeared in Astronomy, Sky & Telescope, Selenology, The Journal of the British Astronomical Association, The Journal of the Irish Astronomical Society, The Journal of the Antique Telescope Society, The Observers' Guide, The Observatory, The Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage, and Deep Sky Journal. He is the Book Review Editor for The Journal of the Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers. Robert was a contributing editor for Business Software magazine (early 1980s).

The success of his astronomical writings lead to Robert being elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society of London in 1998. He is also a member of the San Jose Astronomical Association, a Life member of the Fremont Peak Observation Association, the East Bay Astronomical Society, The Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers, and The Northern California History of Astronomy Luncheon and Discussion Association. Robert has taken his family to five total solar eclipses (Gulf of Baja 1991; Caribbean Sea 1998; Black Sea 1999; Zimbabwe 2001; Aegean Sea 2006).

In addition to being a best-selling nonfiction author, Robert has also won awards for his short stories. “When Are You Going to Cry” won first place in the Las Positas College fiction contest and second place in “Writers Talk Challenge 2005”. The story was published in “The Sand Hill Press” (Stanford University, 2006). His coming-of-age story, “Up and Over” was the cover story for the December 1992 issue of Seedling Short Story International (vol 12, no. 48). In 2005, Robert began writing book reviews for the local weekly newspaper The Tri-City Voice.

From 1981 to 2002, Robert worked as a full-time Senior Technical Writer. He wrote technical documentation for military hardware, high-tech semiconductor products, manufacturing procedures, marketing materials, white papers, and company press releases.

Robert holds Bachelor of Arts degrees in History (1975) and English (1994) from California State University, Hayward. He has also taken writing workshops, seminars, and college-level fiction writing and editing classes. He has studied creative writing under Leonard Michaels (The Men’s Club), Donald Barthelme, Diane Johnson, and Tim O’Brien (1978 National Book Award winner for Going After Cacciato).

Robert represented the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club on the state Central Board (2004–2007). He is active in his branch and served on the East of Eden Writers Conference committee (2004 and 2006). He is also the co-founder and Interim President of the new Fremont Area Writers Club (2008—).

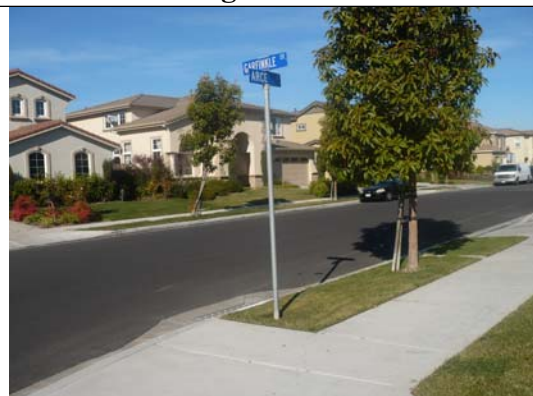


Bob Garfinkle and wife Kathy.



Ray & Myrla Raymundo & Bob and Kathy Garfinkle at the Black & White Ball at the Sports Center on December 31, 2008.

Naming of the streets



Several former councilmembers, most of whom served in the 1960’s, were given street signs bearing their names.

Above shows the street in the Talavera district bearing the names of Robert Garfinkle and Alice Arce.

**Honoring
Mark Leonard
Economic & Community
Development Director**



On January 30, 2009 at the Crowne Plaza in Union City, a big crowd gathered to honor Mark Leonard, who retired from his position as Economic and Community Development Director of the City of Union City.

There were sumptuous appetizers complete with Paddy's very popular coffee and a live band.

Mark gave a rousing speech introducing his guests and long time friends and a summary of the big improvement in Union City through his hard work and leadership. He thanked everybody for being there at his very special night.

When I was doing my work at the Museum, I thumbed through an old undated newspaper clipping. It says, "City names development director." It states that a planner from Humboldt County, who started his career in the Bay Area, will be this Union City's new community development director, replacing Richard Arjo.

In 1984, Mark was a 36-year-old Community Development Director for the City of Arcata. During his seven-

year tenure in Arcata, a city of 14,000 people, Mark helped form a Local Development Corporation and developed a public industrial park. He also updated the city's general plan and worked extensively with housing rehabilitation. He is also credited with initiating Arcata's first historical preservation program.

Mark received his master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from San Jose State University in 1974 and started his planning career in Los Gatos. He also worked for the City of San Mateo as an assistant planner for just under five years.

When Mark Leonard was first hired as the Community Development Director for the City of Union City, he said that his first goal was to review the City's general plan and gather community opinions about how the City should grow.

True to his word, the City, through Mark's hard work, updated the general plan in 1986 and again in 2002. There are now new developments in the City, namely, upscale homes, new industries, and nice commercial buildings that you see around the community, the Union Landing.

Mark is also credited with initiating the City of Union City Cultural Resources Inventory of around 400 historical homes and buildings in the City. Mark works with the Union City Historical Museum in periodically selecting the homes in the inventory of historical homes and sending them to the Planning Commission for approval of historic designation.

Mark lives in Oakland with his wife Sharon.



Mintz Cheng presented Mark with a “street sign” LEONARD WAY.

City Manager Larry Cheeves presenting an old portrait of himself and Mark.



Deputy City Manager Tony Acosta praising Mark for his work for the city.

Police Chief Greg Stewart presented Mark with a bag full of goodies.



Former City Manager Karen Smith proudly said that she hired Mark Leonard.



Live bluegrass band



Two historical figures Heidi Kitayama, wife of former Mayor Kitayama and Elvin (Al) Rose, first Volunteer Fire Chief at Alvarado Fire Station dancing to the music of the live band.



City employees presenting their tribute to Mark.



The crowd.



Mark's speech.



Local Historian Myrla Raymundo and Mark Leonard.



Joan Malloy

Meet the City of Union City's newest director, Joan Malloy, Director of Economic and Community Development Department. She took over the position of long-time Director Mark Leonard, who retired on December 31, 2008.

Joan grew up in Stockton, California. She attended John R. Williams Elementary School, Lincoln Middle School and Lincoln High School. She attended the University of Oregon and graduated with a Bachelor in Landscape Architecture. She also has a degree in Planning at the University of Michigan in 1993.

She worked in the private sector as a land planner and landscape architect from 1983 through 1993. She then decided to go to the public sector. In 1994, she applied at the City of Union City and stayed there up to the present.

As the Planning Manager in the Department, Joan worked on the City's General Plan. The 2002 General Plan formalized a long-term vision for the physical, economic, and social evolution of Union City and outlined policies, standards, and programs to guide day-to-day decisions concerning the City's development.

Joan and her colleagues were instrumental in bringing new developments in Union City, namely, many upscale homes, new industries, nice commercial buildings that we see around the community, the very successful regional shopping center at Union Landing with its 25 screen theater and numerous restaurants and retail businesses.

Joan and David Pingitore were married in 1990 and have a son Nicholas, who is 10 years old and in the 5th grade at St. Paul's Episcopal School in Oakland. They reside in Oakland, California.

She is very much involved in her son's school and sports activities. She is also involved in several neighborhood activities.

"Yes, I have political involvement too," she goes. "I was walking for Measure K and the latest measure, Measure UU." She also got involved with the latest Presidential campaign.

Joan's first recollection of Union City? When she first visited the City in 1994, she was so impressed with the appearance of Alvarado-Niles Road and the beautiful architecture of the City Hall.

Joan appreciates the forward thinking of the elected officials and cites the Hillside Area Plan, transportation, and the Station Districts as examples of their vision. She also appreciates the Commissioners for their professionalism, inspiration and positive attitudes.

**City of Union City 50th Birthday
Celebration with Artist Nancy Pratt**



**Artist Nancy Pratt and Myrla
Raymundo, President of the Friends
of Union City Library**

The Union City Library invited master watercolorist Nancy Pratt as the guest of honor at the unveiling of her painting entitled Union City on January 11, 2009. The painting is a colorful imaginative rendering of the cultural events and significant places and people that made Union City what it is today.

The painting will hang permanently just inside the main gate as one enters the Library. The many Union City residents of all ages who visit the Library will be delighted to find this amazing depiction of the history of Union City waiting for them. The acquisition of the painting by the Library was made possible through the generous support of the Friends of Union City Library. At the birthday party artist Nancy Pratt discussed each one of the fascinating symbols, figures, people and places that inhabit her painting making the history of Union City come alive.

**Reenactment of the First City Council
Meeting**

The reenactment of the first City Council Meeting was held on January 26, 2009 at the Barnard White Elementary School.



**Two Union City Mayors, Mark Green
and Dick Oliver**



**Two City Clerks, Renee Elliott and
Linda West with Mayor Green**

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Teresita "Tessie" Gatan

Our city is our past, our present and our future. We should know the history of our city.

Continue to read the Union City Historical Museum Newsletter, which contains historical news and new happenings in the area.

Walking tours from the Museum are always held every Thursday and Friday. There is also a Presentation of Union City History to visitors.

I hope to see broader participation from the members. They can help in being a docent, working for a special project, or helping with fundraisers.

The officers, the docents and the members continue to accomplish good things for the Museum.

Again, thank you for helping the Museum officers and directors in the achievement of their objectives and goals. We will continue with our good works.*Tessie Gatan*

"UNION CITY THROUGH THE YEARS"

By Myrla Raymundo

Local author and historian *Myrla Raymundo* has written a careful and detailed accounting of the very first beginnings of the community known as Union City. She has described the significant people, industries, events and places that made up the culture of Union City.

Also included in the book are the recent happenings and development in the City of Union City, such as Union Landing, the commercial and business establishments, the big and beautiful homes, and the people that now comprise Union City.

The book is available at the Union City Historical Museum, 3841 Smith Street, Union City.

"UNION CITY ORAL HISTORY"

by *Myrla Raymundo*

Local author and historian *Myrla Raymundo* speaks about her new book *Union City Oral History*, which will be published soon.

This book tells about the early people who came to Union City. This book also tells stories of the people who are continuously forming the course of history in our city.

This book yields a bounty of information on these people whose lives are chronicled therein.

The book will be available at the Union City Historical Museum, 3841 Smith Street, Union City soon.

FOUNDER'S NOTES



Here's an invitation to all of you good readers to visit our web site www.unioncitymuseum.com/.

This web site is an introduction to the content and capabilities of the Union City Historical Museum and a welcome invitation for you to visit the Museum.

It tells about the Museum, its location and what you could expect to see and enjoy.

It tells about the history of Union City from the past to the present

It tells about interesting facts about Union City - The Union City story

It tells about the Museum Artifacts and displays - Things of the past. These are just some of the displays in the Museum:

1940 Fire Truck used by the Alvarado Fire Department.
The Crash of Flight 615 relics
Drive-In Theater relics
Old bottles dug from the Alvarado area.

Old Singer Sewing Machine.
Old Piano owned by Matsumoto descendant.

Old Printing Press.
Calculator used by the Kitayama Nursery.
Old Projector
Old typewriters
Union City Police Department story from 1960 through 1980.
Fire department pictorials
Alvarado Map of 1940
Union City Maps 1960s and 1980s
Photographs of the Union City Pioneers.
Photographs of the Union City Mayors.

You can read all the issues of the Museum Newsletters from the very first issue to the present issues.

You will enjoy reading the Oral History - Stories of people who helped changed Union City

You will know the homes and buildings that were designated as historical. Some of them are:

30947 Vallejo Street – August May House
3938-3840 Smith Street – Dinsmore-Granger General Store
3939 Smith Street – Filipino Community Senior Center & Vicinity
31014 Union City Boulevard – former bank
3848-3850 Smith Street – former barbershop, pool hall and store
4214 Horner Street – former Alvarado Presbyterian Church

Myrla Raymundo



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