

Our Stories—Sue Strakosch and John Glasheen

Sue Strakosch and John Glasheen met listening to music at the Met Café over forty years ago and their shared love of blues and jazz has been a constant in their lives ever since. Prior to this past year of pandemic restrictions they attended as many as three and four concerts a week. They were regulars at music venues throughout the state including our own Lily Pads. They have continued to seek out musical performances wherever they can find them, not an easy task this past year. They recently attended a Covid-safe concert at the Music Mansion on the East Side of Providence and are eagerly awaiting the start of the outside concert series at the Pump House in mid-April.

After Sue and John were married in 1992, they sometimes went shopping for a church community. Unsuccessful at first, they had a pleasant experience that helped them find what they had been searching for. John, who at the time was director of South County Community Action, in Peace Dale, was invited to address a community forum at UUCSC on the topic of affordable housing. John and Sue decided to learn more about their hosts.

Their decision to join UUCSC was affirmed during their first year when they participated in Small Group Ministry. John was disturbed because he usually stirred up controversy. He wasn't used to people who agreed with him.

Sue grew up on Long Island and was active in her non-denominational Protestant church. She made a Rhode Island connection by graduating from Rhode Island College with an ambition to enter the business community in some way. Very early in the computer age, she received training as a computer programmer, which she supplemented with an MBA from URI. Formerly a Bank Boston and Textron employee, she worked for GTECH/IGT until retiring in 2015. She traveled extensively throughout the US and Europe for her work and also loves to travel personally.

John had a Catholic boyhood in Northampton, MA. He says he majored in football at Deerfield Academy and Brown but became a serious student in grad school at U Mass and Harvard. He taught high school history, was an editor for D.C. Heath, a textbook publisher, and was a faculty member in the Department of Education at Brown. He also has worked for political candidates, most notably presidential candidate Walter Mondale in 1984, but his primary interest is in community empowerment

with an emphasis on affordable housing. To that end, he served as executive director of South County Community Action for fourteen years.

John has three children from a previous marriage—Leah in Baltimore, John III in Gainesville, FL and Megan in Alexandria, VA—and five grandchildren.

Over the years Sue and John have contributed much energy and expertise to UUCSC. They have worked as editors on previous versions of the newsletter and both have been members of numerous committees. Notably, Sue has been a member of the Board as Clerk and then as Treasurer, and is currently on the Finance and Worship Committees. John has been Chair of the Membership and Social Action Committees and a member of the Religious Education Committee, among others. They have participated in numerous marches and protests, most recently at a car protest at Chase Bank in Wakefield. Sue has been an active participant in Together Women Rise (formerly known as Dining for Women). For many years John has attended the Christmas Eve service as Santa, requiring very little in the way of costuming besides the red suit.

John and Sue have enriched our congregation greatly with their hard work, their commitment and their presence. They are grateful that they have found a community in South County at UUCSC.

Helene Gersuny, 2004 and Elizabeth Donovan, March 2021