

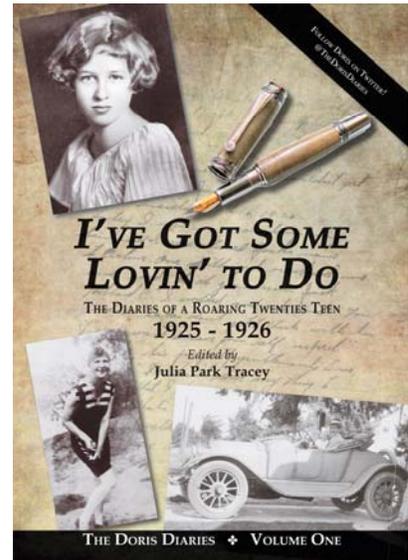


SRJC Alumni & Friends Association

Julia Park Tracey considered becoming a poet after graduating from Petaluma High School in the early 1980s, but her parents didn't think it was a wise career choice. Instead, Julia enrolled at Santa Rosa Junior College, and acting on a friend's suggestion, signed up for a journalism class and joined the staff of the college newspaper, the *Oak Leaf*.

Julia credits her three-semester training on the *Oak Leaf* staff with immersion in traditional journalism practices, and that experience launched her career as an award-winning writer, editor, publisher, activist and proud alumna of Santa Rosa Junior College.

Julia will be showcasing her talents on Thursday, November 15 at 7 p.m. at Copperfield's Books in Petaluma (140 Kentucky Street) for a reading from her new book, *I've Got Some Lovin' to Do*, *The Diaries of a Roaring Twenties Teen 1925-1926*, based on the real-world adventures of Julia's great aunt, who passed away last year at 101 years old. After the book signing, you're invited to meet Julia for drinks and conversation at Andresen's Bar in downtown Petaluma (19 Western Avenue).



While Julia was an *Oak Leaf* staffer, her Pulitzer Prize-winning advisor, Kathy Mitchell, set high standards for her students, which helped them win a statewide "General Excellence Award" for college newspapers for three consecutive semesters.

"This experience lit a fire in me to the extent that I was doing freelance work at age 18, and at 19 was writing stories. I was whipped into shape by the newspaper at SRJC," Julia said.

Julia transferred to San Francisco State from SRJC to pursue a journalism major, but delayed her education when she became a single mom. For about 10 years, Julia was a freelance contributor to her local newspaper, writing news, business columns, and education articles.

In 2000, Julia joined the newspaper as a full-time features editor, using the skills and training she'd received from Kathy Mitchell and other SRJC instructors.

"I went into community journalism, similar to the *Oak Leaf*. It's not hard news, but I have to write as if it's the most important news ever to the individuals who cut out the articles and save them. I'm not making history but helping people keep track of their own history," she said.

A few years later, Julia and a group of supporters pooled their finances to launch the *Alameda Sun*, a new newspaper for the East Bay community of Alameda. At the time, she was one of only 85 female publishers nationwide, and she faced a financially risky and entrepreneurial situation with no staff or predictable salary.

“In a knee-hole under my desk, my daughter would color while I conducted interviews. It’s a proud legacy I leave to my daughters that I launched this paper while I was a single mom,” said Julia.

While cleaning out the house of her great-aunt, Doris Bailey Murphy, last year Julia found a box of her diaries, bundled by date starting in 1925, and this discovery prompted Julia to begin sharing her aunt’s fascinating entries publicly.

The diaries illuminate the life of a headstrong young woman, and as Julia delved into their contents she gained new insights into her relative’s youthful years. She posted funny quotes on her Facebook page from Doris’ diaries, and when people started asking for more Doris entries, she started her own Doris Facebook page, Twitter feed and website. She proceeded to independently publish the first volume of the Doris Diaries – *I’ve Got Some Lovin to Do, the Diaries of a Roaring Twenties Teen 1925-1926*.

“The diaries echo what is going on at the time. They are a historical document of what’s going on in the world,” said Julia. “Doris starts out as privileged young woman in this changing time period for women. She chops off her hair, drives around with no chaperone, drinks whiskey, makes racist comments, debates Hitler, moves to San Francisco, works for the Red Cross, meets her husband, works for Sonoma County and ultimately embraces the internet and email, all in one lifetime.”

Julia, who plans to publish a second volume of the Doris Diaries in the near future, credits her rigorous education at SRJC as the launch of a fulfilling career as a writer, editor and publisher.