

# RANCHO BODEGA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## DID YOU KNOW?

### **The Chicken Farmers**

For a long time Highway 101 ran through downtown Petaluma, but in 1937, after the Golden Gate Bridge was built, the California Highway Commission wanted to build a bypass around the town. Most of the town folks were in favor of the bypass until they learned that the proposed route went through 120 small chicken farms. Colonel John Skeggs, the chief highway engineer, gerrymandered his way through the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, and got his proposed route approved. Enter Max Kortum, a Petaluma chicken farmer. Max led a



**Max Kortum**

bitter two year battle against Colonel Skeggs. The Highway Commission finally scheduled a hearing in Sacramento, and 500 Sonoma County residents went up to protest the route. Governor Earl Warren ordered the route changed to avoid the chicken farms and Colonel Skeggs disappeared into the shadows of bureaucracy.

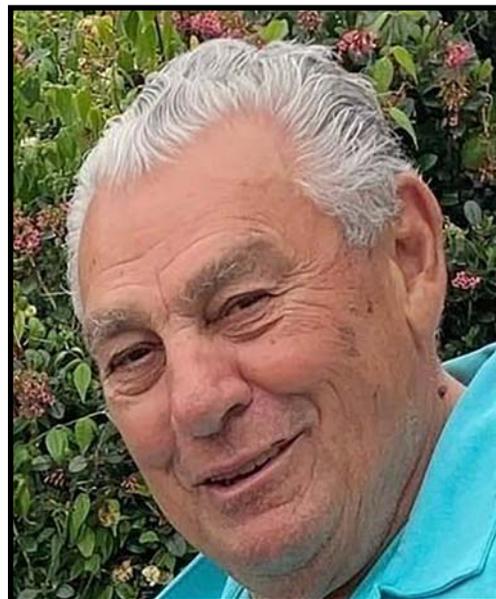
## **A TRIBUTE TO NED JOHN MANTUA**

**1942-2022**

Ned Mantua passed away unexpectedly on February 15, 2022, at the age of 80. He is lovingly remembered by his daughter Tania (John Rohan), sons Mitch, Nate (Christine), and Dominic (Lisa), grandchildren Max, Sofia, Trent, Nicholas and Marina, and his many relatives and friends.

Ned lived his entire life in Bodega and Bodega Bay. He and his parents, Johnny and Irene, lived on their ranch off Valley Ford Freestone Road until he was five, then moved to Bodega Bay. He attended Bodega Bay Elementary School and many of his classmates ended up being his lifelong friends. He went on to Tomales Middle School and Tomales High School where he was active in sports and the senior play and graduated in 1959. He spent one semester at Santa Rosa Junior College, long enough to complete the football season.

Like his mother, most of his working life was tied to the fishing industry. After leaving SRJC he started working as a fish buyer at the Lazio Fish Company. He met Margaret Skelly at a dance in Bloomfield, and they married at age 21. They had their four children in the next five years,

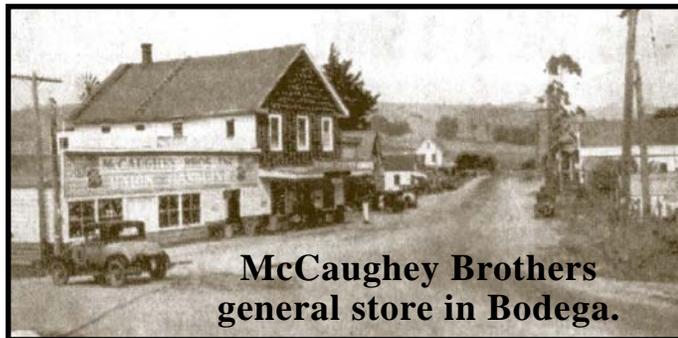


**Mantua's**  
**HR Tops** 1966  
**Good Spot**

Catcher Ned Mantua slammed a two-run homer over the left field fence in the fourth inning to snap a 1-1 tie and give the Coast Merchants a 3-1 triumph



## FROM THE ARCHIVES



**McCaughey Brothers  
general store in Bodega.**

*But where  
will we go  
for milk...?*

**1979**

Ned Mantua, who owns the store but not the building, reportedly feels the bulk of his sales comes from nuts, bolts and fishing lures.

He's also said he has about 30 regular customers, some in their 80s, who rely on the small grocery for daily provisions.

Mantua, whose family has lived in Bodega for three generations, says the store is "just about the same today as it was when my mother was going to the store as a little girl."

Mantua has run the store for 13 years. His present lease goes until 1982.

He has until March 20 to sell out his groceries or find an alternative that will please both his customers and Public Health.

"It's not really Public Health I have a complaint with. It's the law. You can go to a farmer's market and buy food they sell off the dirt, but my wooden floor won't do."

and Ned left his wharf job to work at McCaughey Brothers general store in Bodega. He bought the business in the late 1970s. In 1985 he moved the store to Bodega Bay, eventually settling in across the street from Spud Point Marina. The business closed in 2000 with the rapidly shrinking fishing industry. He then managed the gas station and convenience store at the Tides, retiring two years ago at age 78.

Ned always loved fishing and hunting, sports, horse races, and playing cards. He started his kids fishing and digging clams as soon as they could walk. He especially loved duck hunting, as a kid on the shores and ponds around Bodega Bay, and later on Estero Americano, Salmon Creek, the Central Valley, and Tule Lake. Ned loved playing baseball, fastpitch and slow-pitch softball, and hung up his cleats once his kids were playing in high school. He loved going to his grandchildren's sporting events and yelling words of encouragement to them and suggestions for the referees. Ned was a lifelong fan of Tomales High School sports and was among the 49er faithful. He was thrilled with the 49ers Super Bowl runs, traveling with the team and joining them on the sidelines for some of their most exciting games. Ned was a gambler. In the past few decades, he's been an active member of a poker club based in Santa Rosa, and he loved playing Texas Hold 'em locally and in World Series of Poker events.

Ned had many friends. He was kind, a great storyteller, and a great listener. Ned was very generous and was compelled to supply his friends with fresh fish, abalone and crab. Ned valued community service. He served as a trustee on the Shoreline Unified School District School Board from 1975-1991. Ned served on the Board of Directors for Bodega Bay Public Utilities District since 2004.

Ned loved to be around his children and grandchildren and was especially happy when everyone was together. Ned had a great rainy-day hike along Lagunitas Creek on the day after Christmas last year.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

The whole family was there, and they saw spawning salmon. He got to spend a little time with each person and tell them a little story or joke. A very good day, indeed, for Ned and his family. <https://www.legacy.com/>

### **SEIFERT'S HEART REMAINS IN HIS BELOVED SAN FRANCISCO\ CAROLINA PANTHERS COACH GEORGE SEIFERT RETURNS TO HIS HOMETOWN THIS WEEKEND ON A ``BUSINESS TRIP'**

Ned Mantua is a lifer. He's called this cozy coastal town home since he was born 57 years ago. He's called himself a San Francisco 49ers fan since the franchise began in 1946. He's called himself a season-ticket holder since 1961. So you may find it odd that Mantua sees nothing wrong with what he's about to do. Today, Mantua will make the 90-minute trek south from Bodega Bay, over the Golden Gate Bridge and down to Candlestick Point. Then he'll walk into 3Com Park wearing a Carolina Panthers shirt and sit in the seat provided by the Carolina Panthers' head coach. This is not treason - it's loyalty. Mantua has called George Seifert his friend and fishing companion since 1999, and that trumps a lifetime of faithfulness to the 49ers home team.

"I'll be pulling for George," he said of the Panthers-49ers showdown. "I was such a die hard 49ers fan. But when George left, it was like part of football left." If Seifert's heart isn't exactly in San Francisco, it's about an hour northwest in Bodega Bay, where Seifert has made his retreat. His modest two-bedroom, wood-shingle house sits on a hillside above McCaughey Bros. Marine Supplies and Hardware, owned by his buddy Mantua. Directly across Bay Flat Road is the Spud Point Marina, where Seifert's boat is moored in slip E-9 when not in dry dock.

"This was the spot he was looking for" said Mantua, whose 148-year-old store is the only thing Seifert passes on his walk to the boat. Whenever he's in Bodega Bay you can't keep him off the water. Out by 6 a.m. in by 2 p.m., regardless of the weather. "Part of it is just being out there," Mantua says. Getting out there with him is half the adventure. "When he drives a boat, you've got to hang on," said Mantua. "As fast as that boat will go, he'll go. It's hammer down." - <https://greensboro.com>

## **Bodega store burglarized** <sup>1976</sup>

**BODEGA** — McCaughey's Store in Bodega was burglarized early Saturday morning, and the burglar got away with \$1,980.

The burglar broke in through the back and spent several hours chiseling through a 75-year-old safe. Only the cash was taken.

Ned Mantua, store manager, said it was unusual for the store to have more than a few dollars on hand.

## **Congress restricts boat hull paint use**

However, Ned Mantua, owner of McCaughey Bros., a boat supply business at Bodega Bay, said the state Legislature banned the use of paint containing TBT in February.

"We were allowed to sell stock we had and that was it," Mantua said. Now the store sells straight copper-base paint that does not contain TBT.

Mantua and commercial fisherman Paul Mapes said about 95 percent of the boats in the commercial fleet at the bay have wood, steel or fiberglass hulls. Most of the boats are less than 82 feet long.