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Four generations on one block

By John T. Miller



The tract of homes on Ponderosa Lane was built in and around a walnut orchard in 1950. To this day, no matter how many times the road has been repaved, you can still see the sinkholes where the trees once stood. Photos provided

buying the house across the street with Tim and his wife Donna moving in.

In addition, back in that same decade, this magical lane in Saranap boasted four sets of grandparents with their offspring living on the same block. The Babysitter's Union put up a protest, but there was no need to go outside family for coverage.

Jim and Jeanette raised three boys and then eventually bought and sold their house, moving all of five houses up the street. Tim and Donna did the same and moved a half-mile away on Freeman Road. However, they are only six houses down if you travel through their backyards and get a little muddy in Las Trampas Creek.

"It's wonderful to have the great grandchildren pop in and out," says Betty. "What more can I ask for? I am one blessed person." Betty related how she grew up with family in Oakland. Her in-laws lived across the street, her mother had a house in back and her sister lived next door. "We called it the Crawford Compound."

Kayla was 5 when her parents sold the house on Ponderosa Lane, and says she never got over it. She remembers playing Manhunt in the neighborhood and the skate ramp across the street at her cousins' house. "Every time we visited Grandma Betty I wished I still lived in the neighborhood," says Kayla.

Now, almost 25 years later, she does. And, from her front yard, she can watch her kids walk up the street and knock on Grandma Betty's door in their 21st century version of the Crawford Compound.

Other tidbits

Betty and Cal Crawford purchased their house in 1956 for \$13,000. They were the third owner in five years. It is now worth more than \$1 million. The original price of the homes was \$9,000 in 1950, but for \$75 extra you could get a brick fireplace.

Kayla and Wes Andrews' new home is one of the few in the vicinity to still have its original floor plan - three bedroom, one bath, 1200-square feet including the garage.

Betty Crawford, who at 90 years old still lives in the Saranap home she and her husband Cal purchased in 1956, says she is truly blessed to have her great-grandchildren moving in just three doors down from her house.

Her granddaughter Kayla and her husband Wes Andrews purchased the home with the help of Kayla's parents, Tim and Donna Crawford.

The house, a complete fixer-upper, was rescued just a few weeks away from foreclosure with a last minute offer to the previous owner, whose husband had passed away eight months previous.

Tim, who retired in 2018 and sold his successful business - Unique Elevator Interiors - devoted himself full time to fixing up the house. In late July, Kayla and her family moved in.

Monopoly anyone?

The Crawfords already had a history on Ponderosa Lane, where in the late '70s, Betty and Cal played a real life version of Monopoly, buying the house next door to them and renting to their daughter Jeanette and her husband Jim, and also

Andrews is a member of the family that owns and runs the popular Sideboard Restaurant in Lafayette.

One other family has had four generations on the block, but Grandma and Grandpa predeceased the Clarks before the great grandchildren were born.



The Crawford clan in the late '90s. Back row, from left: Paul, Sean, Candy, David, Ryan Crawford and Andy Baird; middle: Tim, Cal, Betty Crawford, Jim and Tyler Baird; front: Donna, Kayla, T.J. Crawford, Jeanette and John Baird. Not pictured is Katie Crawford who was away at school. The family has been a major presence on Ponderosa Lane since the mid-'50s.



The new kids on the block, from left: Nora, Lilly, and Harley, play King of the Hill on a mound of dirt in front of their new home. Their great grandmother, Betty Crawford, lives just three houses down the street.

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