



DISCOVERING MORGAN HILL

By Donna Dicker



My husband and I moved from our cozy, affordable bungalow in Los Altos to a multi-level, hillside house in Cupertino because we thought we needed more space. Although the house was on a hillside with fabulous views of the valley, the worry of another landslide, or one of the many teenagers who parked on our dead end road at night tossing a match out the window causing a wildfire made us decide after several years to move on. Our sons were both out on their own and the large mortgage, with accompanying property taxes, made a move even more appealing.

We began with the idea that we would downsize to a smaller house in our immediate area. We soon learned that the housing market was HOT and we wouldn't get relief from a large payment in the Los Altos/Cupertino area so we began the journey of house shopping. We were in our mid-fifties and had heard good things about The Villages in the foothills of San Jose so off we went. The houses were comfortable, reasonably priced, and there was even a golf course, but each time we visited we missed the mix of different generations. There were no children riding bikes, or young couples buying their first home. So we decided The Villages was not the place for us. Next, we explored the Silver Creek development, also located in the east foothills of San Jose. There were new, affordable condos and even a golf course, but we soon learned that there were home owner associations with stiff fees and membership in the golf course was an additional cost. Silver Creek was not the place for us.

One Monday morning I was telling a friend about our weekend house hunting when he suggested that we “Look fifteen minutes south on Hwy 101 in Morgan Hill”. He had a friend who had just bought a house there and was pleased with the amount of house he got for a very reasonable price. Memories of driving through “Blood Alley”, Monterey Road, to visit my husband when he was stationed at Fort Ord came back.

On our first visit to Morgan Hill luck was with us when we turned off Dunne Avenue with a Safeway and Coldwell Banker real estate office. We were on an information gathering trip and we had decided to let a real estate agent show us the town. When we entered the Coldwell office that Saturday morning we were greeted by a friendly woman working at her desk. Her name was Shirley Dolan. Shirley became our partner in finding a home in Morgan Hill. We spent many a Saturday with her, and she worked diligently to successfully find the right home for us. Later I would learn that Shirley was the mother of Maggie Leininger, our current AAUW branch president.

Our home on Rosemary Circle has welcomed new grandchildren, new great grandchildren, experienced the passing of our parents, celebrated marriages, been remodeled, redecorated and for the last twenty-three years has fulfilled the maxim for us – THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

DONNA DICKER