

In the summer of 1958 I graduated from Cal Poly with a degree in Animal Husbandry. Newly married to my wife Zera, we were now ready to become full time cattle ranchers. With some help from my parents, Zee and I bought 2,740 acres for \$90,000. We got 2 houses, a small shed but no barn. What I would discover over time, was a road, and if you followed it long enough it would lead you to a mythical place called "Pinch Gut Canyon where labor and heart ache were scattered about.

This ranch was definitely not a fixer upper as Mother Nature had reserved it for chamise brush, oak trees, and poverty grass. But it was the nicest place to live ever if you were a Black Tail Deer. After 3 years of spending a fair amount of time crawling through the brush in search of my cattle I met a gentleman from Los Angeles who loved to deer hunt. He wanted to know if I would be interested in selling our Cantinas Ranch, as it was called by the locals. I wanted to hug him, but then I thought better of it as this was no way to negotiate with confidence. After much paper signing Zee and I were no longer ranchers but lookers. We now needed a place to keep our dogs, horses, a baby girl named Katherine, and one more in the baby girl on the way that we would name Lillian.

If you want to be a real rancher you go north, young man, to Nevada, Oregon, or New Meadows, Idaho where in August it is cow heaven. But, as a native would tell me, "you had better like feeding hay to your cows for 6 months and shoveling lots of snow." Zee and I looked at each other, for a moment, through our born-in-California eyes and then it took but a second to get my key in the ignition and our station wagon roared into life. We headed back to Sissy Land where snow is for skiing and if you played your cards right Mother Nature would provide ample grass so very little hay is needed.

We hadn't been home but a couple of weeks when we got a call from a rancher friend of ours who knew I was looking for a new place to call home, a place where we could have a "Do Over." My friend said his brother, a realtor, had a listing on a pretty nice ranch of some 8,000 acres near the little town of Parkfield, in Southern Monterey county. The very next day we met the owner of the ranch and he would showed us around.

We all know what love-at-first-sight is. Well, Zee and I were immediately smitten with this land that laid at the headwaters of the Little Cholame Creek. Cholame is a Yokut Indian word meaning the Beautiful One. They sure new what they were talking about and for me this valley is living proof that Camelot is alive and well. After another round of paper work, this time as a buyer, in the month of November 1961 we closed escrow on what would become The V6 Ranch. First Zee would have to bear two more boys, John and Gregory, to make the Varian crew 6 members strong, hence the "V6" brand.

The Taylor's who we bought from kept their house, corrals and 2,700 acres leaving us with nothing but one old barn. Back then, if you wanted to build a house you just built it. So, through the winter of 1961 we built a wonderful house of 1,000 Sq. Feet that would serve us well until 1975 when we built the house we presently live in. The spring of 1962 was time to set up camp. We cooked our first meal and spent the night and have been camping here with Mother Nature's permission for 52 years. Zera and I casted our lot with all our energy and I hope with a modicum of common sense and we became 6 and The V6 came into being. Now we are 18 strong and Zee and I look back with no regrets. Zera left a life in Culver City, CA and I left a life in Palo Alto, California.

There is now 20,000 acres, 3,000 of which our son Greg and his family own and 17,000 that the V6 owns. The whole of it is on loan from Mother Nature. The loan is protected by a conservation easement that says "this land can never be divided into smaller parcels, meaning this land will remain beautiful, open landscape forever, however long that is.

So we invite you all to come and enjoy this magical place called The V6 Ranch and the Cholame Valley and out of respect to Mother Nature, please make your foot print as small as possible.

*Sincerely, The V6 Ranch Family*