

News Summary



ATTENTION:

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10 QUESTIONS

Anniversary special milestone for award-winning executive

Torrey Hills resident Donna Vargo has worked in the construction industry since 1978, starting out in her family's construction business as a skilled finish carpentry craftsman. Today she brings extensive project and executive management experience to Johnson & Jennings General Contracting, a leading San Diego commercial construction firm currently celebrating its 30th anniversary in Southern California's building industry. As executive vice



Donna Vargo

president and principal, Vargo helps comprise the firm's five-member executive management team, providing oversight of all project management and field activities, marketing and business development efforts, and contract negotiations. She also leads corporate strategic planning.

Before joining Johnson & Jennings in 2004, Vargo was employed for more than 11 years at Roel Construction Company, where she served as executive vice president in charge of the company's tenant improvement and special projects group in southern California, Nevada and Arizona.

Vargo earned her bachelor of science degree in industrial science/construction technology from Fitchburg State College in Worcester, Mass., where she graduated magna cum laude as the only female in her program. She holds an associates degree in business management/real estate from Northern Essex Community College.

Vargo is a member of the San Diego Downtown Partnership. In 2000, she was the recipient of the prestigious "Women Who Mean Business" award presented by the San Diego Business Journal and, in 1996, received the TWIN Award (Tribute to Women in Industry), presented by the YWCA.

1) What brought you to this neighborhood?

In my early 20s, I took a cross-country drive out to San Diego from Massachusetts with a friend — it was love at first sight. I've lived in Point Loma, Mission Valley and even on a boat for four years on Shelter Island. But when it came to putting down roots and buying a permanent home where we would raise our daughter, we had to give that more serious thought. We chose the Carmel Valley area because of its great central location to downtown and North County, its close proximity to the beach areas and beautiful Del Mar, and the quality of the school system.

2) What makes this town special to you?

Those of us who live in this town are truly spoiled... with beautiful Torrey Pines State Beach, the quaint downtown village of Del Mar, miles of biking trails, and great parks — it's an amazing place to live. After residing in the area for more than 10 years, we have grown to love the area and all it has to offer. We've developed long lasting

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friendships and a true sense of community.

3) If you could snap your fingers and have it done, what might you add, subtract or improve in the area?

Improve the traffic congestion at the split!

4) Who or what inspires you?

As a child, my parents inspired me. As a young adult, I had a wonderful mentor who inspired me and helped me to step outside of my comfort zone and grow as a professional. Now that I am a parent, my daughter inspires me every day and forces me to slow down and see the world all over again, taking nothing for granted.

5) If you hosted a dinner party for 8, whom (living or deceased) would you invite?

No one glamorous or famous. I'd love to see both my maternal and paternal grandparents again and to meet their parents before them.

6) Tell us about what you are currently reading.

An eclectic mix: "Bringing Up Girls," by James Dobson; "Sarah's Key," by Tatiana de Rosnay; "Who Moved My Cheese," by Dr. Spencer Johnson; and "Does The Noise in My Head Bother You," by Steven Tyler.

7) Name a few of your favorite movies.

"The Sound of Music"; "Sleepless in Seattle"; "Young Frankenstein" (with Gene Wilder); and "Avatar."

8) What haven't you achieved in your life that you would still like to?

I'd love to travel the world. Life can get so hectic that you don't stop to enjoy it before it passes you by. I feel there are so many things I've yet to experience and it's out there waiting for me. It's not a matter of finding the time — it's a matter of making the time.

9) What is your favorite vacation spot?

It would be hard to name just one. I love to visit new places and there are so many wonderful places to see. My favorite vacation spot is wherever we are at the time. When you are there you talk about returning and planning that next trip because it is so wonderful and you are living in the moment, but you end up not returning and instead going to yet another destination untraveled.

10) What is your motto or philosophy of life?

Growing up, my Dad was always fascinated with our family genealogy, tracing our roots back to Normandy, France, and even further back to William the Conqueror. My father would always remind us that our family motto is "Be all you can"... I have always lived by that!

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