

2006 FABULOUS PHOENICIANS

Lattie and Elva Coor

Lattie and Elva Coor met at Northern Arizona University in the late-1950s. He was a senior, she a freshman. They were never a couple but they frequently encountered each other on and off campus due to their mutual interests in hiking, politics and the cultural arts. Both were good students: he was valedictorian at Camp Verde High School; she was salutatorian at Litchfield High School.

People assumed they'd reach great heights and they did, literally. They saw each other atop a peak in the Estrella Mountains before he moved east to St. Louis, Missouri, in 1958 to earn a master's degree in political science from Washington University.

While Lattie worked his way up the WU collegiate ladder from assistant professor to university vice chancellor, Elva whet her political chops alongside Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater. They married other people and went their separate ways.

They didn't see each other for 32 years, when he became president of Arizona State University in 1990 and a mutual friend invited them to a get-together. This time, they

were both single, yet once again, the desire to explore Arizona's mountain trails superseded any romantic notions. "Call me if you want to go hiking," they said to each other as they parted company.

But it was biking that brought them together as a couple. Lattie began bicycling in 1991 to recuperate from a heart attack. The following summer, Elva organized a 574-mile bike trip between Utah and Mexico. Much to the delight of Lattie and Elva's friends, who felt the two should have dated all along, the long-time hiking buddies married on Dec. 27, 1994.

The pair was unstoppable in upgrading the level of education at ASU. Before retiring as the university's president in 2002, Lattie singled out improving the quality of its undergraduate education as his greatest achievement. In 1998, Elva poured her efforts into founding the President's Community Enrichment Program, an outreach program designed to bring more friends and supporters to the university. Since then, the model university-community partnership has grown to more than 900 community participants and 50 faculty members.

Despite their retirement status, the Coors remain busier than ever traveling the world with their blended family. They rode horses in Iceland and Peru, went on safari in Tanzania, cycled through the Czech Republic, rope-climbed the Grand Tetons, and SCUBA-dived among the sea lions and otters in the Galapagos Islands. Among their favorite destinations is Mexico, which they consider one of the world's most overlooked treasures.

Music also plays a major role in the couple's lives. Lattie is an accomplished five-string banjo player. He was introduced to mountain melodies while living in St. Louis and the purity of the music appealed to him. He performs a rare style of picking called "frailing," which produces a "punchier sound," he said. He loves playing such energetic bluegrass classics as "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" and "Hog-Eyed Man" at family gatherings.

Elva plays the radio and DVD player, she likes to joke. She has listened to the radio broadcast "Saturday Afternoon at the Opera" for 45 years and also enjoys all kinds of dance music.

With all their world travels, they're both proud to call Arizona home. "There is an honesty and a sense of destiny here that makes its residents feel like they can accomplish anything," Lattie said. "We're honored to be part of the state's evolution. It's an indescribable treasure."



The Fabulous Phoenician Award was initiated in 1985 to pay tribute to Valley philanthropists. Previous honorees are: Thelma Kieckhefer (1985), Virginia Piper (1985) and Peggy Aste (1985), Newton Rosenzweig (1986), G. Robert Herberger (1987), Herbert K Cummings (1988), Eleanor Libby (1989), Barbara Bonoff (1990), Gordon Galarneau Jr. (1991), Bruce T. Halle Sr. (1992), Eddie Basha (1993), Nick Balich (1994), Robert Norris (1995), Donald L. Ulrich (1996), John Teets (1998), Sam Eichenfield (1999), Herman Chanen (2000), William (Bill) Pope (2001), Sandra Baldwin (2002), Priscilla and Michael Nicholas (2003), Jeanne and Gary Herberger (2004) and Hugh and Ruth Downs (2005).

TRENDSETTERS PHOTOGRAPHER: SCOTT FOUST
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Oonagh Boppart looks like a proper British lady, and she is, but the twinkle in her eyes signals that she's a playful spirit. Thanks to her dedication and hard work, organizations such as Desert Botanical Garden and Arizona Ballet are on point.

Oonagh grew up in England. Her parents already had two girls and wanted a boy, so the job of naming the newest McGill offspring fell to her sister. She named the newborn the Gaelic word for "lamb," something she's not, Oonagh is quick to point out lightheartedly. Better than her grandmother's choice, Bridged Una McGill, because her initials would have spelled B.U.M., she noted with a chuckle.

She spent her entire school career – from age 4-1/2 to 18 years – at the St. Mary's Convent for Girls. Despite the lack of male students, Oonagh received her first kiss at age 14 at a coed party. She remembers his first name, Ralph, but never saw him again.

The gentlewoman moved to the United States in 1965 and married her husband, John, in 1979. When John's job took them to Los Angeles in 1986, Oonagh stepped down after 25 years as Director of Preschools for Special Needs Children. The energetic Brit dove into volunteerism when the couple returned to Phoenix in 1991. She served as a Court Appointed Special Advocate for 14 years, on the Foster Care Review Board for 12 years, and was both regional and national president of Achievement Rewards for College Scientists. She presently sits on the boards of trustees for Florence Crittenton Services, Ballet Arizona and Desert Botanical Garden. The latter two organizations fill her soul and heart, respectively.

These days, she focuses her bountiful energy on fund-raising for the Desert Botanical Garden's outstanding desert plant research projects. She already co-chaired one campaign to raise \$16 million; now she's eager to add to it.



Oonagh Boppart



Jennifer Croll

Jennifer Croll is a successful entrepreneur who owns six boutiques bearing her name, but as a child she dreamed only of becoming a great actress. The problem was the after-school theater department she auditioned for from second through sixth grade wouldn't let her on stage. "They told me I couldn't sing. I wanted vocal chord replacement surgery," the blond fashionista said. "Looking back, it made me wonder, 'who breaks down your confidence?' Today, I'm happy where I'm at."

Her life definitely took a turn for the better after the theater incidents. First, she reconnected with the love of her life, Cristian. Years had passed since Jennifer last saw her childhood crush; then they met by chance at a lounge. The couple was married six months later. "I wouldn't be who I am today without Cristian, who's given me a leg up on all the horses I've ridden," she said.

Next, she learned the joys of volunteerism in high school while serving in a soup kitchen. In 2001, Jennifer established the Girlfriend Holiday Lip Gloss Exchange Luncheon. Two years later, she founded Las Palomas, a monthly charity lunch group that gives young women a change to give back to their community.

In 2004, she established the Jack & Chloe Club Foundation. Named after her son and daughter, the organization raises money specifically for children's charities. Another child played a prominent role in her latest effort. Last year, she created Matthew's Day on Market Street, an annual event celebrating the life of young cancer victim Matthew Lilien.

Although the childhood Jennifer never achieved her dream of acting on stage, the confident adult Jennifer has a new goal. She fantasizes about buying a yacht and a remote island in the Mediterranean and exploring the world with Cristian, Jack and Chloe.

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Printer's ink has always flowed in Renee Dee's blood. The Arizona Foothills Magazine co-creator began her publishing empire as a youngster, banging out copies of "The Wide World of News," a monthly mini-magazine she distributed in her neighborhood. Even back then, the publishing auteur knew the value of running a turnkey operation. She gathered local news and recipes, wrote them up on the family typewriter, produced three copies at a time using carbon paper, and distributed the finished product to her 11 subscribers. A born saleswoman, she also collected subscription fees – five cents a copy and a quarter for the entire year. By the time she was in second grade, the young mogul's mother recognized Renee's greatest sales asset. "You can't take 'no' for an answer," she told her.

In 2005, Renee retired from the publishing industry but did not leave her commitment to bettering the community behind. She continues to spearhead many charitable committees and organizations, pairing time, sponsorships, editorial coverage and promotional partnerships to a number of Valley organizations. Renee's motto is, "Be the change you want to see in the world" and she walks the talk. Earlier this year, she co-chaired the Arizona Foundation for Women Sandra Day O'Connor Luncheon and is a member of the Heart Ball committee. Renee's philanthropic outreach also has included the American Heart Association, Boys & Girls Clubs of Phoenix, Southwest Autism Resource and Research Center, ChildHelp USA, Crisis Nursery and Body Positive.

An accomplished "time-shifter," Renee is a businesswoman when her 3-year-old son is sleeping and a mother during his waking hours. "Your priorities change when you have children," she said. "You want to help your kids grow up to be good adults. I don't move through the world as fast. Being with my son lets me see and appreciate the small things."



Alexis Glascock is a skilled attorney. She graduated Wellesley College and earned a master's degree from Harvard. She studied at Nanjing University in China. She speaks fluent Mandarin Chinese and French. Yet one of her proudest accomplishments is mastering "Jingle Bells" on the piano. That's because she achieved the milestone while taking lessons alongside her three favorite accomplishments – her children.

Her eldest was due the second day of Alexis' bar exams. "I had no idea how deeply I could fall in love with a child. I didn't know that was part of my personality," the petite blond said. "I learn more from my children than they learn from me."

Alexis has always held child-related causes close to her heart. While working with the Arizona State Legislature, she formed the nonprofit corporation Capitol Idea and sponsored holiday parties for more than 500 underprivileged students at the Mary Bethune Elementary School in Phoenix. When the parties began in 1995, many of the children had never seen Santa Claus; the majority did not have holiday celebrations in their homes. When budget shortfalls closed the school last year, Alexis and the former teachers successfully campaigned to reopen the school.

In 2004, she chaired The Friends of Crisis Nursery Safari Soiree, raising about \$700,000 in the process. Alexis continues to serve on various Heart Ball committees, and in 2008, she and husband Bonsal will chair the Phoenix Symphony Ball.

This dynamo also volunteers at her children's schools. She is a homeroom mother and a class parent representative, and coordinates computer and art programs and school fundraising events.

An avid reader, Alexis always finds time for political and historical fiction and non-fiction. One of her favorite classics is "The Great Gatsby."

Ultimately, Alexis strives to be a good role model for her children. "Teaching them they can make their world a better place to live by helping others is my goal."

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Marilyn Harris is one of those fortunate few who make their living doing what they love best. In Marilyn's case, both her professional and personal lives center around horses. Her investment firm specializes in horse properties and ranches. When she's not buying and selling, she's riding. In 2004, Marilyn won the American Quarter Horse Association Amateur Adult World Show Championship. In 2005, she was the champion winner of the AQHA Select World Working Cow Horse Class, an enormous accomplishment in the horse world.

Marilyn has ridden and shown horses all her life. The discipline helped her maintain above-average grades at Central High School in Phoenix. She was organized and enjoyed the discovery process while researching papers. As an adult, she continued to seek out new challenges. She speaks fluent Spanish and has her SCUBA license; she put both to good use during a visit to Mexico's Sea of Cortez. During other adventures, she explored northern Africa, Greece and Turkey, and hitchhiked through Portugal.

Her charitable and volunteer work is as diverse as her travels. She has served on the Governor's and Mayor's commissions on AIDS, the Orpheum Theater Foundation, Brophy Mothers' Guild and City of Glendale Historic Preservation Task Force. She is currently active with The Board of Visitors, Brophy College Preparatory Board of Regents and Board of Trustees, the Women's Board of the Barrow Neurological Foundation and the Christ Episcopal Church Endowment Committee.

With a 10-acre ranch in Cave Creek and an office in downtown Phoenix, Marilyn moves smoothly between her two worlds. She pops a CD – anything from Willie Nelson and Dierks Bentley to the Rolling Stones – in her car stereo to get in the mood for wherever she's heading.

Among her favorite movies is Diane Keaton's "As Good As It Gets." Maybe that's because for Marilyn, life is as good as it can be.



Nan Howlett



Andrew Lloyd Webber should send Nan Howlett flowers. She has seen the award-winning playwright's "Evita" 30 times and "Phantom of the Opera" six times, and is a big fan of "Jesus Christ Superstar." She developed her appreciation for the theater from her mother, a creative woman who sparked Nan's interest in the arts. But Nan doesn't only enjoy watching plays; she derives equal pleasure from reading both comedies and dramas. "The dialogue and stage directions stretch my ability to imagine the action taking place on stage," she said.

Nan's life has all the elements of a great stage play or novel. Making herself indispensable during an internship with a PR firm in Paris, she extended the opportunity from three to nine months. Smart and fashionable, she moved on to a coveted position with Lancôme in Paris, where she founded France's Habitat for Humanity. She often traded her couture clothes for overalls to help build homes in Poland and Cape Town, South Africa.

Nan returned to Phoenix in 2001. Soon after, a friend set her up on a blind date with C.A. Howlett but it was not, as they say in the theater, a "cute meet." During their luncheon, the airline executive spoke more on his two cell phones – one regarding business, the other updates on the World Series – than her. However, six months later, they met again in a calmer atmosphere. This time, Cupid's arrow found its mark; the couple married in Vail, Colorado in 2003.

Nan's philanthropic efforts strike a balance between "where her heart lies and medical, arts and human services needs." A dear friend has Type I diabetes so Nan began work with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation; she is chair-elect of its 2007 Promise Ball. She also chaired the 2005 March of Dimes Gourmet Gala and the 2006 HomeBase Youth Services Doorway of Hope Dinner, and served on committees for the Arizona Foundation for Women, Heart Ball, Phoenix Follies, Body Positive and Las Palomas.

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If you're watching reruns of TV's "Saturday Night Live," don't be surprised to see Cathy Kleeman in the audience. The front row seats came courtesy of Cathy's childhood pal-turned newswoman Katie Couric as a special treat when Cathy and now husband Jim were first dating. The double-whammy of guest host Alec Baldwin and musical guest Paul McCartney did the trick – Cathy and Jim married in 1995 at the Wrigley Mansion.

Growing up in Virginia, the vivacious teenager felt more comfortable in her role as a follower than a leader. She enjoyed cheerleading, attended cotillions and pursued artistic and creative interests, such as decorating, fashion and gardening. She even babysat for President Lyndon Baines Johnson's grandchildren, whose parents, Charles and Lynda Robb, lived across the street from her grandparents in Washington, D.C. This self-declared "late bloomer" blossomed in college and eventually snared jobs in advertising and marketing. The work tapped into the analytical side of her personality.

These days, husband Jim jokes that she uses her sales techniques to raise their daughters. But the former candy striper and admitted "girlie girl" also is passing down to her children many valuable lessons from her own childhood. One is loyalty. Despite living all across the United States, Cathy remains close friends with Couric and four other classmates she has known since first grade, about the same age her daughters are now.

Another is courage. When Cathy was honored for her work with the Fresh Start Women's Foundation, she dedicated the plaque to her 7- and 9-year-old daughters. It was a small gesture to declare the girls' power to make the right life choices.

She also is sharing the spirit of philanthropy her mother, a Junior League member, instilled in her. Among her memorable summer jobs was working at a camp for autistic children.

Cathy has stepped back from her work with Fresh Start, Make-A-Wish, Phoenix Suns Charities and Cox Charities to concentrate on her family. "You don't get a second chance with your children," she said.



At the University of Minnesota, Jill earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in family studies and child development. Her boyfriend Tom teased her that she was "studying to be a housewife," but the petite brunette knew her commitment to marriage and family already were shaped at birth. "I am the middle daughter so I was the mediator, the fixer and the caretaker," Jill said.

Little did she know she'd draw on those characteristics at an early age. While Jill was in high school, her father was diagnosed with leukemia. She helped care for her father, even donating blood platelets for his bone marrow transplant and overseeing the family business while he recuperated. At the same time, she maintained above-average grades in high school, and participated in cheerleading, gymnastics and line dancing.

Throughout her father's illness, she was able to observe the close bond shared by her parents, who often held hands and exchanged affectionate looks. She also drew strength from the manner in which her parents handled their challenges. "My father led by example. He never let us feel like woe is us," Jill said. "I realized young how precious life is and now live in the moment."

She met her future husband while the two were students at Arizona State University. A fraternity brother of Tom's set them up on a blind date, and she felt an immediate connection to the handsome, outgoing young man. Jill knew early during their five-year courtship that they complemented each other – he was the planner while she was spontaneous.

Now, Jill devotes her time to raising the couple's three children and fund raising for child- and school-related efforts. Jill's hard work has benefited Xavier College Preparatory, Arcadia Boys & Girls Little League, Phoenix Children's Hospital, Habitat for Humanity, Heart Ball and Junior League of Phoenix, among others. However, her greatest satisfaction comes from guiding her children to become thriving, successful young adults.

"Someone told me, 'I see where your daughter gets her strength and presence.' That someone could attribute those qualities to me is the best compliment I could ever receive."

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Lisa Shapiro has much in common with Goldie Hawn, a celebrity and entrepreneur she's long admired. Both are blond, beautiful and athletic. But they also share impressive business acumen, the drive to succeed, and unshakable family commitment.

"I admire Goldie's mothering skills. In these days of excess, she's raised her children with values," said Lisa, who manages to juggle raising two young children with a long list of community service. Among her more recent projects are chairing both the 2006 Heart Ball After the Ball Party and 2007 HomeBase Youth Services Doorway of Hope dinner. She has also contributed her time and skills to the Phoenix Symphony Ball, March of Dimes, Honor Ball, Body Positive, Arizona Foundation for Women and Phoenix Children's Hospital.

The small town girl graduated with honors from the University of Montana with a business degree. Lisa and two girlfriends moved to Phoenix 16 years ago. Waitressing at the Rusty Pelican helped pay the bills for a while but she soon was welcomed into the advertising industry, where she earned the respect from her peers during her 12-year career.

Like the actress she admires, Lisa likes to have a good laugh with her good works. "There's nothing I love more than taking care of business but I've got to make the work fun," she said. "Sometimes the work is hard but complaining won't help the situation. Fun is all a frame of mind, a positive attitude."

A former aerobic and step teacher, Lisa maintains her healthy outlook with a regular workout regimen. While she cannot always indulge her guilty pleasure – a spa day with the girls – she regularly hikes, runs and bikes. She recently achieved a personal athletic milestone – completing a 26.2-mile marathon in less than four hours.

But don't expect to see Lisa at other marathons. She has already set her sights on new goals.



Paige Wheeler



In 1992, Paige packed her suitcases and two cats and headed from upstate New York to Phoenix where the weather was sunny. Now she shines brightly helping the less fortunate here.

Her first important charitable act came before her move to Arizona. Paige met a 15-year-old orphan who lost his mother to cancer and father to alcoholism. The boy's aunt took in his siblings but not him. With her college roommates' permission, Paige offered the young man the spare room in their home, and for the next two years she wore multiple hats – student, substitute mom, cleaning woman and banker. The boy thrived within the security of a home and people who cared. He graduated high school, earned his teaching degree, married and is now raising a family of his own.

During her eight years as general manager of a Phoenix health and fitness club, Paige exercised her right to help the less fortunate by organizing holiday fundraisers. She lightened her workload to raise a family but still volunteered for such charitable groups as Las Palomas, Phoenix Children's Hospital, Trends Charitable Fund and Arizona Heart Association.

Now a mother of two, Paige created a nonprofit company that allows her to spend time with her 6- and 4-year-olds. "Excessities" solicits non-monetary contributions that are resold through consignment houses, online auctions and other venues.

Paige's friends know her passion for the environment; they call her Sister Ivy because she is devoted to operating a "green" household. She uses organic products to feed her family, moisturize her skin and clean her home. "I try hard to maintain a healthy home but I'm not crazy – I let the kids eat McDonald's. A real treat for me is dark chocolate. It's high in antioxidants."

This tomboy with a feminine edge prefers ESPN to "E.T." "There is nothing better than watching a great ballgame. I love sports, any sports, and competition," she said.