

RALPH BARGETTO: 1924-2011

# Winery descendant dies at 86

Local real estate exec was denizen of charity board rooms

Bio - B

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By CATHY KELLY

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SOQUEL — Ralph Bargetto — a Soquel native and Italian boy affectionately nicknamed “terromoto” more than 80 years ago, meaning roughly, little earthquake, in a nod to his high engery — died Tuesday of complications from Parkinson’s disease, a son has confirmed.



**BARGETTO**

Bargetto, 86, was a father of 10 and key descendent of the Bargetto Winery family.

He was a man who worked hard at the family winery, seeing Prohibition first-hand, was impassioned by the study of language as a boy and at Santa Clara University, and was pulled away to serve in the 13th armored “Black Cat” division of the Army under Gen. George S. Patton.

He came home to run a successful real estate operation and became a denizen of top county charity board rooms.

Bargetto didn’t want to leave the family winery business in the 1950s when it got tough. But it got so tough selling 50-gallon barrels to Monterey County farms and Central Coast Italian and French restaurants — at a time when most Americans didn’t drink wine — he was forced to go into sales of another sort, his son Tom Bargetto said.

It was frustrating for the Italian-American to go into restaurants in those days and see no wine on the tables, Tom Bargetto said. But Bargetto, who until his last days drank wine out of a simple glass without a stem, never had much time to think about what might be lacking. He did an incredible amount of giving back, friends and family said.

“He was a very outgoing, very confident man who thrived on all this stuff,” Tom Bargetto said. “I think that was taught to him and his brother by their dad, to be so capable. ... This was a good man who lived very simply and on his own terms. He had a tremendous value system. He had a nice home and nice cars, but he lived modestly; he was a

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well-educated man of the earth.”

Bargetto died at his Soquel home, surrounded by his close-knit family, his son said.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated 11 a.m. Tuesday at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 435 Monterey Ave., Capitola. A rosary will be recited 7 p.m. Monday at St. Joseph's. Graveside services will be after Mass, at Holy Cross Cemetery, 2271 Seventh Ave.

Bargetto's influence has been left not only at the family winery and “compound” on Main Street, but in real estate and Chamber of Commerce circles, at Dominican Hospital, Good Shepherd Catholic School, Goodwill Industries and Long Marine Lab — just a sample of the governing board leadership he was involved in until his early 70s, his family said.

Many will undoubtedly miss the decades of Sunday barbecues and annual cardone-centered celebration of the gregarious gardener, wine lover, entertainer and cook held. A cardone is an “ancient vegetable” similar to celery that Bargetto perhaps loved more than all the things he grew, Tom Bargetto said. And he could always find peace in the garden, and the subsequent celebrations always included Bargetto and others singing an old Northern Italian folk song, he added.

Among his volunteer work, Bargetto “had a tremendous love for Dominican Hospital,” his son said, and the services provided by the nuns and others working for Catholic Healthcare West.

## RALPH V. BARGETTO

**BORN:** Oct. 24, 1924

**DIED:** July 13, 2011

**HOME:** Soquel

**OCCUPATION:** Winemaker; founder of the former Real Estate Center brokerage.

**EDUCATION:** Soquel Grammar School; Mission Hill Junior High; Santa Cruz High; Santa Clara University

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:** Member, Dominican Hospital Advisory Board; longtime member and past president, Santa Cruz Rotary Club; member, former director and president, Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce; charter member, Long Marine Laboratory board; founding board member, Good Shepherd Catholic School; past president, Grand Jury Association; board member, Goodwill Industries of Santa Cruz; member, Knights of Columbus (altar boy when St. Joseph's was kitty-corner to Gayle's Bakery).

**SURVIVORS:** Children Phillip Bargetto of Dutch Harbor, Alaska; Tom Bargetto, Ann Radvanyi, Jim Bargetto, Peter Bargetto, Paul Bargetto, Katie Maleta, all of Soquel; Mary Horath of Aptos; Teresa Bargetto-Andres of Turlock; and Rita Bargetto-Snyder of Scotts Valley; 27 grandchildren; and 3 great grandchildren. He is also survived by sister-in-law Beverly Bargetto of Soquel, and his cousins in Italy, Mario Bargetto, Maria Vigna, Paola Vigna and Ida Turco.

**FAMILY:** He was preceded in death by his wife of 60 years, Marguerite “Micky” Bargetto, who died Aug. 29, 2010, and his brother, Lawrence Bargetto, who died in 1982.

**SERVICES:** Mass of Christian burial is 11 a.m. Tuesday at St. Joseph's Church, 435 Monterey Ave., Capitola. A rosary is 7 p.m. Monday at St. Joseph's. Committal services will be after Mass, at Holy Cross Cemetery, in Live Oak.

**CONTRIBUTIONS:** Rotary Club of Santa Cruz Foundation, P.O. Box 497, Santa Cruz, CA 95061; National Parkinson's Institute, 675 Almanor Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94085.

He left part of his estate to Dominican Hospital Foundation.

“Even though he was a conservative businessman, he saw that America gave his parents a good break and he was concerned others get that possibility, too,” Tom Bargetto said. “A lot of that had to do with his faith, too, his Catholic faith.

“He was a great listener and a natural leader,” he added. “People seek out confident and capable people and he

never said ‘no.’ ... It wasn't always the easiest thing to be Ralph Bargetto's son. He expected a lot. He expected us to shake hands, look people in the eye and follow through on our promises. And he was not the type of father to go to our baseball games, but in the grand scheme of things, it worked out just fine.”

As his longtime Rotary buddy, Bob Rudolph, put it, Bargetto was exceptionally good to be around.

“He was one of the nicest persons I have ever known in my 86 years,” he said. “I had the misfortune of following him as president of Rotary, and it wasn't easy, I'll tell ya. I just got an email about it. I feel terrible; I'll miss him.”

Bargetto Winery was founded by Bargetto's uncle, Phillip, and his father, John (Giovanni) Bargetto. Both emigrated from Castelnuovo Don Bosco, a small town in the Piedmont region of northern Italy.

The brothers moved from San Francisco in 1917, establishing the winery on the banks of Soquel Creek. Daily operations are now handled by Martin Bargetto, John Bargetto and Loretta Bargetto Muijal. The family established Bargetto Regan Estate Vineyards near Corralitos in 1992. Bargetto's twin sons, Peter and Paul, later founded Soquel Vineyards.

Bargetto left the wine business in 1963 and became a founder of the Real Estate Center a few years later. It soon expanded from seven agents to 85 agents. In 1990, he was elected president of the local Board of Realtors.

Though he suffered from dementia, Bargetto started talking about his wife of 60 years, Marguerite, the day before he died, his son said. She too died of Parkinson's disease, on Aug. 29, 2010.

Bargetto is survived by 10 children; 27 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren and sister-in-law Beverly Bargetto. He had several close cousins in Italy as well. His brother, Lawrence Bargetto, died in 1982.

Memorial contributions are preferred to the Rotary Club of Santa Cruz Foundation, P.O. Box 497, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, or to the National Parkinson's Institute, 675 Almanor Ave.,