

Margaret H. Sedenquist

(1927 – 2021)

Margaret H. Sedenquist passed on February 9, 2021, at the age of 94, after a courageous battle with Covid-19. Trailblazer, entrepreneur, business owner, community leader, philanthropist, and deeply cherished mother, grandmother, great grandmother, sister, aunt, mentor, and loyal friend, Margaret was loved and admired by everyone who knew her.

Born and raised on a cattle ranch near Douglas, Wyoming, Margaret's childhood fostered a deep understanding of self-sufficiency, an abiding love of family and community, and the knowledge that individuals working together can accomplish great things. After earning a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Wyoming, Margaret worked at General Electric in Schenectady, New York as a research psychologist. Moving back to Wyoming, she worked as a school teacher in Cody, Wyoming where she met her husband, Charles Sedenquist, a chemical engineer with Husky Oil. Her three children, Mark, Daniel, and Diana were born in Cody. In 1964, the family moved to Southern California where Charles accepted a job at the prestigious engineering design firm, C.F. Braun & Co., in Alhambra. Margaret entered the real estate business and had a successful career, first as a residential realtor, and later expanding into commercial real estate where she facilitated 1031 Exchanges. She eventually served as president of the Society of Exchange Counselors (a commercial real estate marketing organization). Margaret's brokerage company was instrumental in handling a number of complex real estate 1031 Exchanges that involved almond, walnut, and peach farms in California's Central Valley, yachts, jets, hotels, golf courses, ranches, luxury homes, apartment buildings, and industrial property all over the country. Margaret served as President of the Pasadena Association of Realtors and the Los Angeles County Boards of Real Estate (LACBOR), and she served on the board of directors of the California Association of Realtors. She is the founder of the Foothill Apartment Association, a trade organization for property owners and managers. She also founded Mohawk Management Corporation to manage her clients' commercial and residential properties as well as her own. Margaret was president of Sedenquist-Fraser Enterprises, which owned and operated a plastics factory in Cerritos, California. And, she co-founded Commercial Pacific Savings Bank in Santa Cruz, California.

Along with her successful business enterprises, Margaret's legacy is deeply rooted in volunteerism and philanthropy. Described by her friends and colleagues as a visionary, a clear and compassionate thinker, and a role model for showing up and getting things done, Margaret served on a wide variety of foundation and community boards and committees for which she received many awards and recognition for outstanding leadership. These include: University of La Verne Board of Trustees where she was instrumental in managing the real estate and financial assets of the university; Board Chair of Five Acres, a child and family services agency in Altadena, California; Board President of the Pasadena Pops Orchestra and then later a board

member of the Pasadena Symphony and Pops when they merged; founding Board Chair of the Pasadena Chamber Orchestra; Board President of the YWCA Pasadena-Foothill Valley; board member of the Institute for Religion and Wholeness at the Claremont School of Theology; board member of the Arcadia Methodist Hospital Foundation; board member of A Noise Within; and Board President of the Pasadena Playhouse. Margaret had great enthusiasm for the theater and her days on the board of directors of the renowned Pasadena Playhouse will long be remembered. In 1982, noted artist Peggy Ebright sought to reopen the Pasadena Playhouse - a California cultural icon. She recruited Margaret, who was voted Board Chair in 1986. Under Margaret's leadership, the theater reopened after 17 years of closure, and it remains a vital cultural institution today.

In addition to her charitable endeavors, Margaret also served the City of Pasadena in a variety of roles. She served as Chair of the City of Pasadena's Finance Committee, the Endowment Advisory Committee, and as chair of the Pasadena City Hall Restoration Finance Committee. In 2011, the Women's Civic League named Margaret Woman of the Year, and in 2018 the Pasadena Foothills Association of Realtors gave her the 2018 Distinguished Service Award for her work with nonprofit organizations. She was active in the Pasadena Rotary Club and especially loved Rotary's Monday night book club get-togethers with dear friends. Margaret was also a lay healer at All Saints Church in Pasadena. Margaret's involvement with All Saints Episcopal Church of Pasadena runs deep. In addition to serving on the Vestry (the governing body of the church) for several years and as Stewardship Chair (where she greatly increased the amount of giving to the church), in the 1970's she was a delegate to the Diocesan Convention. Together, with then-Rector George Regas, she helped to reform the "male-oriented" language in the liturgy to be inclusive of women. She was proud of this change to the liturgy. As Margaret said, "gender-inclusive language is extremely important because it is with language that we think and dream and change and grow." While working closely with George Regas, Margaret was also a leader in the movement to authorize the ordination of women to the priesthood. Throughout her life, Margaret was a fierce advocate for the rights of women and for many other social justice causes. She was courageous, outspoken, and she fought effectively for the causes and issues that she believed in.

In recent years, Margaret became an advocate for staff and research groups associated with the City of Hope. She was treated for cancer at the City of Hope and later became co-chair of the SCOREboard task force, a research committee comprised of cancer survivors who provide information and feedback to a national group of oncologists working to develop new and improved patient care protocols for older patients with cancer. Margaret was intellectually curious, a lifelong learner, and she was dedicated to assisting others in any way possible. Her nature was always to give back and to help.

Margaret loved to travel. Favorite recent trips include the Galapagos Islands and a trip down the Amazon River with family members and trustees of the University of La Verne. One of the Amazon guides sent the following recollection: "Margaret was the ultimate good sport. I recall her encounter with a head-smacking flying fish that left her slightly dazed but still smiling. Nothing was going to dissuade Margaret from having a good time!" Margaret especially loved

to spend time in England. She had a vacation home in London for many years which she shared with family and friends. She was active in assisting the professional lives of her children and always supported their entrepreneurial efforts with enthusiasm and financial assistance. She had deep and lasting friendships. She was generous with her time, expertise, and financial support with dozens of enterprises and organizations. Her youthful spirit, sharp wit, and amazing energy, her steadfast practice of driving the newest red Cadillac, her early adoption of every new electronic device available, her devotion to her dogs, her love of flowers and making beautiful flower arrangements, her delight in playing cards and board games, her love of entertaining and having friends and family in her home, her deep love for her siblings, nephews, nieces, and generations of cousins, her love of the City of Pasadena, and her funny, playful sense of humor will be remembered by all who knew her. In the words of Devorah Lieberman, President of the University of La Verne: "Margaret brought sharp wit and humor, visionary ideas, and an earnestness that endeared her to everyone she met. She inspired us to visualize the future, to be bold, and to seize opportunities."

Margaret is survived by her sisters Kathryn Hall and Patti Cobb, by her children Mark Sedenquist and his wife Megan Edwards, Daniel Sedenquist and his wife Lynette Sedenquist, and Diana Sedenquist and her husband Jack Fisher; her grandchildren Joshua Jacques, Michelle Jacques Cowen, Nicholas Sedenquist, Carrine Fisher and her husband Carlos Lopez, Talia Fisher and her husband Matt Russell; and her great-grandchildren Naylina Jacques, Ayden Jacques, and Rio Zev Lopez. Margaret was preceded in death by her husband Charles H. Sedenquist, her brothers Fred Hageman and James Hageman, and her sister, Hilda Grant.

Margaret's brilliant, strong, caring, kind, charming, optimistic, wise, and nurturing soul will be forever missed by everyone who knew and loved her. A Celebration of Life will be held when it is safe for family and friends to gather. To make a donation in her name, please consider the following organizations: City of Hope, Five Acres, A Noise Within, Pasadena Symphony and Pops, the Pasadena Playhouse, Spread the Word Nevada, All Saints Episcopal Church Pasadena or the Margaret H. Sedenquist endowed scholarship at the University of La Verne, <http://univ.lv/sedenquist>.