

→ **JOHNNY DEPP** Goes Vampire - The Photos! p.156 / → **GRACE KELLY**: The Granddaughter She Never Knew p.188

# VANITY FAIR



**HOW  
AARON  
SORKIN'S  
WEST WING  
SHAPED  
MODERN  
POLITICS**  
*By JULI  
WEINER*

**CZAR  
WARS**  
**PUTIN  
vs.  
RUSSIA'S  
CAPTIVE  
OLIGARCH**  
*By MASHA  
GESSEN*

*"I used to be Snow White, but I drifted."*  
- MAE WEST

# Julia

**OPENS UP to MIKE NICHOLS**

*An Intimate Conversation About Fame, Fairy Tales, and Raising Normal Kids*

HAS *THE WASHINGTON POST* LOST ITS WAY? / **YOGA'S** NEW BILLIONAIRE-WIFE POSE



**HONORED GUESTS**

(1) Richard and Patricia Nixon with Lee Annenberg, holding Jennie Eisenhower, the Nixons' granddaughter, 1979. (2) Dwight Eisenhower and Walter Annenberg, 1968. (3) From left: Walter Annenberg, Ronald Reagan, Charles Price, William French Smith, George Shultz, and Donald Regan, December 31, 1985. (4) Lee and Walter, photographed by Jonathan Becker for *Vanity Fair*, 1999. (5) Lee and Margaret Thatcher in one of the Sunnylands greenhouses, 1995. (6) Nancy Reagan and Bob Hope, New Year's Eve, 1986. (7) Jimmy Stewart playing with the Tony Rose Orchestra, New Year's Eve 1982. (8) Queen Elizabeth II with Lee, 1983. (9) On the patio outside the Game Room, from left, an unidentified man, Gerald Ford, Leonard Firestone, an unidentified woman, Lee Annenberg, and Brooke Astor, 1978. (10) The Sunnylands guest book signed by Richard Nixon, 1974.



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ANNENBERG FOUNDATION TRUST AS HONORARIES



the driving range, they used to pile the balls up in a pyramid. But Walter had that sensibility, too. There's an aesthetic to Sunnylands, a sense of beauty. It's a magical kingdom."

Like other family members, Kabler, whose father was Schenley liquors tycoon Lewis Rosenstiel, attended many of the New Year's Eve parties. She recalls, "One year, Ginger Rogers and Frank and Barbara Sinatra were invited for after dinner, and they came too soon, so they had to come back. Walter danced with Ginger."

Kabler's daughter, Liz, tells me, "I started going when I was five. I was put in my little evening gown and came in toward the beginning and said hello to everybody and danced on Kirk Douglas's feet." That was in 1987, the penultimate year of the Reagan presidency, when George H. W. Bush, she says, "was still called Vice President Bush. And I caused quite an uproar, because he'd invited me to draw with him on one of the mornings. So I woke up quite early, and I marched over to his room and started banging on the door. I didn't know that you just don't do that to a vice president. But he did come and draw with me."

In 1998, I was writing an article on Palm Springs for this magazine, and Lee Annenberg's best friend, Harriet Deutsch, the wife of Sears, Roebuck heir Armand Deutsch, asked Lee to include me in that year's festivities. By then the party was down to four tables, and the guest list was made up mostly of what remained of the old Reagan kitchen-cabinet group: former ambassador to the Vatican William Wilson; former United States Information Agency

*In 1963, Walter and Lee bought the*  
**EMPTY DESERT SCRUBLAND**  
*that would become Sunnylands.*  
*The estate cost \$5 million.*

chief Charles Wick and his wife, Mary Jane; retired steel magnate Earle Jorgensen, who was 100, and his wife, Marion. The men were in tuxedos, most of the ladies in long black velvet dresses set off with major jewels. Waiters passed sevruga caviar and other fancy hors d'oeuvres. But all that paled in comparison with the art and décor. A huge Monet of irises hung over a sofa flanked by end tables holding pots full of color-coordinated magenta orchids. "Lee has these orchids on these tables year-round," Ann Douglas, Kirk's wife, informed me. "I don't know how she does it."

After a dinner of quenelles of pike with bay shrimp, chicken Kiev with roasted potato balls, salad and cheese, and an ice-cream

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 BY A. J. ALL OTHERS © THE ANNENBERG FOUNDATION TRUST AT SUNNYLANDS

DATE	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	NAME	RESIDENCE
7-15-74	Michael Mink	White House + S. White	9/8/74	Richard Mink	San Clemente
	With great appreciation for another superb stay at Sunnylands - Pat & I			Pat & I	
	Charles French Long	new york city		Jack Brennan	"When you're down you find out who your real friends are - We shall always be grateful for your kindness and for loyal friendships"
11-12-74	Hoyt & Diane DeLong				
	John & Mary Ann				
	John & Joan Walker				

bombe for dessert, Lee proposed a toast: "I'd like you all to think for a moment of our beloved Ronnie and Nancy, who can't be here tonight, and of all the other friends who aren't here anymore." Then Walter, 90 and showing his age, stood and toasted Lee. "I am so lucky to have been carried by my wife in the manner I deserve," he declared. He stood two more times, between speeches by Wilson, Wick, and Charles Price, who had been Reagan's ambassador to Belgium and Britain, and repeated the same toast, word for word. Each time Lee responded, "Thank you, honey." Then he and Lee led off the dancing. By 10 after midnight it was all over.

In March 2000, Lee invited me for a weekend. I drove from Los Angeles with Betsy Bloomingdale. As we passed through the security gate and across a bridge over one of the fake lakes, Betsy exclaimed, "Look at those pink petunias!" There were about 5,000 of them. "Oh, what money can do," she added with a sigh. I was assigned the peach guest room: peach-and-green flowered bedspreads, peach-and-green flowered chaise and armchair, peach chest of drawers and night tables, green desk and desk chair, cream walls, peach-and-cream striped curtains, peach wall-to-wall carpeting, peach wastepaper basket, and, yes, peach jelly beans. In the Game Room, where we joined our fellow houseguests, New York banker Ezra Zilkha and his wife, Cecile, then vice-chairman of the Metropolitan Opera, the color combination was glossy coral and canary yellow. On the bar, two tall glass cylinders contained potato chips and pretzels, which had

iversity of Pennsylvania and program director for the Annenberg Retreat at Sunnylands, to use the new official name. The first "summit," taking place this month, will be on U.S.-Mexican relations.

Liz Kabler, an art consultant, thinks her grandparents' estate is perfectly suited for its mission. "When you look through the guest books," she says, "it's unbelievable the peaceful tranquility people felt there. I can't imagine anybody throwing a fit in anger there. Or not being more amenable to really talking."

I spoke to her and other family members prior to the grand opening, in February, which drew an impressive crowd, including U.S. chief of protocol Capricia Marshall, Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, George Shultz, Barbara Sinatra, Eli Broad, museum directors Michael Govan, Jeffrey Deitch, and Ann Philbin, former ambassadors William Luers, John Gavin, and Robert Tuttle, and former First Son Steve Ford.

**I**'m so excited," says Diane Deshong, Lee's daughter from her first marriage, to Las Vegas casino owner Beldon Kattelman. "It's just what Mother and my stepfather would have loved. My desire is for people to know that, as important as Sunnylands was, it was a family residence also. And I think my parents were the happiest—especially Uncle Walter—when it was just he and Mother there. And we loved to be with them. We would go out every Christmas and Easter and Mother's Day. So it was really our

*"Lee put colored jelly beans in the guest bedrooms  
TO MATCH THE DÉCOR.  
On the driving range, they piled the balls up in a pyramid."*

been stacked one by one in a perfect spiral pattern. It was all too much, and yet somehow chic: 1950s high-modern style carried to dizzying mannerist heights.

Over lunch, the talk was of the battle for the Republican presidential nomination, being fiercely fought between Senator John McCain and then Texas governor George W. Bush. Walter, who could still be quite sharp, had some wise, if cynical, advice for the candidates: "Never let your spoken words reveal your inner thoughts." Lee added, "I don't like what Bush and McCain are doing. Al Gore is going to win if they keep this up."

**B**y then Walter and Lee were already planning for what Sunnylands would become after they were gone. In December 2003, 14 months after Walter was buried on the grounds, newly elected governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, and 30 state legislators met at Sunnylands for a conference called "California's Future." In 2004, 2007, and 2009, the last time shortly before Lee died and was buried beside her husband, she invited Supreme Court justices Sandra Day O'Connor, Stephen Breyer, and Anthony Kennedy to the estate to help formulate high-school programs on the Constitution sponsored by the Sunnylands trust. The three justices met there again this January to pursue that project with Kathleen Hall Jamison, head of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the Uni-

home, too. It'll never be the same. But it's the way it should be after Mother and Uncle Walter passed away."

Will the potato chips still be stacked in spirals?

"We're never going to be able to maintain it like that," says Deshong. "But we're trying to do the best we can to make the retreat participants feel comfortable and have the privacy that I personally think you need to get something accomplished." Diane's children, Howard Deshong III, an investment counselor, and Leonore Deshong, an animal-rights activist, were at the opening with their children, who, along with their cousins, will eventually replace their elders on the board. As Diane Deshong explains, "The new generation—our kids and our grandkids—that's what's going to give Sunnylands life as time goes on."

One last note: according to the trust's mission statement, the master bedroom may be used only by the president of the United States or other heads of state. □

#### FROM THE ARCHIVE

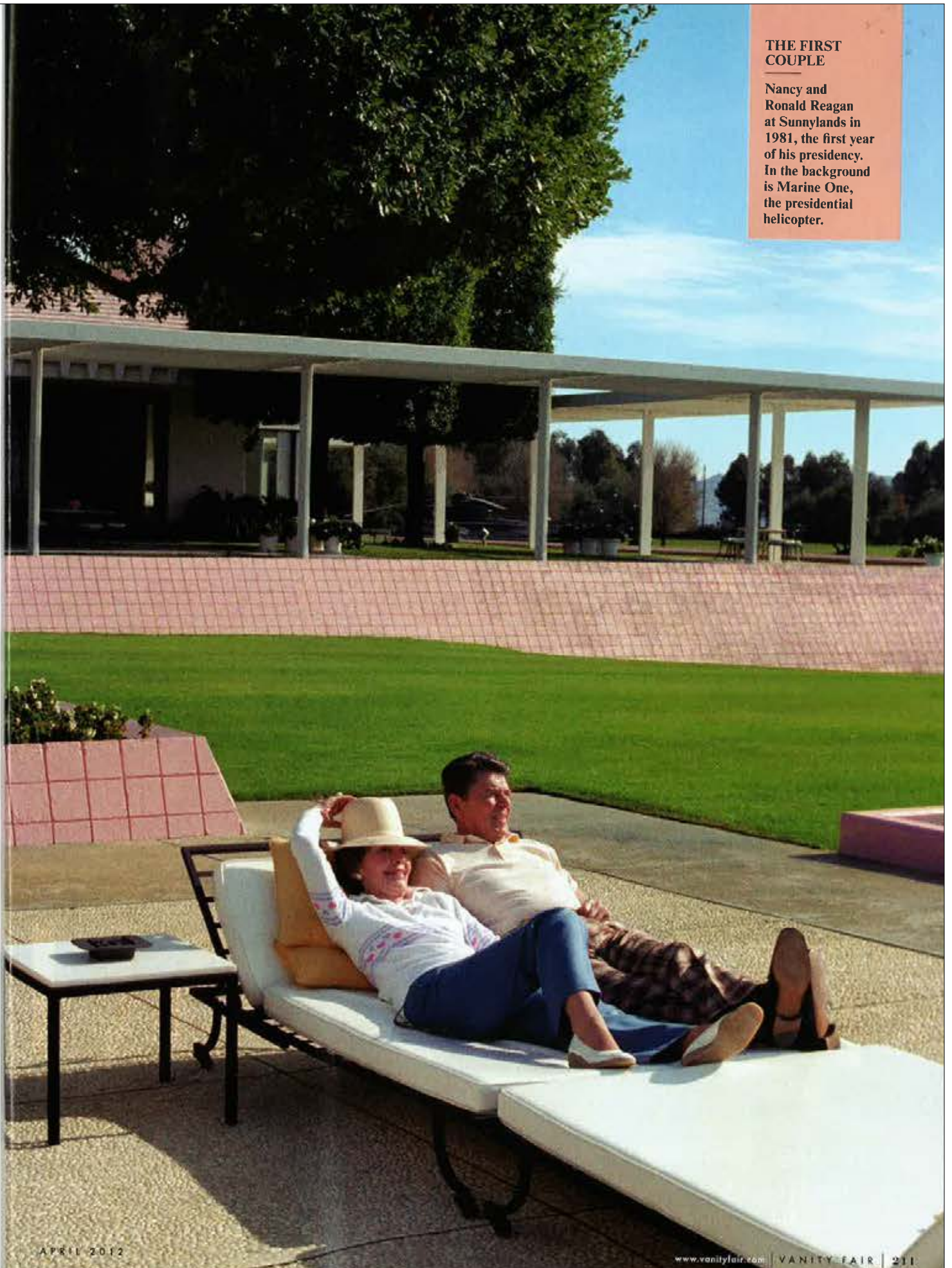
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**THE FIRST  
COUPLE**

**Nancy and  
Ronald Reagan  
at Sunnylands in  
1981, the first year  
of his presidency.  
In the background  
is Marine One,  
the presidential  
helicopter.**



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