

Stanley K. Hansen

March 25, 1924 – April 24, 2012



The founder of Brookview Park, Stanley Karsten Hansen passed away of cardiac arrest at home at the age of 88. He was preceded in death by his son, David K. Hansen, his parents and sister-in-law, Phyllis A. Williams. He is lovingly survived by his wife, Janice L. Hansen, daughters JoAnn H. Gracey (and Donald) of Danville, and Karol L. Hansen of Concord. Grandchildren John Hansen (and Rebecca) of Rohnert Park; Alexander Hansen (and Kimberly) of Rosarito, Mexico; William Gracey of Antioch and Megan Gracey of Concord; and great-grandchildren; Melissa, Kamryn, Alexis, Rachael Hansen, and Alexa Hansen.

Arrangements for cremation by Moore's Mission Funeral Home, 1390 Monument Blvd,
Concord Ca, 94520, 925-682-1100
No formal services are planned

Celebration of the Life of Stan Hansen

12 noon
Memorial Day, Monday, May 28, 2012

[Zio Fraedo's of Pleasant Hill](#)

611 Gregory Lane
Pleasant Hill CA 94523
925-933-9091

RSVP appreciated 925-682-0433 (Brookview Office M-F, 9-4)

Contributions in his memory may be made to the charity of your choice, the [Concord Historical Society](#) PO Box 404, Concord, CA 94522, or [Monument Crisis Center](#), P.O. Box 23973, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

There were two great loves of Stan's life, his wife of sixty-two years, Janice, and the land where he was raised; where he built a unique senior manufactured home community, where he lived, worked, played, and where he spent his final days. Born March 25, 1924 in Alameda, CA., he began his life in Oakland, CA. His parents, Julius Jess Hansen of Oakland, and engineer and mother Sophie Marie Tiedemann Hansen of San Francisco, purchased with the help of Julius' family five acres of walnuts and pears on January 31, 1931 part of the Monte del Diablo parcel, expanding to twenty acres in 1942, all between the Walnut Creek and the SPRR tracks and Star Route 55, later named Monument Blvd. They reported \$500 the first year farming walnuts and pears. As a boy he would toss fruit to the train engineer and haul sacks of ballast stones from the tracks to line his mother's flower beds. As a young man he had a farm deferral and served fourteen months in Air Force occupational duty in Okinawa after WWII ended.

Twenty-year-old Janice Lee Gardner met twenty-four-year old Stanley Karsten Hansen in a walnut orchard on her Christmas break from college, 1947. He was in a tree pruning branches. She was carrying a borrowed .22 rifle for target practice. He noticed her blue eyes, full red lips, her head crowned with a braid of soft brown hair; she wore saddle shoes and plaid. She noticed his wavy, sandy brown hair, rugged good looks, an impish grin; that he wore a farmer tan, and did not come down from the ladder. The next day she invited him to her family's nearby farmhouse for a duck dinner, but he refused her offer. Jan found out much later he'd been taking Arthur Murray ballroom dance lessons and had a class that night. After a nineteen-month on-and-off courtship, Stan and Jan married June 26, 1949. They raised three children, David, JoAnn (Jodie), and Karol in a renovated brick cottage on the Ranch, just a half mile from where they met. Sophie and Julius lived on the other side of a very tall hedge. Stanley was Sophie's only child, her "Tanny-Boy" until she died at 96.

As a young adult with a growing family and with only a 1942 Mt. Diablo High School education under his belt, but with an astoundingly energetic drive to succeed, he became an entrepreneur. He purchased a cherry red tractor (and a 1948 Chevy chassis later converted to a dump truck) – both wedding gifts for his bride, he always said – and starting with custom orchard disking and walnut harvesting for other farmers in the Diablo Valley. Next he built a walnut processing plant on property the couple bought on Mohr Lane where they later built a home in 1967 and lived for ten years. Jan worked alongside him doing the books and keeping track of the itinerant crews in the orchards, sometimes while pregnant. The children were tended lovingly by grandparents. When the valley's walnut orchards were replaced with suburban sprawl, Stan hooked a blade to the tractor and switched to grading and paving. His wife and children weren't always sure who he loved more, them or being on a tractor: most times over his married lifetime he would work till after dark when he should have been at the dinner table.

In 1972 with the support and assistance of Jan in the sales office, David in the field and a crew of young men, he began to develop the Ranch into a highly-acclaimed, manufactured home community. Stan won an Environmental Design Award from the City of Concord, and the respect of the industry for his attention to detail and vision of a new ground-breaking senior community in a tree-filled, park-like setting. Brookview Park has been featured in "Better

Homes & Gardens” magazine, April 1977 and “New Shelter” magazine, September 1980. In addition, several pages are devoted to the Park in the architectural and community planning book, “The Form of Housing,” by Professor Sam Davis, UC Berkeley, 1977. As a former Northern California Regional Director of the Western Manufactured Housing Communities Association, he strived for harmony between park owners and park residents. The current director wrote to Stan's two daughters, who will be assuming management of Brookview, “Your Dad was a legend in the industry.” For a developer of a manufactured home community owner / operator he was extraordinary. His second-in-command, Josh Maruri said, “He tried to make every homeowner in Brookview happy... tried to take care of everyone, residents and workers.” Living on the property, Stan sacrificed financially and physically to maintain the community as a beautiful and serene place for his residents, and his and Jan's parents to live out their days. As this land was his father's legacy to him... this community is Stan's legacy to his children.

Recycling was one of Stan's favorite hobbies in his final years, he sold the cans and glass he collected from his residents and cardboard collected around town and usually donated 100% of the receipts to charity. He and his Brookview volunteers were honored in 2011 with the Monument Crisis Center Heartfelt Award, one of his favorite charities. Another interest was WWII history. In the few times they visited Bonn, he would badger his cousins for details on their lives in Nazi Germany; a time they wished to forget. Stan was a member of the Concord and Contra Costa Historical Society, and a supporter of local historical restorations including the WWI Soldiers Memorial Monument in Pleasant Hill and the 1856 Don Francisco Galindo Home and Museum in Concord. His sixth grade Spanish teacher was Miss Ruth Galindo and they were great friends until she died at age 89. He served as a pallbearer in the funeral cortege for her horse-drawn casket.

He volunteered his services to the Monument Community Partnership and Monument Community Gardens Action Team, and built raised vegetable beds for Ygnacio Valley High School students as well as 35 beds for his residents' use at the Park; he even made his own compost and mulch. March 2002 the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors extended special recognition to Stanley K. Hansen for “his outstanding and unselfish lifetime of service for the betterment of the people in Contra Costa County, including his mobile home efforts in providing affordable housing, by declaring his birthday, March 25th as Stanley K. Hansen Day in Contra Costa County.” Stan was also a member of the Contra Costa County Iron Horse Corridor Advisory Committee from its inception and the Contra Costa County Mobilehome Advisory Board.

He could be very sentimental, a collector of personal history, archiving every timecard since the walnut days, used his old trucks from the paving days, even the 1948 Chevy dump is still around, painted in his colors, red with black fenders. He was exasperated everyone at times: residents, employees and family alike: be a mind-reader and do everything he asked without question and you were golden; rebels need not apply. He was known in the community he owned and operated as “The Warden,” all tongue-in-cheek, of course. He would never allow himself to be angry at anyone for long and no one else could to him. When you saw him inspecting the crew on his bike or golf cart wearing his uniform: blue coveralls and a wide-brim

hat, you wouldn't have guessed he was the developer and owner of this beautiful community. He was a tough old bird. In his 80's working Christmas Day his one ton, ride-on Essick roller overturned on a soft slope and pinned his leg. Rather than worry his family he summoned 911 on his cell and sheepishly called Jan from the ambulance like a naughty boy.

He grew old with a few close childhood buddies, but his best friends were women. In 2005 his daughter took Stan and Jan to Germany to visit cousins, then to Paris. She surprised them by planning for four friends, aka "The Wild Bunch" to be waiting in their suite when Stan and Jan arrived. All week Parisian restaurant waiters would say to this one man sitting with six women, "*Ahhh Monsieur, est ce votre harem?*"

Stan always said his marriage to Jan was a shotgun wedding but in the next breath, "I never could have done any of it without her." During Stan's hospital post-op, Jan stayed with Stan 24-hours a day, sleeping on the visitor sofa in his hospital room. After he was finally clearheaded, he whispered into the nurse's ear, "I have something precious." "What's that Mr. Hansen?" said the nurse. "My wife." But before you think he was an absolute angel of a man, he did have a bit of the devil in him. He was stubborn as hell. He drove everyone crazy including Jan. All of his family worked for him at one time or another and he never failed to micro-manage every one: "do it a la Hansen" he would say. He ordered countless letter drafts that drove his daughter mad typing for him over and over. He pouted when he didn't get his way (You women are ganging up on me!) And he was impossible when his hearing started to go. But, many, many people, from city trash collectors to city council members, residents to waitresses, loved him for his generosity, sense of humor, great charm, and integrity.

As an employer he was known to be a stern taskmaster, yet fair. He had a willingness to work side-by-side in the dirt with his employees, or climb up a ladder to a roof to check a repair, even in his eighties. If you disappointed him, you would get the "pickle face" and silent treatment. You had to have a firm handshake and work hard or just try hard if you didn't have the skills yet. Yes, sometimes it was Stan's way or the highway but he educated his men with a passion for high quality; he did not bully. Many of his crew over the years went on to other vocations but when they visited, they always said they were grateful for starting in the working world with him. Stan spoke many times with pride of a tall strapping teenager who worked for him in the late 70's; green as the hills. The boy, Doug, moved on to college then out in the world, working his way up in the freight management industry. In 2007 Doug became the CEO of a successful NASDAQ logistics transportation company and earned the Midwest Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year Award. He writes, "Stan was a great man and I can honestly say that he was a major influence in my life. He taught me about hard work. He taught me about quality and doing things right the first time. He taught me about responsibility. I believe that he helped shape me into the person that I am today. I will never forget him."

Stan did not know the meaning of regular rest except when he and Jan took R&R in San Juan Bautista. Hawaii and Germany were favorite trips. On a tour of China to see the Xi'an Terra-cotta Warriors archaeological reserve, he found himself in a gift shop without Jan's supervision. A few month later crates with a life-size warrior general and horse statue was delivered. They

now keep watch over Jan's front door for him. He worked every single day from the time he could hold a shovel, to sorting recycle while balanced on a cane, the day before his hip replacement surgery for osteoarthritis March 19, 2012. He had a bad ticker but took the risk anyway, no question about it. He wanted to throw away the cane and get back to the recycle yard. Shortly after surgery pneumonia set in. With other chronic health issues, he knew he was dying but his devoted wife stayed by his side day after day and kept hope alive.

To show how much he loved her, exhausted, he tried everything she asked of him, “Stan, one more bite; Stan, another sip of water.” Through all this his humor remained intact. Asked if he was having fun yet, he rolled his eyes when he couldn't speak intelligibly. One day at rehab his room was filled with guests, all coaxing him into his wheelchair for an exercise session, he shouted weakly, “Is all of Contra Costa trying to get me to physical therapy?” His first day home just four days before he died, Stan had a chuckle over Jan and Karol's Keystone Kops efforts to shift him on and off the commode. When shown a Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue by his daughter to try to perk him up, he pointed to the chest then the head of the scantily-clad model and murmured, “It's her brain that counts.” Not a remark typical of Stan ...probably hedging his bets a bit so he could charm his way through the Pearly Gates, the rascal. He was a stubborn man all his life, wanted things his way, yet never, ever complained about pain. But at the end he tried his damndest to please his wife and daughters until his heart finally gave out at home in the early morning hours of the sixty-third anniversary of his son's birthday.

Stan's favorite movie was “The Music Man,” his last wish was to have no services but a big party with wine, good food, good friends, and to play “76 Trombones” and “When The Saints Go Marching In.” We will do our best. Good-bye Stan, may your memory be eternal.