

Frank and Joan Randall

PHILANTHROPISTS, TRAVELERS, INFLUENCERS

BY SUE EDELSTEIN



Longtime BBC members and Lido Isle residents, Frank and Joan Randall, are an inspiration. They are on the Orange County Register's list of Orange County's 100 Most Influential People for 2019 which stated, "The couple gave \$50 million to the Banning Ranch Conservancy to help buy the 401-acre Banning Ranch, contingent on a purchase deal being worked out. It's the largest undeveloped privately owned coastal open space in Southern California." The Conservancy's mission is to preserve, acquire, conserve and manage the entire Banning Ranch as permanent public open space, park and coastal nature preserve. See their website banningranchconservancy.org for more information.

Executive Director of the Conservancy, Steve Ray said, "The Randalls are absolutely two of the nicest people I have ever met in my life, and their commitment to preserve open space for future generations is unrivaled." When Frank spoke on the day this was given, he said, "Everybody's very enthusiastic about this, and I am as enthusiastic as anyone. Obviously, it's a legacy and I do feel very proud of it and I plan to do more elsewhere in Southern California." The Randalls have helped people, animal, and conservation issues all over the world.

Frank grew up in South Pasadena and Joan lived in Los Angeles. He started his career at Dean Witter as a stockbroker in Reno, Nevada and returned to Pasadena after his father passed away at the age of 56 and he came back to deal with family matters. Frank continued investing in commercial real estate, which required more time than the stock market. At the same time, he and Joan traveled throughout the world. They met when Frank was playing tennis on public courts in Highland Park with a friend. Joan came over

(assuming they were pros) and asked if they gave lessons. Frank was quick to respond, "Yes," and the rest is history.

From a previous marriage Frank has two kids and five grandkids. His son has retired from a teaching career, and his daughter, received a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts and has a studio in Portland, Oregon and also in San Luis Obispo.

Philanthropy work is high on the Randalls' priority list and they support some 20 organizations in one way or another, including Union Rescue Mission, City of Hope, 2nd Harvest Food Bank, The Wilderness Society, Catalina Island Conservancy, Operation Smile, National Trust for Historic Preservation and Starr Ranch Sanctuary.

In the May issue of the Bay Window, a featured article on The Environmental Nature Center (ENC) was shared with readers on the newly opened facility. The Randalls donated \$1,000,000 and are major funders of the ENC Nature Preschool. The Frank and Joan Randall ENC Nature Preschool Classrooms will help the new school to provide quality early childhood education through hands-on experience with nature. In 2016, their \$50,000 donation restored the Center's stream and pond, along with the development of a new Butterfly Habitat Observation Deck, a desert tortoise enclosure and the restoration of two teaching centers within the center. As Bo Glover, ENC Executive Director commented, "The Randalls are visionaries and the school will provide a research forum on early childhood and environmental education. Their donation will be far reaching."

One of Frank's favorite places to go in Newport Beach is the Lido House. He is also the largest investor of this popular hotel. Frank and Joan have traveled the world from the Arctic to Antarctica, Eastern Europe to Western Europe, Australia, Tahiti, and more. When they travel, they make it a cultural trip exploring beyond the obvious.

Frank has participated in peace marches in Russia (1989 and 1990), toured Vietnam (1993) with a small group of Americans organized by Vietnam Veterans for Peace (hoping to help reestablish diplomatic

relations and lift the trade embargo) and visited Cuba (1994) with a group of Americans who were bringing needed supplies like food, medicine, clothing and toys to the citizens. Listening to a radio show in 1988 he became acquainted with Dr. Robert Simon who, with the help of donations from UNICEF, the World Health Organization, Richard Riordan (former mayor of Los Angeles 1993-2001), the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance and others, set up the International Medical Corps (IMC) in 1984. Frank made a charitable contribution and later became a member of the board of directors of IMC, which is an organization dedicated to rebuilding health-care systems in countries devastated by war, natural disaster and disease. In 1994, Frank was invited to accompany the president of IMC to inspect their operations in Somalia and Sudan.

All of these trips have been expertly chronicled by Frank and a series of articles published in The Los Angeles Athletic Club Magazine, "Mercury" (LAAC is reciprocal with BBC). He also wrote about Russia in a Bay Window issue in March 1990 and it is his favorite piece.

Frank enjoys handball, tennis, backpacking, hiking and travel. He had a 41-foot Hatteras and cruised as far north as Santa Barbara and south to Ensenada and now has a custom electric boat called "Knot a Yacht." The family has a ranch near Warner Springs in San Diego County where Frank works on trails in the woods, has opportunities to use his chainsaw and observes his pond full of fish. He appreciates these accomplishments: having a military career in the Navy (retired from the naval reserve as Lieutenant Commander), being a member of LA Society of Financial Analysts (now retired), writing

articles for his club magazines (The Los Angeles Athletic Club and BBC) and being a member of the Catalina Island Yacht Club. The University of Nevada, Reno Alumni Association presented Frank Randall, class of '56, the Alumnus of the Year Award in 2005.

Joan, graduated from USC with a degree in Philosophy, became a housewife, traveled a lot with Frank and has volunteered at the Environmental Nature Center and the Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center. Joan is also an author who writes under the pen names Anna Purna and Catherine Fairfield Hayes. Her most recent book, based loosely on studies of religion, the sciences and the subconscious, *Contemplations On God and Orgasm*, can be purchased through Amazon, AuthorHouse, and Barnes and Noble. Her technique of posing many questions to the reader and intriguing them with thought provoking revelations to stimulate the mind is unique.

A personal milestone occurred on April 22, when Frank celebrated his 90th birthday (so fitting as this day, is also Earth Day, which honors the planet, environmental protection and peace). Advice on life from him was important to pursue, so when asked what he has learned, he replied, "The best deal in business is good for both sides." When questioned about what makes a loving relationship successful, he answered, "Tolerance. You have to be able to understand the other person's point of view and be willing to adjust to their wishes." Joan agreed and said she has no other wishes (maybe a private jet) so between the two of them, their mission is accomplished. We appreciate and honor the Randalls for their kindness and their active solutions to challenges in our neighborhood and around the world.

