

# ~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

## 100 years old, and going strong



Photo Pippa Fisher

Diablo Foods Vice President Connie Collier (left) presents Margrit Getsinger (center) with a bouquet of flowers to mark her 100th birthday on a recent shopping trip with Lamorinda Village Vice President Don Jenkins.

### By Pippa Fisher

In 1919 Woodrow Wilson was president of the United States. In the same year Germany and the Allied nations signed the Treaty of Versailles, formally ending the First World War. Babe Ruth was sold by the Boston Red Sox to the New York Yankees for a record-setting \$125,000, and on Oct. 8, 1919, Orinda resident Margrit Getsinger was born in Switzerland. She will be celebrating her 100th birthday surrounded by generations of family in her home.

Getsinger, raised in Switzerland, met and married her husband, German-born Ralph Getsinger, after he was forced to leave Germany accused of "being a spy" as a result of his employment with the U.S. Foreign Service. Their daughter Joan was born in Bern. In 1945 the family left Switzerland for Michigan. They had two sons, John and Pierce, born in Detroit. Getsinger has four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

She lived in Michigan until 2008 when she moved to California following the death of her husband to live with her daughter. She has her

own second story loft apartment added on to her daughter's home and lives independently alongside her daughter who works in San Francisco as a senior vice president of Morgan Stanley.

Getsinger played tennis until she was into her 80s and says she has always maintained a healthy lifestyle, staying active, eating well, enjoying an occasional glass of wine, and credits good Swiss genes for a long life.

This gracious and inspirational lady must be doing something right. Although she lives with her daughter, she maintains her independence, grocery shopping every week with help from Lamorinda Village. She even takes French lessons at the Orinda Community Center.

Getsinger recently bought a walker frame, joking with Lamorinda Village Vice President and volunteer Don Jenkins as he drove her on one of their weekly grocery shopping trips to Diablo Foods how "I'd better get some exercise if I'm going to be 100." Although Getsinger reads on her Nook device and likes to keep up with news reports, she says reading is becoming more challenging now as the only thing slowing her down

a little is declining eyesight.

Jenkins enjoys discussing world affairs with Getsinger on their drives to the grocery store and remarks on the wide circle of friends she has made since moving here. She stays engaged with friends and family and two very large Bernese Mountain dogs that keep her on her toes.

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