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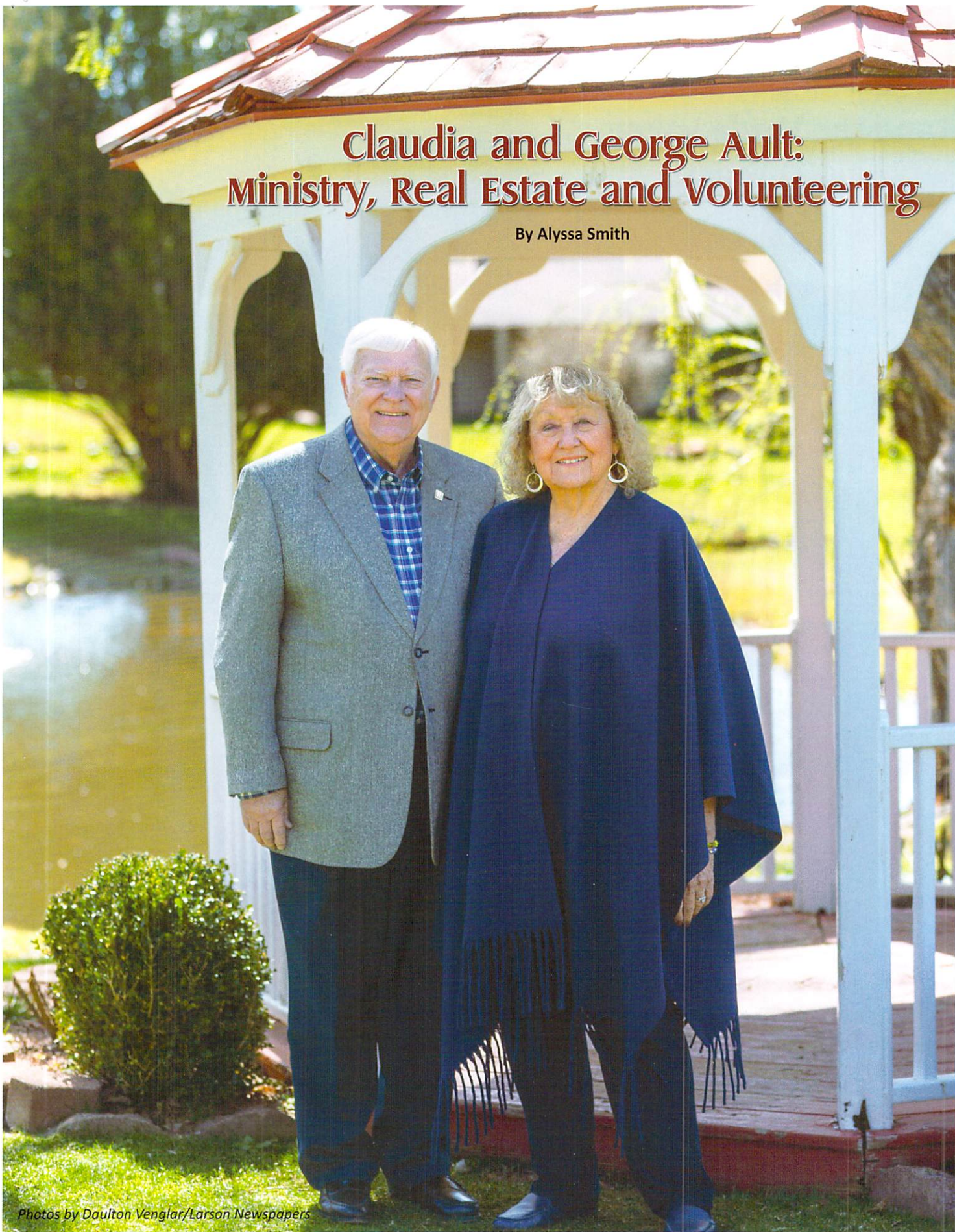
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Claudia and George Ault: Ministry, Real Estate and Volunteering

By Alyssa Smith



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GEORGE AND CLAUDIA AULT sit down for an interview with *Sedona Red Rock News* reporter Alyssa Smith at Poco Diablo Resort.

Claudia and George Ault moved to Sedona in 1985 and have contributed to the community through leadership on various boards and organizations, service to the United Church of Christ and helping residents sell their homes.

George Ault grew up in western Pennsylvania, while Claudia Ault was born in Baltimore, Md., and grew up in the Towson area. They met while attending Catawba College in Salisbury, N.C., and married after college in 1965.

From Salisbury, the Aults moved on to Lancaster, Penn., where George Ault attended Lancaster Theological Seminary, eventually receiving master of theology and doctor of ministry degrees.

"Theology is life," George Ault said, adding that he has attempted to live his passion for theology through community service.

Claudia Ault began teaching at Solanco High School and

later taught in the vicinity of whatever church her husband was assigned to pastor. She spent a total of 18 years teaching before moving to Sedona. The Aults lived near and around Philadelphia for a handful of years serving churches before moving to Michigan, where they resided for 10 years before moving to Sedona in 1985.

Ministering in Sedona

"When we moved here, Sedona had one traffic light and cows would be grazing along the hillsides," George Ault said. "It was a simple place to live in those days."

He was the senior minister at the Church of the Red Rocks from 1985 to 2015, finishing 55 years of ordained ministry and 46 years of parish ministry.

"What I liked about it is that you never knew what was going to come down," George Ault said of his pastoral

role, in which he performed worship services, hospital calls, weddings and funerals among a variety of other tasks. He was also a chaplain in the U.S. Army Reserve for 24 years.

Real Estate

After they arrived in Sedona, Claudia Ault intended to teach but discovered the town had no high school and she did not want to commute, so she took out a real estate license and decided to try realty for the next three years.

"Thirty-eight years later, here I am still doing it," she said.

Claudia Ault is currently a broker associate at eXp Realty with her son, Larry, who joined her in 2002.

"He's a great business partner," Claudia said.

Larry is the Ault's only child and is married to his wife Gina. They have three children, ages 21, 12 and 10, and live in Cottonwood.

George Ault joined the real estate duo in 2018 as a sales associate after retiring from pastoral work.

"We call him the 'newcomer on the block,'" Claudia Ault said. "He says he can do two things, make coffee and copies, but he does more than that."

George Ault said that he had been hearing about real estate for 30 years, so he figured it would be fun to learn a new discipline and language.

"It's a people business and I've been in the people business for 55 years," he added.

"It was the biggest surprise to me that this would become a 30-year career after teaching, especially when I came here and thought I could teach," Claudia Ault said. "Little did I know that teaching prepared me for real estate" with skills like organization and the ability to be ready for any surprises.

"The part of real estate that I love the most is listing homes



AT THE HEART of Sedona's vibrant community are George and Claudia Ault. From spearheading initiatives at the Church of the Red Rocks to supporting organizations like Rainbow Acres and Sedona Lago Gardens, the Aults have consistently championed causes close to their hearts.

for people," Claudia Ault said. "I'm a caregiver at heart."

"A caregiver of the world," George Ault interjected.

"Because I love Sedona, it's been an easy thing in meeting new buyers and helping them get acquainted with the town and what makes a nice place to live," Claudia Ault said. "I'm sold on it. I love it, so I can easily sell that."

She started working as a Realtor with Andy Hughes Realty, which she said all the old-timers in the area will remember, and has worked with Foothills, Remax and Sotheby's.

"Even when I'm ready to leave a position, I'm always grateful for what I've learned

while I was there," Claudia Ault said. "I've always enjoyed helping younger Realtors get a leg up on the business, how to start and what to do. I think from the very beginning that to be a good Realtor you've got to be connected in the community ... You build relationships. That's what it's all about."

Community Service

George Ault has been involved in starting many organizations in Sedona through the church, including the first Boy Scout troop, Troop 48, now Troop 7048, for which he was the first scoutmaster. While no longer affiliated with the church, the troop is

still functioning in Sedona.

The troop produced about three dozen Eagle Scouts, which Ault said was a fantastic number, as only 2% of scouts nationwide become Eagle Scouts.

"It was very interesting to be a part of their lives at that formative stage," George Ault said, adding that many went on to be engineers, physicians and businessmen.

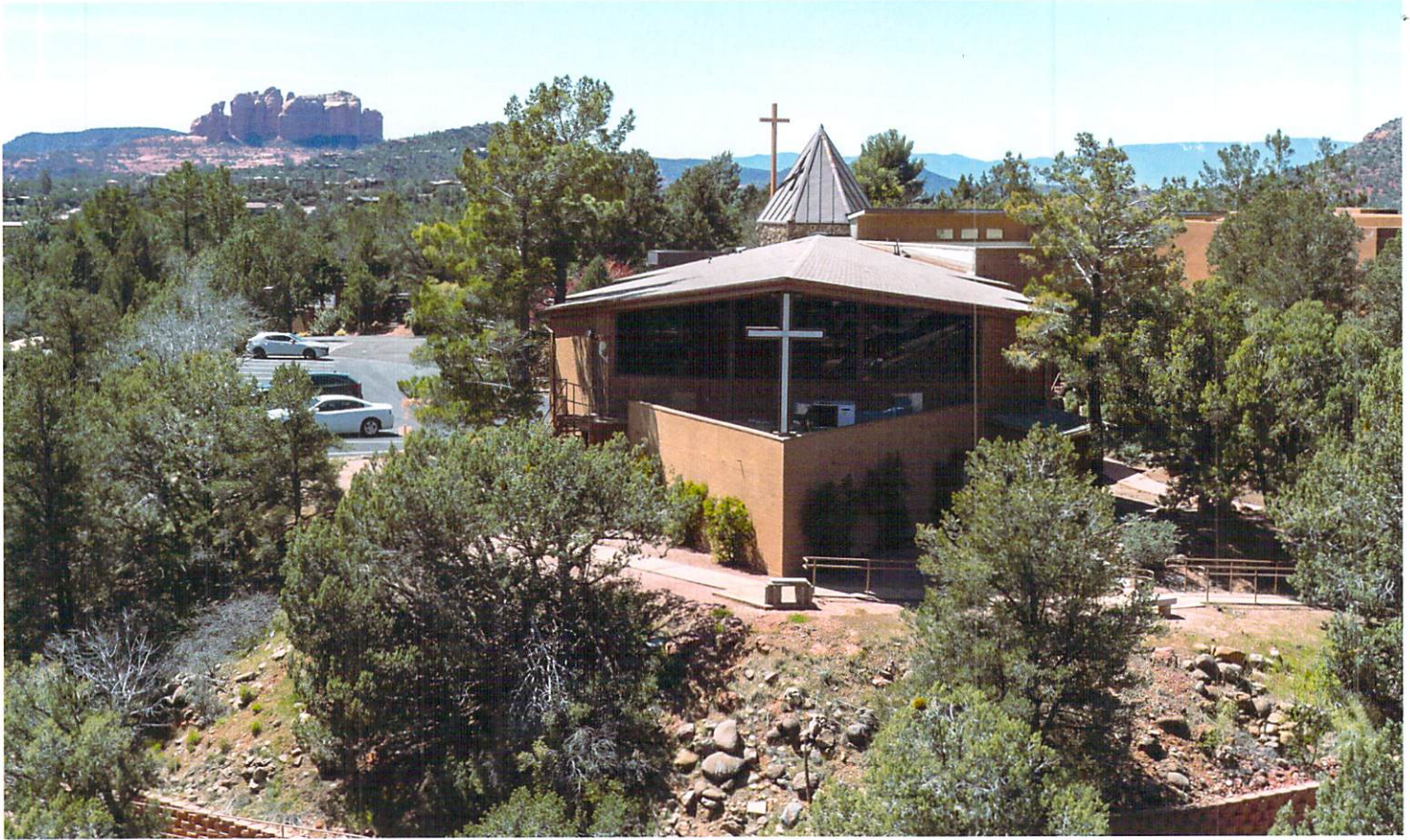
Ault also served on a number of other boards and committees in town, including as the vice president of the committee that formed the Greater Sedona Community Foundation, now the Arizona Community Foundation of Sedona; president of the Sedona 30; president of

the Verde Valley Caregivers board of directors; and the first chaplain of the Sedona Volunteer Fire Department, which later merged with the Red Rock Fire Department to form the Sedona Fire District.

He has also been on the boards of the Sedona Area Veteran and Community Outreach, the Military Officers' Association of America and Hope House.

"Almost every group that I would go to in the community, there would be a couple of our [church] members serving on the board, from the humane society to the arts," George Ault said.

Another of the organizations that started in the basement



GEORGE AULT served as the senior minister at the Church of the Red Rocks for 30 years before retiring in 2015. Ault has been a minister for 55 years, including time as a chaplain in the U.S. Army reserves for 24 years.

of the Church of the Red Rocks in 1992 was the Verde Valley Caregivers.

Church members were trying to answer the question of how to help the seniors in the community stay in their homes as long as possible. VVC has since evolved into an organization outside the church that has over 350 volunteers and serves over 2,000 people in the Verde Valley.

“They’ve been recognized as a number-one national volunteer transportation organization in the country,” George Ault said. “Right here in little Sedona.”

The church has been involved with almost every local volunteer nonprofit organization, including Meals on Wheels, Verde Valley Sanctuary and Hope House.

Claudia Ault served on the board of Rainbow Acres for 25 years before retiring last year. Rainbow Acres is a Christian community in Camp Verde that houses and cares for adults with developmental disabilities.

When she was invited to join the board, she replied, “Oh you must mean George, he’s the board



GEORGE AND CLAUDIA AULT have dedicated themselves to public service, leaving an enduring legacy of leadership and compassion. Their involvement in various boards and committees, coupled with their support for local nonprofits, has had a profound effect on Sedona’s growth and development. Whether it’s advocating for seniors or supporting individuals with developmental disabilities, the Aults’ commitment to public service knows no bounds.



FOR GEORGE AND CLAUDIA AULT, real estate isn't just about transactions, it's about connecting with people and helping them find their place in Sedona's vibrant community. With over three decades of combined experience, their expertise and deep-rooted knowledge of the local market have made them trusted advisors to clients.

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BEFORE MOVING TO SEDONA, George and Claudia Ault came from western Pennsylvania and Baltimore, Md., respectively. The couple attended Catawba College in Salisbury, N.C., which is where they met. The couple married shortly after college in 1965.

person,” but remembered that they insisted they wanted her.

“It’s easy to love the ranchers and to get to know them,” Claudia said.

She helped start Rainbow Acres’ capital campaign in the early 2000s, which raised money to build conventional homes for the ranchers, or residents, in place of the single-wide trailers with which the program had begun, recalling how one of the ranchers had said that when he lay in his bed in the mobile home, he could look up and see the light of day through the ceiling.

George Ault is now on the board of Sedona Lago Gardens, a Rainbow Acres community in Sedona. This organization, which was launched around two years ago, provides temporary housing for high-functioning neurodiverse adults.

The property was donated

by philanthropist Barbara Lago and is set up as four private homes contiguous to one another, each of which houses four people, who receive part-time assistance from psychologists and life coaches. Unlike Rainbow Acres, residents are there on a temporary basis. George Ault said that many have jobs in the community but are considered to need to learn to further their social skills.

The Aults hosted the Imagine Gala on April 20 as a way to introduce Sedona Lago Gardens to the community and to celebrate Rainbow Acres’ 50th anniversary while soliciting community support.

“I cannot not give back,” Claudia Ault said, describing it as her slogan and her drive to keep going.

World Travel

In their spare time, the

Aults enjoy reading, watching movies and traveling. They have been to 40 different countries and 49 states.

“The wanderlust is always there,” Claudia Ault said. She particularly enjoys the Scandinavian countries. On one vacation, they purchased a Volvo, picked it up in Sweden and drove it across the country for two weeks.

“What a wonderful experience that was,” Claudia Ault remembered. “It was the most glorious autumn. Here we were driving in a foreign country, we’d never been to Sweden before, and it was like driving in Sedona.” She noticed that every road sign was in English.

George Ault, on the other hand, especially enjoyed a canal trip through southern France.

“In our journey of life from the east coast to here, with the last stop being in Michigan with 40-below wind

chills, it is such a pleasure to be in the Southwest,” Claudia Ault said.

George Ault commented that they have seen Sedona go through many changes since they moved here, including the addition of a high school and medical center. He said that when they arrived, they had come from a subdivision in Michigan that had more kids than all of Sedona.

Claudia added that it made the transition for their 10-year-old son difficult.

“When he [Larry] graduated from high school, he could not wait to leave Sedona,” Claudia Ault said. “After he had a bit of training and went into the Air Force, guess where he came back to? Sedona. That’s the story of a lot of kids that he went to high school with. They left, they came back. To a small town like this. That really is something.” ■



Northern Arizona Healthcare is proud to serve you

Residents know that northern Arizona is a special place. Small-town living, vast spaces, friendly faces and beautiful vistas. Northern Arizona Healthcare (NAH) is honored to serve as the largest health care system in the region, boasting a service area of over 50,000 square miles. Our two hospitals and numerous outpatient clinics are seamlessly connected by Guardian Air, providing emergency transport service with ten helicopters, a fixed-wing airplane and numerous expert health care providers.

More than 3,000 doctors, nurses and other health care experts serve this region that is home to more than 750,000 people and tourists from around the world. NAH colleagues provide patients with the highest level of personal care, as if they were treating their own loved ones, as we continue to build on our commitment of providing outstanding health care to our valued community. Whether they are providing immediate care in the Sedona Emergency Department to help prevent a trip farther from home, or seeing patients for annual preventive care at our primary care clinics, our health care experts are working together, in a team approach, to best serve those who walk through our doors.

We are one. We are Team NAH. And we are grateful to serve northern Arizona.

This non-profit organization's mission is Improving health, healing people. Patients trust us with their lives and it's a responsibility we do not take lightly.

We are investing in health care technologies and improving our facilities to allow patients access to high-quality preventive and specialty care in the communities they live in. From Fiscal Year 2020 to Fiscal Year 2022 we invested more than twice the amount of dollars per patient day in the Verde Valley versus Flagstaff. And, in Fiscal Year 2023, we spent at least 60% more per patient day in the Verde Valley than in Flagstaff. A 'patient day' is a calculation that hospitals use to understand how many patients we see, per hospital, per day. This calculation helps us properly plan our resources to ensure we're meeting the community's health care needs



Team NAH continues to focus on keeping our communities healthy and thriving. We're expanding our specialty services in the Verde Valley, like the Cardiovascular Institute, Orthopedic & Spine Institute and endocrinology, by recruiting the best health care providers to ensure individualized and comprehensive treatment.

Our leadership is building strong ties with the people we serve to understand the unique needs of each area. They are excited to share their short and long-term plans for NAH. They have asked for residents' input regarding short-term and long-term master planning and are prepared to meet the needs of northern Arizona, making sure we are here when you and your family need us.

The best is yet to come. We are Team NAH. Always working to serve you better.