

Margaret H. Sedenquist

(1927 – 2021)

Margaret H. Sedenquist passed away on February 9, 2021 after a courageous battle with Covid-19. She was 94. 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. Returning to Wyoming, she worked as a school teacher in Cody (near Yellowstone National Park) 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 enjoyed 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, 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 properties as well as her own. Margaret was president of Sedenquist-Fraser Enterprises, a manufacturing services company 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 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; 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 served the City of Pasadena in a variety of roles. She was Chair of the City of Pasadena's Finance Committee, the Endowment Advisory Committee, and 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 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. 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 people, ideas, and principles 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. Recent adventures included the Galapagos Islands and a voyage 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. Margaret had deep and lasting friendships. She was generous with her time, expertise, and financial support with dozens of enterprises and organizations. Her

youthful, fun-loving spirit, sharp wit, and amazing energy, her love of entertaining and having friends and family in her home, her deep love for her children, grandchildren, siblings, nephews, nieces, and generations of cousins, her love of the City of Pasadena, and her funny, playful sense of humor will be fondly 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 and his wife Lorena 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 parents Ruth (Shaw) Hageman and Fred A. Hageman, 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>.