



The Wonderful World of Michael Romano

An interview-biography with this longtime Pacifica resident, businessman and writer of tales

Written by Jean Bartlett

May 29, 2024

(A Pacifica Historical Society Project)



Mike Romano, if Pacificans don't know him personally, they know this longtime Farmers Insurance agent's business sign in the shoreline area of Rockaway Beach—you can see it from the highway—recently updated to: ROMANO & Dad Farmers Insurance. Or, maybe they know him from several of his earlier Pacifica businesses: Pacific Home Satellite and Romano's Meats. Or, maybe they know him from his paramedic days. Some of his Farmers Insurance clients have followed him through every business venture.

As to Mike and I, our paths first crossed in early December of 2012. Mike had finally taken the advice of his three children. "Dad, you need to write down these stories you've been telling us for your grandchildren." The result was, "Days of Drugs and Sirens," a highly-entertaining, nonfiction page-turner from the author's days as a paramedic in San Francisco's wild and crazy 1970s. Writing for the *Pacifica Tribune*, I interviewed Mike for his first book signing. It was held at Florey's Book Co., here in town, and since then, there have been many more books, book signings and interviews.

←Mike with a few of his published reads in 2016.
(Jean Bartlett photo)

Still very much a working force at Farmers Insurance, Mike has written and published a total of 35 more books since that first book signing. Additionally, he has four more books finished and ready for publication, and 60 ready for edits and illustrations. He currently has three tales in his head. A great many of Mike's stories are fairytales, more specifically, tales of imagination for readers of all ages. What certainly contributes to Mike's ease as a scribe, is his lifelong devotion to Danish children's book author Hans Christian Andersen – that and an unending sense of possibility.



Michael Richard John Romano was born in Oceanside, New York, a hamlet on Long Island, on January 14, 1949, to Alphonso "Al" Lorenzo Romano and Concetta "Nancy" Annunciata (Miliano) Romano.

"Okay, 'John' is my confirmation name," Mike illuminated. "I chose it after my godfather, John Funicello. He was the uncle of Mouseketeer, actress and singer Annette Funicello. So, that makes Annette my god cousin! I used to see her at Christmas parties at my godfather's house. She made the second kindest person on the planet (after herself), Mr. Rogers, look like the spawn of Satan. She was such a beautiful person.

"My parents were going to name me, Michelangelo Cara Romano and the Irish priest said, 'Don't do that to the boy. You don't want to give him a 'Guinea' name. So my parents named me after the priest, Michael." (Mike added that when you are fully Italian, you can say, 'Guinea.')

Is Mike 100 percent, Italian? According to his saliva/DNA test with 23andMe, a health and ancestry service based in South San Francisco, Mike is 86% Southern Italian, 8% Greek, 5% Austrian and 1% Mongol. That Austrian percentage is from his Mom. Her ancestors include the Habsburg dynasty. The Habsburgs ruled Austria from 1282 until 1918. Mike noted the Hasburgs were shot, poisoned, murdered, strangled and beheaded – a knowledge, he laughed, that prevented him from ever seriously considering a run for Pacifica City Council.

Mike is the second and youngest son of Al and Nancy's children. His brother, Marino "Chick" Pasquale Antonio Romano, is nine years older. In between the two brothers was a child who died at birth. Mike believes it was a sister but his parents kept that sadness to themselves.

"My mother was born March 10, 1917, in Manhattan, NY. Her family was from Italy's Amalfi Coast. Her family's surname was Maxmiliano, but it got dropped to 'Miliano' on Ellis Island. She was the eldest sibling – well, she had an older brother, who was also born in Manhattan, who died the year she was born. All of her younger siblings were brothers."

Achillo F. (1914-1917), Achille Alfred (1918-1988), Vito Pasquale (1923-1994), Joseph Francis (1925-1975), Francesco (1927-1984) and Christie Charles (1931-1963).

"Was my mom tough being the only sister? She could fling a penny loafer around the corner and hit you in the back. She could be at the beach, in a bathing suit, and if you did something you weren't supposed to, she could pull a wooden spoon out of somewhere, and give you a country 'derriere' whipping, in the French vernacular. She made Zorro look like a sissy."

Not long after Mike's Uncle Achille was born in Manhattan, the Miliano family returned to their roots in Positano, Italy, a cliffside village on the Amalfi Coast.

"My mom lived in Positano and went to school in the town of Amalfi. Her school is now called the Hotel Luna Convento, the 'convent of the moon.' The school/convent was founded in Amalfi in 1222 by Saint Francis of Assisi. Twenty years ago, my wife and I took our kids there, and there was this old lady, holding court in the courtyard, like the Empress Dowager, and as it turns out, she knew my mother. They went to school together.

"Something else about my mom, she also had this name: Vincenza "Nancy" Catherine Miliano. Maybe that's a Positano thing. But 'Nancy' works!

In Italy, in 1926, the lira was suddenly revalued for political reasons and there were financial consequences. Not long after, the Miliano family returned to New York.

"My mother's father was an importer. You know what that means, Mafia. Back then, if you had money, everyone was in the Mafia. I never met him. He was worth American millions in Italy but with this collapse in finances, he was losing his hiny. He still had \$100,000 in cash. That was amazing amount of money back then. They put it in my grandmother's bra when they came back over on a boat. But the bottom line is, my mom grew up in Italy and in Long Island."

Mike's dad, Al, was born on February 1, 1914, in New York on Long Island.

"My dad's dad, he left Italy under different circumstances. He had to slip out of town! He was about 6 feet tall, had a walrus mustache, no neck, and his whole body was a muscle. You wouldn't want to be alone with him at night, scary looking guy. He didn't like my father, hated my mother, hated my brother Chick but he loved the shit out of me. When we lived in New York, he used to take me everywhere with him. He died when he was over 100, of unnatural causes. He owned a three-story apartment building, and he was on the third floor, scraping the wood on the window to repaint it, and he was drinking his own homemade wine and whiskey and he fell. He didn't die. But he didn't get up either.



We couldn't afford to fly there from California. We took the train by way of the stockyards in Chicago. When we got to New York he said, 'I wait here for you to die.' I said, 'That's cool.' I am 16 years old. He said to me, 'Come here. Come closer.' I came closer. He said, 'Remember!' I said, 'Remember what?' And he said, 'Big women!' And that was it for him.

"When I was 3 he gave me an Italian stiletto. This is the kind of stiletto that could go through a leather jacket. Almost like a gun, you had to load it by pushing it in, pull the handle back and then out the blade goes. I brought it home. 'Look, Ma, look what Grandpa gave me.' Pow! Pow! Pow! She hits me with a wooden spoon. The next time I was with my Grandpa, he said to me about my mom, 'Don't tell her shit.'

←Mike, age 3, at home with his brother Chick, 1952. "My brother is still going. He's 84 and lives in Los Angeles."

"My grandfather had a farm where he lived in a two-story home in upstate New York. He grew cantaloupes and zucchini, really everything. He's who I learned to garden from. It's genetic. What was his first name? Grandpa! Kidding! His first name was Marino, like my brother – Marino Romano. My mother's father was Pasquale, it means Patrick. Never met him; he died before I was born.

"My grandpa would say to me when I was 4 or 5 years old. 'Michael, you see that boy over there?' And that boy over there would be 7 or 8. 'You kick his ass and I'll give you a silver dollar.' For a silver dollar back then, you'd be a diabetic. So I went over there and got the shit beat out of me. I come back to my grandfather. My grandfather says, 'Good boy.'

"I'm like 8 now and my grandfather says, 'You see that boy over there.' 'Yeah, I know, Grandpa.' 'No, no. You win and you get two dollars.' So I punched this kid in the kidneys, kicked him in the back and he dropped to the floor. 'Good boy! You tell your mother nothing. Here's two dollars.'

"My Grandpa Marino, when he would babysit me, he would take me out to these old country stores in New York—with the elevated wooden decks around them—and all the old Italians were playing pinochle in the back, for money, buffalo nickels. My grandfather gave me a handful of nickels and three or four Hershey bars. 'Hershey bar. Nuts or no nuts? Come back in two hours. Don't kill nobody,' he would smile, or maybe grimace. I was 6. I went out and I got up to my own devices. Tee-hee!



"When I was 7 or 8, I used to go around to the stores and collect the tickets for the numbers. The 'numbers' are the numbers racket. You buy a number you paid a quarter. If you were caught with the numbers and the money, that's two years in jail – but not when you are 8. I would go around and pick up the papers and go around and pick up the money. One of my uncles, my mother's brother, he would send me on this assignment and I made five bucks. I did that once a week.

←Mike and his folks at Mike's First Communion, 1956.

"My mom was a very smart woman. She spoke five languages: Italian, German, French, English and Spanish. She used to do the international puzzles. I can speak Italian, I am fluent in Spanish and I can get arrested in six others. My dad was industrious and had a good sense of humor. And my mom's brothers, my uncles, were math freaks. I'm a math freak and my uncles taught me how to make money.

"I had six or seven paper routes when I was in New York. I was 9 and 10. The Lotto stuff, that was just once a week. As to the newspapers, I didn't deliver them. I picked up the money, because the kids were only getting 25 percent of the money. I got 90 percent of the money. I would give them 50 percent of the money and keep 40 percent. The only time I ever delivered the paper was if someone got sick. That was my mom's brother, Uncle Frankie. He taught me how to hustle.

"Uncle Frankie also taught me how to drive when I was 8. No reason, other than he wanted to. It's not like I was needed to drive on a farm. There were no farms in my mother's family. But there were some pretty

good-sized homes. My mom's brothers were very financially successful. Uncle Frankie taught me how to drive on a World War II jeep, with no synchro. That means there will definitely be gear grinding. I used to say to Uncle Frankie, 'Let's go grind some burger!'"

Mike's father was a tailor. His company, Silton Brothers, made the original coonskin caps for Disney's most well-known television show of the 1950s, "Davy Crockett: King of the Wild Frontier," which starred actor Fess Parker and which only ran a year. But those frontier caps became the rage for thousands of boys who were fans of the show.

"My dad was an incredible tailor and the main floor of his company was probably 60 by 60, open, with sewing machines around it. In the middle was a pile of coonskin caps, about eight feet tall. I used to jump in that pile, every time I was there. It was heaven."



When Mike was 10, he moved with his family to East Los Angeles. His mom had severe rheumatoid arthritis and her doctor advised West Coast weather as necessary medicine. His dad went to work as an awning maker and his mom became a manager for The Good Guys, a former (chain) consumer electronics store.

"When my dad was in New York, he was tailoring heavy coats and hats. People don't wear heavy coats and hats in California which is why he went to work for an awning company. The shop he worked for was in Pasadena and he became the manager. He was just so good at what he did.

←Mike was 10 when the family moved to Los Angeles.

"In our basement, he had these giant sewing machines, treadle machines, that we put motors on. One day I came home and my father said, 'Mike, bring me the good scissors.' 'Why?' 'Just bring them.' He said this in a very calm, sweet voice. He had sewn his thumb to a leather awning. He clipped it. Pulled his finger off but it was

definitely bleeding. But I told him, 'I know what to do.' I was in the medical scout troop. Our troop leader was a doctor. More on that in a minute! But I fixed my dad's finger. He said, 'Oh, that's good,' and he went back to work.

"My dad was a small guy, five foot six and a half. I got my height from my mom's family, her brothers, all six foot one, her dad, six foot four. My father's father was six foot one. Mom was a shrimp. I got her hiney, her balding hair and her arthritis." Mike stopped to shout up at the ceiling. "Thank you, Mom!" But I also got her ability to speak languages, in that, I can hear any language and repeat the words and sound like that language. It's music!

"When we were kids in El Sereno, we had a mimeograph machine and we created a town newspaper – The El Sereno Voice. It was six pages, three sheets folded over. We charged two cents apiece and made money.

"Again, I've always been able to make money. My brother had a box of buffalo nickels. I was the salesman. '20 cents apiece or nine for two dollars,' I told customers. One guy says to me, 'Why should I give you \$2 for nine?' 'Because with nine you get a choice,' I responded. 'Well okay,' the guy said.

"I was an Explorer Scout. I started out in Boy Scouts, and then went to Explorer Scouts – both in East Los Angeles. Our Explorer Scout leader was Dr. Newman. We would go to jamborees as the medical troop. We couldn't do surgeries! But, he taught us how to take care of: cuts, bruises, breaks and rashes, and do wrapping. He taught us how to take a fish hook out of a fish. Sometimes you have to push it through; the fish is already in shock. You clip off the end and put the fish back in the water. We had special little pliers that would snip the barb really quick. 'Quick release,' we called it."



Mike went to Sierra Park Elementary School in Los Angeles, for fifth and sixth grade, and from seventh through ninth, he went to All Saints Catholic School in El Sereno.

←**The Romano family, 1960.**

"I was raised Catholic, basically. I was taught by the sisters of Perpetual Pain, from the Sect of the Iron Rosary!"

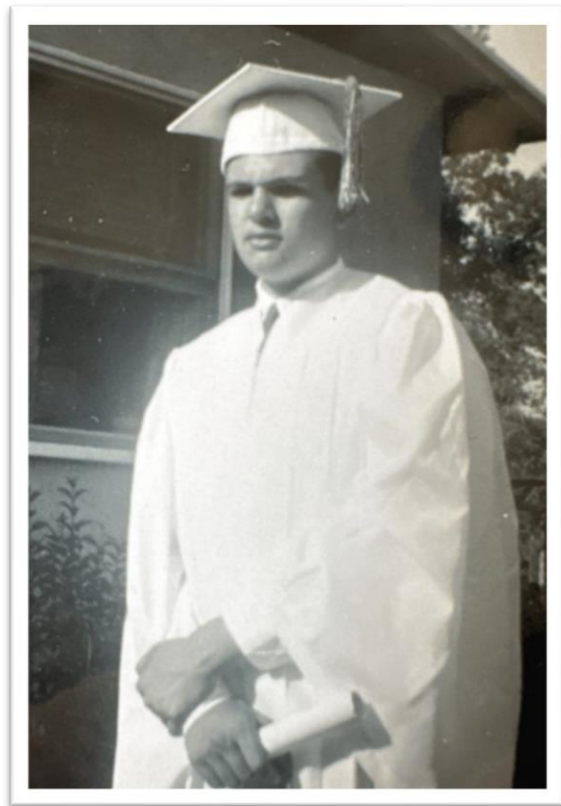
Mike was an early reader. At 5 he was reading everything by Hans Christian Andersen that he could get his hands on. His big brother had taught him how to write a little, when he was 3, and that included, writing his name.

"My brother is nine years older and I read his books. I am now 12 and I am reading his old high school chemistry books. So, ammonia triiodide, in its liquid state, is nothing. But when it dries, it has an expansive quality close to gunpowder. We had a non-nun teacher, Mr. Ford, who used to steal food from our lunches. He also used to smack us in the back of our heads with a ruler. He wore wingtips. He would come in and put his feet up on his desk and say, 'Okay, spot quiz.' He'd give us the quiz, put up his feet and take a nap at his desk.

"So, I took the ammonia triiodide, not knowing exactly how expansive it was, and painted it on the bottom of his shoes. When he woke up, and stood up, he was lifted off the ground into one of those Catholic school' drop ceilings with the acoustic tiles, and then dumped back down. He sprained both his ankles. The ambulance came to take him away. I hear over the intercom, 'Mr. Romano, to Mother Macrina's office!'

"They called my father. He came in and said, 'Did anyone say he did this?' There were like 26 kids in the class. 'Not yet,' he was told. Well, nobody threw me under the bus. They all hated Mr. Ford. But the administration knew I was capable of creating whatever caused Mr. Ford to lift off the ground like he had a rocket up his ass! I said, 'It shocked the heck out of me, Sister.'

"Now here I am, sitting at the desk in Mother Macrina's office, and my father's there, and another nun was sitting there, Sister Josine. She had a scar on her face. 'You know how I got this scar?' she asked me. 'I don't know, dueling?!' Pow! Pow! Pow! So Sister Josine said to my father. 'Your son is a functioning sociopath.' And my father said, 'At least he's functioning!' Dad was cool!



"We left Mother Macrina's office and as my dad and I walked across the quad, he turned around to make sure no one was listening and asked, 'Did you blow him up, Mike?' 'Yes I did.' 'Don't do that again, Mike.' 'Okay.'

"This story ends with the firing of Mr. Ford. One by one, when each kid was questioned by the principal and the other teachers about the incident, each one of them said, 'Mr. Ford was stealing whatever he wanted from our lunches and he was striking us with a ruler.'

When Mike and his family lived in Arcadia, they lived two blocks from the Santa Anita Racetrack.

"Now I was sturdy for my age, and when I was 12 or 13, I got a job parking cars at the racetrack. I knew how to drive and said I was 16 and a half. I made really good money and some of the people whose cars I parked were celebrities, and the ones that stick out as the nicest guys were Sammy Davis Jr. and Frank Sinatra."

←Eighth grade graduation, 1963.

"One day I came home from high school, and my mom is crying, 'Oh, the high school charges so much.' Now, I am a freak. I test really well. Not even normal well. In order for Catholic schools to get money from the state, they have to place high on the state tests. They always had me and two others that did well on these tests. I scored the highest because I'm a freak. I went to Mother Macrina. 'Mother Macrina, do I bring good money into the school?' 'Oh yes you do.' 'Then how can we give my mom a discount?' 'What kind of a discount were you thinking?' 'I don't know, 80 percent?' We got a 70 percent discount because early on my mom's brothers taught me how to grind!"

"What do I mean, 'how to grind?' I once asked my Uncle Al, who was loved, respected, feared and well off, though I can't elaborate on any," Mike grinned like a Cheshire cat, "how do you know when you're rich? My uncle looked at me, like he would, and he slowly said, 'When you go into a store, you see something you want and you don't have to ask the price. Then you will know. Now, that is not to say I wouldn't then grind them to hell on the price!' Then my Uncle Al would quietly laugh, while he patted me on the shoulder.

Despite getting his tuition pared-down in a grinding maneuver that would have made Uncle Al proud, Mike eventually left All Saints Catholic School.

"I went to public high school because they started bringing in too many lay teachers at All Saints. I started not liking it anymore. I told my dad, 'I don't like it.' So I went to Woodrow Wilson High School."

When Mike was 16, he was out in the very back of their huge backyard, and he was picking bananas, but really, looking for tarantulas.



"I heard someone say, gently, 'Michael, Michael.' I went running into the house. My dad was sitting in the tub and he was having a berry aneurysm. That means, the carotid artery bubbled out like a tire, and shifts the brain in the head. He was drowning. I pulled him out of the water and gave him CPR. Dr. Benjamin Lane Crue, Jr., one of the top neurosurgeons in the world, did an experimental operation on my dad. He put a platinum valve in my dad's neck and turned it every day, more and more off. He gave him a shot of this medicine every day. The result was anastomosis. Anastomosis means the vessels you have now will grow roots – vessel sprouting. One side of the brain will be shut off and those roots will grow and feed it. In six months, my dad was back up on the ladder again. A few years later, my dad died of emphysema. He wouldn't stop smoking. I was so mad at him." (Mike lost his dad on October 3, 1971.)

←Mike and his folks, graduation, Woodrow Wilson High School, 1967.

"What was the most important lesson my dad taught me? 'Never quit!' And also, 'Straight is not the way life goes. Life goes like a pinball machine. Always be ready to bounce.'

"What lessons did my mom teach me? 'Duck, because the shoe is coming!' My mom also taught me how to cook. She was a great cook. GREAT! My uncles used to say, she could take ten pounds of horse manure and everyone would come back for more. Her meatballs, wow! I am a magnificent cook and I learned it from my mom."

Not long after Mike graduated from high school, he signed up with the U.S. Navy. It was during Vietnam and he wanted to choose his branch of the military. He did not want to get drafted into the Army. While he loved his family, he was tired of East Los Angeles. He figured the Navy was his ticket out.

"I had just signed up to be in the Navy and I go home and find my draft notice. I go back to the Navy recruiting office the next day and show them the notice. And they say, 'We're sorry son, we can't help you because the Army got you. But just wondering, what did you want to be in the Navy?' And I said, 'Corpsman,' and they said, 'Come this way!'

"When I told the Navy I wanted to be a corpsman, the Navy fast-tracked me. Navy corpsmen are always needed and most people don't want the job. In Vietnam, the rumored expectancy of a corpsman was seven days. Corpsmen were always a big target of the enemy. Why is that? The Marines are taught nothing can hurt you because you are a Marine. But if something does, Doc can fix you. So, if you shoot the corpsman, it freaks out the Marines. It demoralizes them."

Mike went to Corpsmen School, A and B, at Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego. The job of a corpsman is "surgery on the field:" take out bullets, stop bleeding, sew a lot of stitches, resuscitate, manage pain, insert IVs (hook up an intravenous line), clean wounds and whatever else is needed to keep the wounded alive until they can be evacuated. Training is six months.

One of the first jobs Mike was assigned at Corpsmen School was a debriding. A "debriding" is the removal of damaged tissue or foreign objects from a wound. This particular debriding was on a pilonidal cyst – a fluid-filled sac under the skin in the lower back, near the crease of the buttocks.

"When you get to the core it goes, pop! The smell is like a warm breeze through a baboon's ass. They didn't tell me about that!"

On another school day, the corpsman-in-training had to show a group of Marines how to self-administer a morphine syrette on the field. A disposable injection unit, a syrette is a metal tube with a long metal injection needle, protected by a plastic cover and it contains morphine. The label on a morphine syrette says, "morphine, 1/4 grain."

"I had, like, 50 Marines in this class and under my instruction, they had to stick themselves with sterile water to practice giving a morphine syrette. Well, unbeknownst to me, some of the guys took two actual morphine syrettes, cleaned off their morphine labels with acetone, and replaced my two teaching syrettes with their diabolical ones. I used one, to show everyone how it was done. Then one of the guys in the back said, 'We didn't see that. Do it again.' So, I gave myself shot two. That totals a 1/2 grain of morphine. I woke up five hours later with grass on my teeth. The guys do shit to each other. Ha! Ha!"

Something else the corpsman-in-training did, while he was in San Diego, was work with the Flying Samaritans. Co-created in November of 1961 by pilot Aileen Saunders Mellot—one of the best known pilots in civil-aviation—the volunteer organization brings physicians, nurses, dentists and other professionals, in private aircraft, to provide free health care to individuals in rural Mexico.

"Really, my training was excellent."

Once it was completed, Corpsman Romano headed out on a naval vessel.

"One day, these helicopters landed and this colonel walked out. "How many of your young docs have had Fleet Marine training?" Out of 14 or 15 Navy corpsmen, four of us raised our hands. 'Who would like to be a Marine,' was his next question. Now, I can tell you that Michael Jackson did not invent the moonwalk (gliding backwards)!"

It turns out Navy Corpsmen can only serve with the Marines, if they have been to Field Medical Training Battalion School. However, Mike's hand was not raised to be a Marine.

"They just took me. I did not volunteer. And here's the deal. I had taken American Kenpō, a street fighting technique, since I was 14. It took six of them to get me into the helicopter. I took out the first three and then three more came at me from the back. I had never been in a helicopter. I didn't like heights. I joined the Navy so I wouldn't be 'in country.' I didn't want to be shot. But admittedly, once I was in country, they treated me like a god. They'd lay on me to keep me safe."

Mike served 21 months, 14 days and 12 hours in the United States Navy, serving as a corpsman with the (2/9) 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines, and the Marine Helicopter Squadron 164. His "in country" was Vietnam's Demilitarized Zone, or DMZ – the established battleground demarcation separating North Vietnamese territory from South Vietnamese territory.



"We would fly north of the DMZ to pick up downed pilots or downed crews. We would be dropped in there. We would stabilize them and wait for the helicopters to come back and EVAC us. Sometimes, the helicopters would not come back for a while, because they couldn't."

Mike was wounded three times.

"When the first incident happened, I woke up in a helicopter. I was being flown to the hospital at the Kadena Air Base in Japan. On the flight to the hospital, I'm on a stretcher, everything is bandaged including my face, and I've got an IV going. I see this really good looking nurse and I said, 'How about a dance?' Her name was Kathy and she told me when I got better we'd dance."

After Mike recovered, he was sent back into action.

"They made me an offer that I accepted. They used to give VRBs (a variable reenlistment bonus), if you agreed to stay back in Vietnam. That was \$10,000, tax-free.

"Eight months later, I was wounded for the second time. I'm on the plane with just one eye open and two IVS going. I see Kathy again. I said, 'Are you stalking me?'"

"Twenty years later, I'm in Pacifica and I see this woman and we walk around each other, trying to figure out who the other person is. Then we realize, she was the nurse and I was the patient. So I brought her home to meet Joanne. Joanne has heard so many of my stories that they go in and out of her ears like twine! But suddenly, my story has come to life. What are the odds that Nurse Kathy would walk through our front door in Pacifica? What are the odds that she and her husband were longtime Pacifica residents? They've since moved, however."

After Mike's second trip to the hospital in Japan, he was asked to go back into the DMZ again.

"They said, 'We need you here bad. We'll give you a VRB, \$12,500.' I said, 'First off, they only give \$10,000 and second off, I already got one.' But they said, 'Please,' so I said, 'Okay.'

"I did treat some pretty horrific wounds in Vietnam. I only ever fainted once. I had been on a long time, maybe 14 hours in surgery. I walked out and a mortar hit. It was a white phosphorous mortar, and phosphorous is a chemical that creates chemical sparkles (chemiluminescence). If it hits you, it doesn't dissipate. It burns through you like a hot ribbon. It drop hit this guy in the eye and he's got sparkles in his eye. This doctor is just coming out of surgery. He sees what is happening, reaches back, and grabs a cyst scoop and scoops the guy's eyeball out. That's all I needed to see after 14 hours and I fell to the ground. But the doctor had to; otherwise the phosphorous would have gone right to his brain."

The third time Mike was wounded he was again flown to the nearest hospital. This time, however, he was attended by a different nurse.

Mike served three tours of duty in Vietnam. The last tour was only supposed to be four months. At eight and a half months, he was still there.

"One afternoon, I'm lying on a wet rock and my feet are just above the water. A helicopter comes down and this guy is holding this paper. 'Doc, you're out!' I didn't believe him. 'Now,' he shouted. The guys said I ran on top of the water. I jumped in the helicopter, took off my flak jacket and put it on the floor, put my helmet on top of it and sat on it, because the bottom of the helicopter was not armored and I didn't want to get my nuts blown off. If nothing else, I am going home with all my nuts."

Mike's trip home was a series of jumps known as "MAC" flights. These were U.S. Air Force Military Airlift Command flights which were used to bring military home, as in Mike's case, or individuals into military zones.

"I started in Vietnam, flew to Japan, then to Hawaii and then to Alaska. The next flight was home. While I am in Alaska, this F-4 pilot told me, 'I'm not taking you in the back in the jump seat.' But I had in my possession a couple of extra new flight helmets, with the different shades on them. I offered them up and he said, 'Come on!' and we flew to Norton Air Force Base in San Bernardino (about 60 miles shy of El Sereno).

"I've got my duffel, my Schmeisser (an MP 40) under my arm, a 9mm at my back and I am pretty far from home. I am going to hitchhike. I walked to the freeway. A truck driver saw me and pulled over. 'Where are you going, son?' 'To Los Angeles.' 'So am I. Get in.' He drove me to my mother's front door. He had seen my corpsman badge and he was, as it turned out, a Marine.

"I get to my mom's front door, the family home, and I knock on it. I had a beard and my hair was long and fairly blond. I had lost 60 pounds and grown several inches. My mother opened the door and said, 'Who are you? Get out of here. I don't know you.' She closed the door.

"Across the street, was one of my old assistant scout masters, a motorcycle cop named Mr. Young. I went over there and said, 'It's Mike Romano,' and I held out my card. He said, 'Nooooo.' I said, 'Yeah.' So he and I went over to my mother's house and he said, 'Nancy, this is Michael.'

"Wah! Wah! You look like a hippie. Go shave!"

Not long after Mike arrived at his mom's house, he got a job at Thrifty's Drugs as fourth assistant manager.

"After four and a half weeks, I was first assistant manager, mostly because I spoke English clearly, Spanish clearly and I spoke the local Mexican Spanish slang, Caló.

"The place was a block house. It had small windows and neon lights, and we were given clothes to wear: plastic pants, a certain shirt and a clip-on tie. After the fifth week there, I went crazy. I took off my clothes, went to the car and put my Navy bell bottom jeans on and a crew top. I went back inside and quit. They told me I had two days of pay coming. I said, 'Keep it!'

"When I came out, I took two days off. I am a math freak and decided to head in that direction. I don't know why but I can do math things, like a cypher, without pencil or paper. At that time, my brother was a senior executive with half a dozen United California banks. I decided to take a test for United California Bank but under a different name. I didn't want my brother to help me out. I got the job, told them who I was and who I was related to, and they still gave me the job. I was Assistant Operations Officer. One day, when I was at work in the bank, this old Italian guy comes up to the cage where I was at—they had cages in those days—and he had a check for \$18,000. He wanted it cashed. I said, 'Okay, I'll be right back.' He informed me he owned Fredman Bag Company. I said, 'I still have to check in, for your protection.'

"This guy didn't like that. He started screaming at me, in Italian, and he grabs me by my tie, pulls me to the cage and puts a handful of money in my eyes. 'I'll kill you.' I grabbed his hand, in what's called a judo arm lock. I pulled him into the cage, boom, pushed him forward, and he went back, fell over the bench and knocked over the ashtray with all the sand in it. Now René, who was the manager, he came running over, 'Oh my God!' Well, I didn't know this guy had two million in the bank. René said to me, 'Michael, if you apologize, he'll drop it.' Meanwhile, my brother comes down from the main branch. But I'm an equal-opportunity bigot. I hate everybody! So I walk over to the guy, like I am going to apologize, and my brother is there, and instead of apologizing, I said something to him in Italian, questioning his mother's acquaintance with a buffalo. I walked out the front door, took off my tie, handed it to a guy begging for money, he put it around his head, and then I called my high school buddy, Bill, who owned a car dealership. I ended up owning 25 percent of two car dealerships."

"Regarding our interest on loans, in the car sales business, we had a Rule of 78s. That meant, all the interest up front, and then you start paying for the car. For us it also meant, if a customer missed a payment, it accelerated to the whole car payoff plus the repo fee and the storage fee. I sold one car, five or six times. It was a 1961 Lincoln Continental with suicide doors (a rear-hinged door on the side of an automobile). On the front fenders it had two little brass pit bull dogs. I was driving a 1966 Chrysler Crown Imperial. There is nothing bigger than that! It had a Volkswagen for a spare tire. Ha! Ha! I also had a 1966 Mercury Montclair. It had dual quads on a 390 engine. It was beautiful, but it was like made out of old aluminum from Juicy Fruit gum wrappers, and the back window was slanted inwards, so it went down in the trunk. But it was a pretty car with all kinds of ribbing.



"I only stayed with my mom for a very short time. The main reason for that was because I slept in the front room in a pullout, and she had this big clock, which I now own, but I don't wind it. When wound, as it was at my mother's house, it is like Big Ben every fifteen minutes – bong, bong, bong, bong, bong, bong, bong, bong and then at the end of every hour, BONG, BONG!"

←Mike during his car salesman days.

Despite his success with selling cars, Mike's heart was still on the medical battlefield. He went to work for Glendale Ambulance and became the first licensed paramedic, anywhere. When he was offered a job in 1974 with San Francisco Ambulance, he left Southern California.

"I rode to San Francisco on my Triumph 650 motorcycle. I had two small carpet bags and \$194 in cash."

"The woman who was behind the front desk of San Francisco Ambulance was extremely busy, and she knew nothing about my being hired. She was generally unimpressed. Naturally, we got along immediately and she has been an insurance client for decades!

"I made \$3.48 an hour and I could work as many hours as I could stay awake. I had no overtime and no holidays." There are 168 hours in a week. One week Mike worked 142 hours. He still has that paycheck stub.

City Ambulance offered him a job at \$13 an hour and he took it. It was good money, but the work was taxing and the rules were not clearly defined. Both issues eventually drove him out.

"I was in a gunfight," he recalled with a laugh. "This guy was on PCP and crank. He shot his mother, lunged her, and she was a big woman, 6 feet tall, 450 pounds. He's in a burned-out building and our old Cadillac ambulance is taking hits. He is shooting at us a lot.

"My partner and I, we're both big boys, so we dragged the mom into the ambulance. We plugged the hole in her lungs and fired back. My partner jumps up with his .41 Magnum, shoots six times and can't hit the building. I had this new, 15-shot Beretta. I started running at him. I shot 15 times and hit him 11 times, mostly clips as he was behind a pillar, but I didn't kill him. Later, I'm standing before the shooting board, my captain is there, and the judge said, 'Boy, why did you shoot this gentleman 11 times?' I was 24 and stupid, and I said, 'Because I ran out of ammo.' My captain was there and he just rolled his eyes. I was charged with contempt of court and run out of the courtroom. But I didn't lose my job!"

During Mike's madcap 1970s' days as a San Francisco paramedic, he met San Francisco's trailblazing topless entertainer—the first topless entertainer in the nation—Carol Doda. A singer and a dancer, Miss Doda made Pete Mattioli's and Gino del Prete's Condor Club one of the Bay Area's most beloved

landmarks. The club was, and still is, located at the corner of Broadway and Columbus in San Francisco's North Beach neighborhood.

"Carol was a good, good person, very funny and very smart. My partner and I used to stand near the Condor because you could get anywhere in the City, from three directions. She would come down and make sure we were fed. She would bring us pizzas, or cakes, or cookies. She helped take care of us so we could help take care of others.

"One time, we were parked outside of the Condor, and we got a call: 'Code three cardiac, Condor Club.' We rushed in with our medical equipment and a stretcher to where there was a very sick businessman from Utah, sitting down near the stage area. My partner and I went into action, and while I am starting an IV, this gentleman informed us, he was not leaving until he had seen them. We knew what that meant. He meant Carol Doda's famous attributes. His EKG reading was having a fit and I told him, 'Sir, we have to leave now.' 'Not yet,' he told me. Suddenly, there was Carol Doda and she was most definitely coming to his aid. She whispered something in his ear and smacked him in the face, both sides, with her ample charms. He cardioverted. His heart rate stabilized and his premature contractions stopped. 'These are healers,' she told me. Again, she was very funny but there was a real sweetness under the hilarity.

"Later in life, my daughter Gina, who was then 16, and I are walking down Union Street in San Francisco's Cow Hollow neighborhood. We were walking through all these pretty little shops and we came upon this lady, sitting on a bench, wearing a Gibson Girl hat, a bustier, bloomers, high-button shoes and she had a parasol. She sees me and she comes running over in her high-button shoes, saying, 'Michael, is this your latest squeeze?' 'It's my daughter,' I said. 'She just turned 16.' 'Come inside and I'll talk to you about your dad,' she laughed. 'Nooooo!'"

It was Carol Doda in front of her shop, Carol Doda's Champagne and Lace Lingerie Boutique, on Union Street.

"Gina asked me, 'Did you date her, Dad?' 'No! But I knew her and she is a lovely human being.'"

Some of Mike's paramedic stories have remained way too fresh in his memory to this day, though he's not exactly thrilled that they do. "Sometimes you just can't un-see things, ever!"

"We got a call to go out to the Marina, where all these very nice, very expensive San Francisco homes are near Fort Mason. It's close to midnight. The home has this veil over the porch lamp to give it that mysterious yellow look. I knocked on the door. The door opened to a dark hallway. 'Down here,' said this little person, wearing chaps, a vest, a 5 gallon hat, cowboy boots, spurs with stars, and nipple rings chained to his penis, and the front and back were open. And suddenly everything became clear. We had arrived at a little person, S&M, cowboy-themed, leather party. 'One moment,' I said. 'We forgot something in the ambulance.' So we ran outside, gagged, and came back with the gurney.

"'What's the matter,' we asked. We heard, 'Down the hallway!' My partner and I are heading down this dark hallway and there are these three little ladies, dressed up as dance hall girls, with modifications. Each is wearing a bustier with their nipples sticking out. Their butts are also hanging out. In addition, they have on high-button shoes and bloomers, open in the front and back. I'm walking down the hallway and they are hanging onto my legs, and I am dragging them down the hallway like Frankenstein. I said, 'Get back. I'm here to fix your buddy.'

"Well, and not to be too delicate, apparently someone had reached up this man's ass and accidentally, pulled out part of his intestine. It's called a prolapsed colon. He is screaming his hiney off and this

intestine part is sticking out. I still had, allegedly, some morphine syrettes from the Navy and I stuck one in him. He's still going, 'Wah! Wah! Wah!' So I stuck another one in him.

"When I was working as a paramedic, my company flew me to Los Angeles to teach CPR, the Heimlich maneuver, how to do an airway and how to start an IV. I got to the airport and I was running late. I ran through the security machine and bang, bang, bang! Well, I forgot had a 9 MM in my back, and I have scalpels and all kinds of shit in my medical kit. These two Samoan guards got me on the ground. But they found out who I was and put everything in a box on the plane and sent it with me. And it's a good thing I didn't miss that class.

"One of those kids in that class, who thankfully listened, became a licensed paramedic. A few months later, my mom is at the funeral of this new paramedic's grandmother—weird coincidence—but right there, at the funeral, my mom MI's (has a myocardial infarction/heart attack). My former student brought her back and she lived for another ten years." (Mike's mom died on February 5, 1986.)

One visit to San Francisco, Mike's mom had a chance to see her son, the paramedic, in action, on the local news.

"My partner and I were in San Francisco, on Geary. We were driving by French Hospital and this lady in a Ford Pinto gets hit on the right side of her car. That spins her car around and she gets hit on the driver's side. It bends the door in, knocks her out and there is a baby in a bunting (a hooded sleeping bag), in the backseat. The car is starting to smoke. We see this as we are driving by. We stop. We had Channel 5 in the ambulance because they used to ride with us. At this point, I'm with San Francisco Ambulance. I am trying to get in there when the car ignites. I went, 'Shit!' And it's true you do get weird when you get scared. I bent the door off. I saw The Rock do this in a movie. He copied me! Ha! Ha!

"I pulled the door open. I grabbed the lady, threw her over my shoulder and grabbed the kid in the bunting. I turn around and chucked the baby to my partner, Big Phil, God bless him, while I held the lady.

"Now, San Francisco Ambulance had these really cheap windbreakers we wore. They were made of this thin, one-sided plastic. The car blew up and the sparks caught my jacket. This is all being filmed. I put the lady down and got my jacket off. I get home at 6 p.m.

"Apparently, this has run on the 5:00 o'clock news, which I haven't seen. My mom is up from LA and she's making spaghetti and meatballs. 'Oh boy,' I smile, 'spaghetti and meatballs!' 'How did your day go,' she asked me. 'Oh, nothing special,' I replied. My mom started beating the shit out of me with a spoon. 'Don't lie to your mother!' 'Oh, Ma, it was just a regular day,' I'm shouting, while ducking. 'A regular day!' she shouted back. Pow! Pow! Pow! 'I saw the news!'"

There was one paramedic call that will always stand out, above all others, as the best call of all time.

"There was this guy, Oris, who had chronic congestive heart failure. I knew him. He was an old drunk and I had been called to help Oris, maybe half a dozen times. This time, he's at this doctor's office and the doctor gave him the wrong shot. Oris is lying on the floor in the reception area. Usually it's an easy thing to fix. You give him Lasix (a loop diuretic, officially known as furosemide), and you pee that out – otherwise your lungs fill up with fluid, then blood and you die, you choke to death. When I get there, Oris is sputtering, 'Eh, eh, eh.' All of a sudden, this cute, curly-haired brunette medical assistant walks in. For me, it's love at first sight.

"Do you know what medication to give him," she asked. 'How about dinner,' I replied. 'No,' she said. 'I'm not going to give him what he needs until you say, yes!' Then I added, 'I've been around the world more times than I've got fingers and toes, and I've been looking for you.' Well, she freaked with that comment. I don't even know where it came from! Oris is shouting, 'Go out with him! Go out with him!' Finally, Joanne said, 'Yes' to dinner and Oris lived to see another day.



"Joanne did not go out with me, immediately, however. But she eventually did. Our first date was to Farrell's Ice Cream Parlour. She liked me after our first date. The real big date was downtown San Francisco at Ristorante Orsi. Joanne liked me even more after that, but I fell for her from the start, and it's never changed.

"As an aside, I brought my mom to Ristorante Orsi one night. I used to go wearing my paramedic medical suit. There was no wait for me! My mom and I sat down, we ordered, the food arrived. My mother said, in not a tiny voice, 'You'd think for these prices, it could have been warmer! This is all the gnocchi you get?' 'Ma!' My mother got up and went to the bathroom. Mrs. Orsi came over. 'I love her,' she said. 'She's just like my mother!' And Mrs. Orsi then sends over this plate of all these meats and cheeses. 'That's more like it,' my mom said. My mom

had no inner monologue. I knew Lorenzo Orsi, he was the head chef. He taught me how to make shrimp diablo. It is so good it is lewd. I taught him how to make my mother's pasta sauce which is – Sweet Jesus!"

Michael Romano married native San Franciscan Joanne Preskar on October 2, 1976, at St. Brendan Catholic Church in San Francisco. They married eight months after they met.

"Where did I propose to Joanne? One night on the phone we were talking late, and I said, 'You know, you need to be married to me. I can't think of any other way to tell you.' And there was nothing. And I said, 'Now it's the time to say, yes, right now.' And she said, 'Yes.'"

While Mike was working as a paramedic, he went to work for his father-in-law, Mike Preskar.

"My father-in-law was very successful. He was a butcher and he owned a meat company. I worked an 8-hour shift as a paramedic, and then when I got off, I had half an hour to get to the meat company. Then I worked an 8-hour shift there. I did that for two years. My father-in-law made the best hot dogs, anywhere. Folks who worked at Schwarz Meats and Evergood Sausage, used to come to my father-in-law's shop to buy his hot dogs.

"One time when I was working the front counter, these two rabbis came in and said, 'Are your hot dogs, kosher?' And I said, 'Do you mean do I have a rabbi come in and bless them, no. But the machine is steam-cleaned and my father-in-law is so anal, you could put a chunk of coal in his ass and it would come out a diamond. They tasted one, and one of the rabbi's said, 'Every Friday, I want twenty boxes of these and 10 boxes of those.'

"You have to have fun,' Mike laughed, as he recalled that conversation. "If you can't have fun, get the hell out!"

"My father-in-law was just so good at what he did. When Hebrew National ran short of supplies, he would make stuff for them and put their label on it. He did that for other companies as well.

"My father-in-law didn't like Italians," Mike continued. "'Preskar' is Slovenian. He put up with me. But early on I finally got him to laugh and maybe like me a little bit more. We were watching this Hebrew National ad on television, and in it they used their famous slogan explaining the higher quality of their sausage: 'Because we answer to a Higher Authority.' And I said to my father-in-law, 'That would be you, wouldn't it?'

"I brought my father-in-law out of the dark ages. Up until then, he had never sold to the public. I got two of those long glass cases for his place and we started selling to the public and he made more there, then he did with his wholesale business. He said to me, 'You know someday, Mike, you can have this place.' I said, 'I don't want this place. Your machines are so loud I couldn't hear a mortar go off.' But it was great working for him and he taught me how to be a butcher."

Joanne and Mike's first place together was an apartment in San Francisco near Lake Merced. They bought their first home in Pacifica's Fairmont neighborhood, on Westcliff Court. They both loved Pacifica. By then, Mike had completely left the ambulance business. "Too much bureaucracy and too much government; you can't do this unless you ask. By the time I asked, the patient was dead."

He had also gotten his own butcher business going and ended up owning four butcher shops: one was in Pacifica's small Crespi Plaza; another was in the Park Mall Shopping Center, where the barbershop is now; another one was in a market in Half Moon Bay, and he also had a shop in a market on Polk Street in San Francisco.

"Our second Pacifica home I bought from a fire captain. He lived in the back of the valley. I was delivering meat to him one day and he said, 'I'm selling my house.' And I said, 'I'll buy it.' No fees. I drove home and said, 'Joanne, I want to show you something.' We look at this house on Picardo Court. 'Oh, that's nice,' she said. 'Well, we own it.' 'We already own a house,' she pointed out. But she really did like this new house and I sold our house on Westcliff that day."

A few years later, Mike was getting ready to get out of the butcher business or at least pare down. He sold everything out of his butcher shop in San Francisco and his butcher shop in Half Moon Bay, and closed both businesses.

"Because of my arthritis, it was difficult to be a butcher. The meat is ice-cold and it was getting harder to move my hands."

He sold his two Pacifica butcher shops when they weren't even up for sale.

"This man inherited a shitload of money from his dead aunt and his realtor came in one day and offered me way more money than what they were worth. 'Sold!'

"The new owner asked me if I could stay on six months and teach him the business. 'You want me to start today or tomorrow?' I wasn't charging him. I made plenty of money from the sale. After six weeks he decided he learned enough and didn't need me anymore. 'Okay.' Two years later, he lost the business.

"Once I sold my butcher business, I opened Pacific Home Satellite in Park Mall. It was a huge shop. I was a distributor for refrigerators, stoves, satellite dishes, televisions and Hitachi cassette players. I also had tape rentals: VHS and U-matic. I should win something for even remembering that name, U-matic!

"Regarding satellite dishes, U.S. Senator Barry Goldwater was a very strong proponent of satellite reception and I became his liaison to the West Coast. One Friday he called me up and said, 'Mike, sell everything.' 'Why?' 'We lost in Congress. They are going to scramble.' That meant, you couldn't get direct feeds from the satellites anymore."

In 1989, Mike started with Farmers Insurance, a business he still loves to this day. But Farmers wasn't his original plan, State Farm was.

"My cousin-in-law was a State Farm agent and when he retired, he had 56 years in. Definitely a record! So he said to me, 'Why don't you become an insurance agent. You know how much money I make?' 'Sold!' I went to a State Farm office in San Francisco to get a job. I was dressed in a three-piece suit. I had my wingtip shoes on and a big festooned tie. I get there. 'I'm Michael Romano.' 'You're not Michelle Romano?' 'On weekends,' I laughed. I thought a little humor. They said, 'Oh, we can't hire you.'

"As it turned out, State Farm had just been sued by a nonwhite, gay female for job discrimination. They lost millions. They were not looking for a 'Michael.'

"On the way home, I got lost in the Avenues, in the Sunset. I stopped at a deli and liquor store on the corner of 26th and Taraval. It was time for a Pepsi and a Moon Pie. As I come out of the shop, I looked in the direction of a bunch of girls walking around an apartment rooftop deck in bikinis. Also in my line of sight, was a big Farmers Insurance' sign. I went upstairs and talked to Ron, the owner of the office. He asked me some of the things I had done for a living in sales. I said I had been a car salesman. And he said, 'Get out of the office.' It turns out his aunt had been screwed by a car salesman and he hated car salesmen. As I'm leaving, two doors down the door opened and it is Evan, Ron's assistant. Evan said to me, 'Starting tomorrow, you come here every day, after 2:00. He leaves at 1:30. I'll train you.'

Eight months later, a group of executives from Farmers, scheduled a meeting with the Farmers' newcomer. As it turned out, Mike had broken a number of sales records and they were there, along with the surprised owner who didn't realize it was Mike whom Evan had brought on board, to bestow Mike with several awards.

"As all the Farmers people were leaving, Ron said to me, sneeringly, 'You'll never make it.' I left and started my business in Pacifica."

"But," Mike said, "the most important part of my life began with Joanne and continued with the three wonderful humans we brought into this world: Amy, Gina and Josh." Mike and Joanne are also now proud grandparents of ten.

The Wonderful World of Michael Romano
An interview-biography with this longtime Pacifica
resident, businessman and writer of tales
By Jean Bartlett (www.bartlettbiographies.com)
©2024 Jean Bartlett and Pacifica Historical Society.
Page 19



The Romano kids, definitely inherited their parents sense of fun, left to right: Gina, Josh and Amy.



Growing up Romano: Mike and Joanne with their three kids: Josh, Amy and Gina.



Joanne and Mike attend Mike's 25th high school reunion.

Except for when their kids were little, Joanne has always worked. Anyone who knows the Romano's long-standing Farmers' business, knows Joanne.

"I am still head-over-heels with Joanne, I always will be, and I am grateful that she keeps me from doing things that are way over the top. Even I know I need to be reined in! For instance, I was thinking, not too long ago, of buying this beautiful World War I cannon. It's a brass cannon with wheels and it has lead in the barrel – \$1,000. Joanne said, 'No! What are you going to do with a cannon?' And I said, 'Who doesn't want a real cannon on their front lawn?' Ha! Ha!"

In those years that the family was living on Picardo Court, a phenomenal housing deal landed on Mike's lap while he was doing some business in Vallemar. When he got home, Joanne said, 'Don't tell me, we have another house.' But this was a beyond-great find and they have been living in their Vallemar home, a home they built, since 1983. They have no intentions of moving.

"The land was, before we built our house, a wet eucalyptus forest, but I could see our future home in my mind. And this whole thing was not even a deal, it was a steal! I don't know how these things fall into my lap. God loves me!"

When did the writer come out of Mike?

"I've always told stories, but when my kids suggested I start writing them down for my grandchildren, the floodgates opened."

In August of 2013, I interviewed Mike for his second book signing at Florey's. The event introduced the first book in a series. Titled "A Little Witch in Training," the story and the series is for children 6 to 100. It is another Mike Romano page-turner. On the back of the book, the author hinted at what is inside.



Mike with his 2013 release, "A Little Witch in Training." (Jean Bartlett photo)

"Isabel, an inquisitive and daring 8-year old, moves with her newly-single mom from her home in bustling New York City, to the countryside in Massachusetts—Salem to be exact! She soon discovers amazing secrets about herself and her new home – and learns of the town's rich and powerful descendants who caused her ancestors such harm. What will happen next? The adventure begins!"

"When I write, I don't first flush a story out with a beginning, middle and end. I have something in my head. I put the premise down and run with it. I never know how the story is going to build or end. I am just as surprised as the reader. I have fun."

There are too many books in the Romano oeuvre to name, but here are just a few: "My Dad the Inventor," "Me and My Dragon Buddy, Hank Bob," "Journey to Shambala," "Midnight at Club Thirteen," "Second Star," "The House with Many Rooms," "The River Beneath Our House," "Sasquatch Junior High," "The Gateway to Hell" and "Hocking the Sticks."

One of Mike's comments from one of our earlier interviews, remains as true for him today as it did more than 10 years ago. "I have two daughters and I taught them, never, ever be subservient to males, and I taught all my children to never judge until you see. Judge people by what they do, not by what they say they are. I also taught my children to trust, or distrust, everyone equally – no matter race, creed, color, or how many fangs they have. And always believe in the magical."

Visit Mike's website, Stories by Mike Romano, [here](#). You just may have the time of your reading life!



The author in his office, 2013. (Jean Bartlett photo)



Jean Bartlett is a longtime Bay Area features writer: Pacifica Tribune, Oakland Tribune, San Jose Mercury, San Mateo Times, Portraits & Roots, Marin Independent Journal, Twin City Times, Ross Valley Reporter, Peninsula Progress, Coastal Connections, Bay Area Business Woman and Catholic San Francisco. She is also a former Hallmark Card writer, a produced playwright and a published author.

(Copyright 2024. Author Jean Bartlett, City Biographer, and Pacifica Historical Society. Funded by the Sam Mazza Foundation. Available online at www.bartlettbiographies.com and through the PHS.)