

Runyon Jr., her college sweetheart, and moved to Sacramento in 1947. They would have two wonderful children, Stephen Runyon and Elizabeth Mulligan. Jean's first attempt at public relations came when Sacramento newspaper executive Eleanor McClatchy asked her to help the Music Circus Theater get publicity. Jean was acting in the Music Circus performances at the time and blended her knowledge of acting and natural skill at publicity with great success.

She was a woman who knew many firsts. After starting her own PR firm in 1960 she was named Man of the Year by the Sacramento Public Relations Round Table in 1962. In 1978 she was the first woman appointed to the Sutter Community Hospitals board of trustees. Jean also became Sacramento's first female Rotarian. In 1988 she was named Sacramentan of the Year by the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce.

Jean raised millions of dollars over the years for many worthy causes such as the American Heart Association, Make-a-Wish, the Cerebral Palsy Association, the American Lung Association, the Special Olympics and the arts community that she so dearly loved. She was one of the kindest people Sacramento ever knew, but at the same time was driven in her pursuit whether for donations to charity or a client's success. While she had a personality that won business clients over, she also never lost her whimsical side. She was famous for her zany rooftop performances as a witch on Halloween—she rained candy on kids from above—Jean Runyon was affectionately called the "Good Witch of River City".

Her first husband, Mercer Runyon, died in 1970. That same year, her father passed away and she also underwent major surgery for breast cancer. She persevered through her tragedies with the can-do spirit that we all loved. In 1980 she married Philip Tow, a prominent air-pollution control engineer who unfortunately died in 1986. Jean later married again to Eugene Graham, who passed away in 1991. Her last husband, Jack Murphy, a retired insurance executive passed away in 2003. For all the challenges that Jean was presented with, it was clear that personal tragedies could not keep her down. She moved forward, never wavered and persevered with a positive outlook on life.

The successful Sacramento PR firm that Jean began in 1960 was joined by Estelle Saltzman and Jane Einhorn and was called Runyon, Saltzman and Einhorn. Their presence in Sacramento was enormous. Some of their major clients included The Sacramento Bee, California Department of Health Services, California Department of Consumer Affairs/Bureau of Automotive Repair, Sacramento Cable and the Sacramento Kings. One of Jean's favorite PR campaigns was for the Sacramento County Measles inoculation campaign when the vaccine first became available. She felt some of her best work was for campaigns on teen pregnancy, AIDS, anti-smoking and prenatal care.

Jean is survived by her two children, son Stephen Runyon of Courtland and daughter Elizabeth Mulligan of Hood, four grandchildren and one great granddaughter. We will all miss Jean Runyon terribly and in so many ways, but we do have countless memories of her to cherish.

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE CITY OF FLOWER MOUND AND THE FLOWER MOUND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the partnership between the City of Flower Mound and the Flower Mound Chamber of Commerce, and to honor the businesses that reside there.

I am proud and grateful to be given the opportunity to represent the strong communities and businesses of north Texas. This pride, however, comes from the energy, creativity and commitment by the individuals within these neighborhoods and institutions that contribute to the growth and opportunity we are blessed to receive in calling this area home.

It's because of cities like Flower Mound and businesses like the ones present tonight that north Texas is able to claim the rare title of being one of the few areas that has retained its economic health in this rough economic climate. The forward-thinking partnership between the city of Flower Mound and the Chamber of Commerce has produced an ideal environment for business prosperity that has remained strong, that sustains the community. That is certainly something to be proud of.

Flower Mound has created, in essence, a haven for new businesses and an environment where small and large businesses alike can take root, grow, and thrive. You are a bright spot in north Texas, and a true example of excellence for the rest of the nation.

I am with great pride that I stand here tonight to join in celebrating the prosperity of Flower Mound. I wish you—the local leadership, the businesses, and the residents—all the best, and let me say that it is my very distinct honor to represent you in the U.S. House of Representatives.

HONORING ELLIE RILLA

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Ellie Rilla, a woman who has helped lead the way to a new model of sustainable agriculture in Marin County.

Ellie is now taking a much needed sabbatical after 21 years as a University of California Extension Farm Advisor. In those 2 decades, Ellie was one of a handful that brought together the old-time farmers of the region with a new generation and created a unique fabric that has held the farm community together during difficult times for agriculture, and has in fact, helped many not just survive, but grow.

I am proud to say that the quality agricultural products of Marin County are today unmatched for nutritional value, taste, and sustainable production—and much of this is due to the passionate commitment, hard-headed economic realism and collaborative spirit of Ellie Rilla.

Ellie grew up in Mill Valley where it was a short jaunt to the forests and rangelands of

West Marin. She began her career as an environmental educator at Circuit Riders, a Sonoma County non-profit that was a leader in environmental restoration, and whose ranks have produced several of the North Bay's most prominent restoration specialists. Ellie still lives in Sonoma County in Sebastopol, a city well-known for its progressive politics and its fine food and wine.

In 1988 she became the UC Cooperative Extension Director in Marin and was immediately welcomed by two of West Marin's farm elders, Boyd Stewart and George Grossi. Coming in the midst of the organic revolution and the creation of California cuisine, Ellie saw the promise of local farmers on the edge of the metropolitan Bay Area producing high quality agricultural products. She became, according to Albert Strauss, the owner of Strauss Creamery, ". . . an awesome advocate of sustainable agriculture and organic and local dairy farms." While big and bland agribusiness and real estate development continued to gobble up small farms elsewhere, Ellie saw that survival lay in producing quality products, and developing in consumer's minds a pride in local, sustainable agriculture.

As organic agriculture entered the mainstream, first with California certification, then with USDA certification, Ellie advised farmers on how to meet the new standards, write business plans and market their products. She also helped farmers and ranchers tackle tough new water quality, through the development of best practices and conservation projects, which continue to evolve today.

It was apparent to Ellie that West Marin's small farms and ranches needed to diversify to survive. While dairies were preeminent, though faltering, 2 decades ago, West Marin agriculture now produces an array of products including olives and olive oil, strawberries, row crops, grapes, free range poultry and grass fed beef. Besides high quality milk, local dairies also produce a variety of cheeses, and even organic ice cream.

Ellie realized that the bucolic beauty of West Marin and farmer's adjacency to the Point Reyes National Seashore were important assets. She became an advocate for "agritourism," an industry in which farms and ranches are opened to visiting guests. "These stays give their guests a flavor of what it is like to live on a farm, to see how food is produced and gain an appreciation for natural ecosystem," wrote Rilla. "At the same time it provides farmers and ranchers with additional operating income to save their farms from development." A tireless promoter of agritourism, Rilla both wrote a book about it and helped develop a UC Cooperative Extension Agritourism Project and website.

On June 30 she will begin a very busy sabbatical with three writing projects. She will be writing an analysis of a state-wide survey into agriculture diversification and agritourism, completing a second edition of her book, Agriculture and Nature Tourism, and updating her decade-old case study of three woman-led farm families. Ellie is then expected to return to the University of California Cooperative Extension program in a year to develop state-wide resources for marketing and leadership development.

It's been my pleasure to work with Ellie and to observe the seeds that she has planted in West Marin to sprout, grow and spread, ensuring a bounty for future generations. Thank