

# A Woman on the Go

By Kaaren Morgner

That smartly coiffed lady driving the 1998 red Ford Ranger pickup around town would be Marilyn Reese and she won't be grinding the gears on that stick shift!

Marilyn and Bob Reese and their two sons left a small town in northern Utah for Merced in 1955. Bob accepted the pharmacist position for Serv-U Drug on Main, which is now Pinocchio's. In 1963, Mercy Hospital needed a fulltime on site Pharmacy Director. Bob took the post. Marilyn, took a position as a teller at Bank of America in 1960. It wasn't long before her skills and relationships with people set her apart. An opening came available in the Loan Department. She completed the training and became the loan officer for agricultural loans, a position she held until retiring in June of 1986.

"I made all the loans right there in the bank. Nothing was sent out. It was personal service. The personal relationships I had with customers, I still have them. In fact, I just went to the Historical Society opening of the Italian Immigrant Exhibit and saw many of my former customers."

Never one to let grass grow under her feet, a few months after retiring, she became a hospital volunteer. Eleven months later, she was asked to join the Mercy Medical Center Foundation Board. That was in 1987. "We had so much fun working together. The camaraderie, the friendships, the galas! Marilyn Rovetto's designs for the gala were full of flare! I remember Under the Big Top—all the balloons we inflated and had to hang to make that three-ring circus! That was something!" she recalled with a smile. That first stint lasted nine years.

In 2010, Marilyn signed on for another three year round of service. She is now in year seven. Her passion for medical care in our community energizes everyone around her. "The thing I want most is this: I want people to recognize the value of the hospital to our whole area. The Foundation raised over five million dollars just to get the new hospital, and all without giving up services needed on the other side of town and in rural areas. This Foundation reaches out to a lot of people!"



*Marilyn Reese, Foundation Board member, Associate member, and Heritage Club charter member.*

Marilyn's eyes light up as she speaks of Heritage Club, an arm of the Foundation which builds a permanent source of funding for programs to benefit Mercy Hospital, through annual membership contributions and the development of long-term giving bequests. "Heritage Club! It was \$100.00 per couple when it started in 1992. That has never changed! I'm so glad we are coming back to the fundamental purpose of Heritage Club!"

In addition to serving on the Foundation Board, she continues her service as a hospital volunteer when subs are needed on the lobby desk, pavilion desk or in the surgical waiting area. "At this time in my life, I am ninety-two this year, I like the freedom of subbing rather than a scheduled time. I've got 4 grandkids and 12 great grandkids and they all live in Tracy!" she remarked with a smile. That's a woman on the go!