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Happy Trails and Hearty Meals:
**MARY BOOKE AND PETER DIFALCO'S
PATH TO LOVE**

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Happy Trails and Hearty Meals

Mary Boone and Peter DiFalco's Path to Love

BY LAURA I. WINN | PHOTOGRAPHY BY ISABEL OLLINGER PHOTOGRAPHY AND COURTESY OF MARY BOOKE



Like many love stories, Mary Boone and Peter DiFalco's began with a chance meeting in the right place at the right time. In 2020, Mary was riding through blue Tahoe on a road bike trip with her gal pals. In town on a mountain bike trip, Peter was staying a mere mile away at a mutual friend's

house. The two cycling groups mingled on a walk together through the crisp mountain air, unknowingly setting Peter, 62, and Mary, 59, on a path toward friendship — and eventually, marriage.

As fate would have it, Peter had moved from Folsom to Orangevale that same year.

Mary was a longtime resident of Fair Oaks. With mutual friends, a shared love of the outdoors, and a location in common, their paths began to cross atop paddleboards on Lake Natoma and group bike rides around town. As a connection developed, Peter thought there was something about Mary.



“Don’t miss an opportunity. That’s Peter’s perspective.”

backyard seat to wildlife passing through.

“Our home backs up to one of the ravines, so we get to enjoy deer, turkey, fox, owls and many other wild critters,” Mary said. “Living so close to the lake also gives us such a nice cool Delta breeze in the evenings.”

On cool summer evenings, Mary picks tomatoes, peppers and eggplants from her garden to use in new recipes. Cooked with love, the aromas of hearty Moroccan stews, spicy Thai curries and crispy Italian focaccias fill their home.

“Food is central in my life, and Peter, having been a cook in the Coast Guard, is the perfect cooking partner,” Mary said. “It’s a great way to slow the day down and connect.”

Staying connected over dinners for two and a shared cycling hobby, the couple takes full advantage of living half a mile from the trail system around Lake Natoma.

A pick-up soccer player for nearly 25 years, Peter traded in his cleats for wide rubber tires to protect his aching knees, swapping what he described as the strategy and

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An avid gamer of all types, the more introverted Peter invited sociable Mary to join the game nights hosted at his place. Over friendly competition and continued conversations, their friendship naturally developed into something more.

Mary fondly recalled Peter as the pursuer. “Don’t miss an opportunity,” she said. “That’s Peter’s perspective.”

Two years after they first met in Tahoe, Peter joined Mary in her Lake Natoma Heights home near Phoenix Field Park, where she had spent many years watching her sons, Tyler and Parker Engquist, play baseball and soccer. It’s a tradition she and Peter continue when visiting Peter’s son, Calvin DiFalco, and his family in the Los Angeles area, cheering on Peter’s grandson at baseball and soccer games.

Building the next chapter of their lives back in Fair Oaks, the couple appreciates their quiet neighborhood, where they have a



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quick decision-making of the soccer field for the mental challenge of mountain biking, where every turn, obstacle and change in terrain demands attention. When he's off the clock from the California Department of Consumer Affairs, Peter hits the trails with his mountain biking group, capping off their weekly rides with meals at O'Connors Wood Fire Grill in Orangevale.

Meanwhile, Mary rides her lightweight Liv-branded road bike with Sacramento Wheelmen and the Sierra Foothills Cycling Club. Also embarking on weeklong trips with her girlfriends, she has covered hundreds of miles with the group, pedaling through California, Oregon, Washington and even into Canada, setting up camp each night, tearing it down in the morning, and doing it all over again the next day.

As she looks forward to retirement from her advanced analytics position with Elevance Health, Mary said she rides now for

the same reasons she did as a young kid: to get outside, be with friends and take the chance to veer off course when the mood strikes. "It's a way to explore the world," she said.

Recently, the couple added an E-bike with an attached trailer to their collection of wheels. The electric assist makes it easier to tow their newest addition, Luigi, a 55-pound, 2-year-old Golden-doodle. A beloved member of the family, they take Luigi to the lake to paddle-board and swim, and travel with him whenever they can.

Last year, Luigi accompanied his proud parents on an especially memorable trip. Peter and Mary spent a scenic September day strolling through the Capitola Art and Wine Festival with Luigi on his leash and drinks in their hands. "It seemed like every time I turned around, Peter and Luigi were chatting with someone new, smiling and happy the whole time," Mary said.

"If you know Peter, that really isn't his thing," she explained.

The trio ended the day walking a mile through the cool ocean air to a brewery, where Mary pulled out a cribbage board she had hidden in her purse. It was game time. "Peter's smile grew even larger," she recalled.

A month later, they were engaged.

This past April, the couple made it official at the Marin County Civic Center in San Rafael. With Mary's son Tyler and his new wife, Callie, as witnesses, Peter and Mary exchanged vows on a second-floor garden, overlooking a sparkling pool and expansive hillside.

Ever the outdoorswoman, Mary chose the courthouse for its proximity to nearby beaches. She hadn't realized she was getting married at a historic venue designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Like their full life together in Fair Oaks, Mary said the beautiful Bay wedding ceremony was "bigger than our expectations, for sure." ■



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