

This installment of our ongoing series of “Meet Your Board” has a different twist. This time around, we are writing in gratitude about a woman who has served our neighborhood and community for a decade as she retires from the RHA board — Beverley Houghton.

With thanks, Bev, this one’s for you.

Her Life’s Story

Bev started life in the midwest. She was born in Chicago, IL, and grew up in Arlington Heights, one of its suburbs, playing “Hospital” with her dolls and dreaming of being a nurse. She stayed true to these roots and dreams, attending college at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington, IL, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

As a college graduate, the *real* hospitals were lucky to get her as a full-time nurse. Even though she spent much of her time in supervisory roles and administration, her favorite fields were surgical intensive care and the emergency room.

In the early 1980’s, she added to her workload, joining the Army National Guard where she spent ten years serving one weekend a month, two weeks out of every summer, with periodic training excursions peppered throughout, serving our country. Even though she was never deployed, during this time she trained to take care of wounded in combat environments and military hospitals. Taking care of others wasn’t the only perk while in the Guard. Just so happens that one of her instructors caught her attention — in more ways than one. Just a few years later, she and that instructor, Milt, married.

Because ten years wasn’t enough, she then served an additional ten in the Army Reserves, building the medical-related capacities of our troops. On these weekends she participated in field training to help enlisted with their medical skills, visited military hospitals to increase the skill set of our servicemen, took part in range firing, and learned basic survival techniques.

She eventually retired as a Lieutenant Colonel.

History in Rossmoor

In 1985, Bev moved to Rossmoor from Long Beach because of the schools. Her daughter was entering high school, and the move to the neighborhood with a midwest attitude just felt right. The small little place on Martha Ann was just what they needed.

And, it turns out, just what we needed, too.

Role on the Board

After retiring from full-time nursing jobs and the military, Bev felt a need to stay involved. That opportunity arose in 2008 when Rossmoor was in another battle over cityhood. She quickly found herself working on one of the campaigns.

That first foray into politics led to her first campaign election — one that won her a seat onto the RHA Board of Directors in 2009. For the first three years, she focused on emergency preparation — a perfect fit given her background and experience. Then she moved onto the festival committee, taking the lead in 2012. Seven years after her first board meeting, she was appointed president and served us in that role from 2016-2018.

Bev shared with me that all of these positions were meaningful and enlightening. Each one offering a glimpse into the neighborhood and our community. But a few highlights stood out — first, and foremost, the community, the people, and the pride.

As she steps down from her ten years of service to RHA, she reflected on her many accomplishments. She is proud of the work that's gone into the festival and its success. She is pleased about getting support from Supervisor Steel's office for our Neighborhood Watch Program and the \$1500 provided to Rossmoor to support our Neighborhood Watch signs. She loved working with the school district, Los Alamitos, and Seal Beach, getting involved in projects outside of Rossmoor for the sake of Rossmoor. Those projects included, but aren't limited to, the Foster Road bike lanes, the 24 Hour Fitness health club fight, and the proposed Village 405/605. Involvement in these projects required hundreds of hours of planning commission hearings, city council meetings, and hob-nobbing events in the interest of Rossmoor. To do what she thought was in the best interest of us all. To ensure Rossmoor retained its magic.

She loved stepping outside of her comfort zone in order to protect the interests of Rossmoor. The neighborhood that gave her so much in return. She met new people, learned new things, and found reward in being part of the bigger picture. Not only has her time on the RHA board been a good learning experience, it has reinforced in her the belief that we should always be fighting for something in which we believe.

Even though she is retiring from our board, she isn't done fighting. Her volunteer work will only take on a new direction. Primarily, she will continue her work with the Reserve Officers Association, an organization open to all ranks and branches of the military, focusing on lobbying for benefits and support of the Guard and Reserve forces.

But she is also looking forward to some more free time, as well. She and Milt love to travel and would like to do more of it. They have been around the world to exotic places, including Vietnam, Spain, Prague, and Poland. But they are not done. Their next stop? Estonia — for a NATO-sponsored international conference.

Words of Advice to New Rossmoorians

“Don’t come home each day and shut your doors in the name of being busy. Instead, reach out. Get involved — only if it’s to meet your neighbors. Pay attention to the RHA and what it does, and not just when there’s a crisis. Support your neighborhood. Be a good neighbor, and the benefits you reap will remind you of why you moved here in the first place. We have a unique something special that we need to preserve, and it’s not going to happen without all of us.”

Thank you, Bev, for all your years of service.

You put in the work to lead our small community — and it’s all of us who benefited from your innate need to nurture, heal, and make whole.

We are healthy because of you.

The RHA Board