

SMITH RANCH HOMES

The Vision

Drs. Grausz and Sadler worked for several years to develop and refine the vision for Smith Ranch Homes. They sent questionnaires to prospective residents and held seminars and focus groups with several hundred people.

They found that respondents stayed physically and socially active, were resistant to being taken care of and wanted options and choices.

The vision for the project was culminated by their research and the design ideas of Robert Tishman.

The vision or concept developed was:

- A community of choice to which people come voluntarily
- A community offering carefree living with an array of amenities
- An evolving community formed by residents and fitting their needs and interests
- A community with opportunities for residents to be active contributors to the community and to society as a whole
- A community with employees who respect the individuality of the residents
- A complex with the highest quality residential facilities and living units with large windows and patios/decks
- A complex with grounds with extensive, lush landscaping and underground parking.

SMITH RANCH HILLS SEMINAR

Smith Ranch Hills, located in San Rafael, Marin County, is a lifetime residential resort for retired or retirement-conscious persons.

We have heard from enthusiastic Napa area residents who are interested in our new concept. Perhaps you too would like to hear about and see our proposed community.

Join us in the Chappallet-Mondavi Room, Silverado Country Club, on July 21, 1985 at 1:00 p.m. Refreshments.

Phone Collect 415-461-7110 to reserve a space for you.
Smith Ranch Hills, 2200 Larkspur Landing Circle, Larkspur 94939

Napa Valley Register, July 3, 1985. Dr. Grausz promoted his vision in Marin, Sonoma and Napa.

Homes to offer luxury retirement



Smith Ranch Homes was to be built at the level of the very best condominiums with the qualities needed to satisfy a group of successful people who are living well.

One version of Shangrila for seniors

Smith Ranch Hills goes after upscale market

Some seniors prefer stand-alone dwellings Page H5

By Bart Eisenberg
SPECIAL TO THE EXAMINER

SAN RAFAEL — One morning soon, residents of the Smith Ranch Hills retirement resort here will wake up and face a day of possibilities. Some residents may choose to chalk up aerobic points in the indoor pool. Others may decide to soak their tennis elbows in the Jacuzzi.

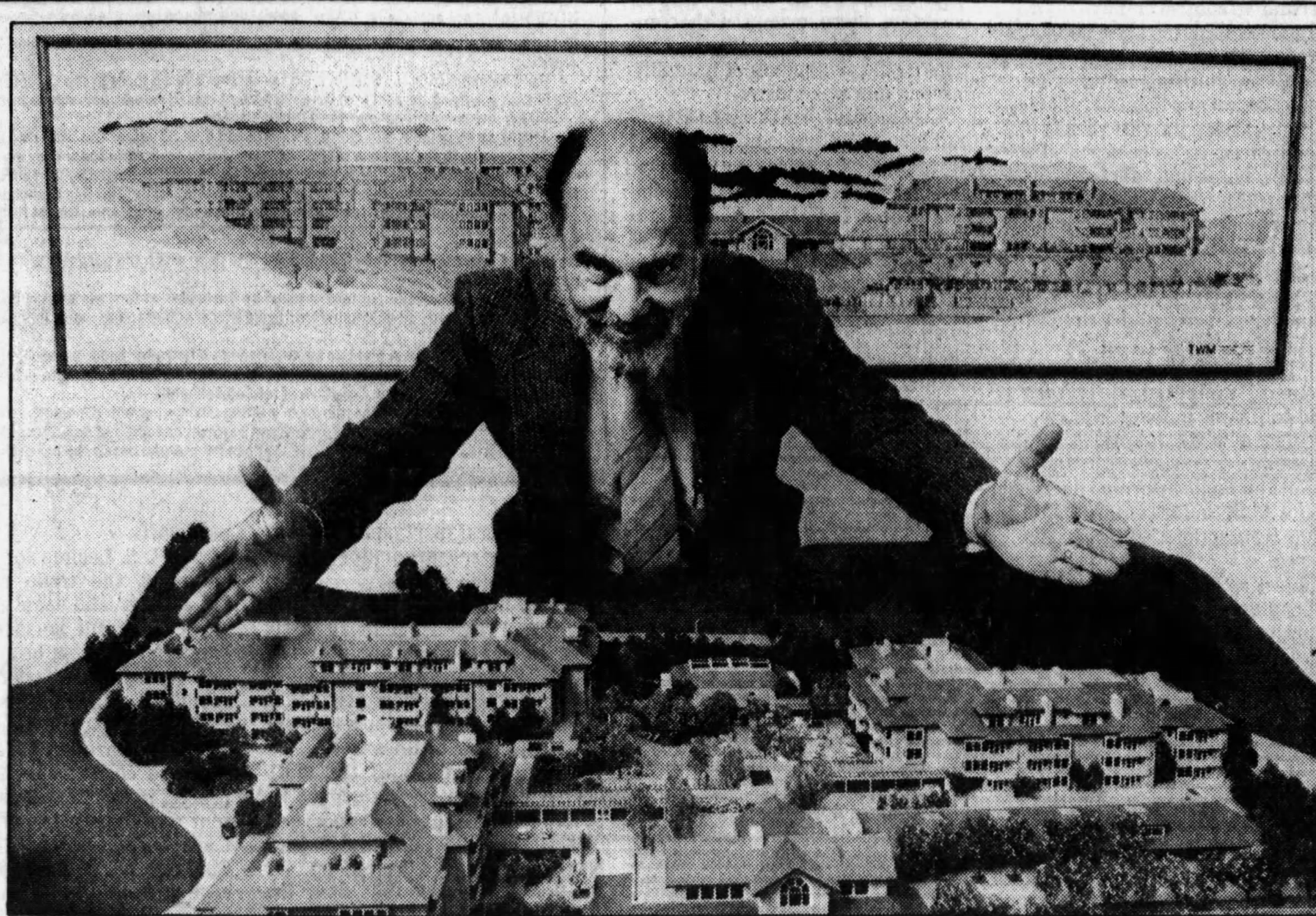
Still others may ponder whether brunch will be cracked crab in the plaza's garden restaurant or fruit salad in one of the dining rooms in the lodge.

At least, that's the scene Smith Ranch Hill's developers imagine.

Smith Ranch Hills isn't scheduled for completion until early 1987. But it's already being touted as the retirement community of the future — for those who can afford it.

"Smith Ranch is unique," said David Kornblum, manager of health care advisory services in the San Francisco office of Laventhol & Horwath, a consulting service and accounting firm. "The facility will be the creme de la creme nationally for upscale retirement communities, in the number of services and amenities it will offer, in the attention to detail and in the size of the residential units themselves."

Developed by Medical Retirement Communities Inc. of Larkspur, the \$90 million project is being constructed on the former



Dr. Henry Grausz with model of Smith Ranch Hills: He wants 'to give people options in their lives'

site of the Las Gallinas Golf Course, off of Smith Ranch Road west of Highway 101. It will initially have 300 units with 30 different floor plans.

The mix of homes is almost the reverse of that typically found in retirement communities. Seventy percent of the residences will have two bedrooms and two baths, while only 20 percent will have one bedroom. Ten percent will have at least three bedrooms and three baths, including four 3,000-square-foot homes.

The project also intends to depart from the cafeteria service or fixed-fare meals offered by most retirement communities.

Instead, residents will be given a choice of two to four "four-star" restaurants, designed by Michael James and Billy Cross, founders of the Great Chefs of France cooking school in the Napa Valley.

Other facilities planned for Smith Ranch Hills include a community garden, a central underground garage, two pools, a man-made lake, exercise facilities and a market.

Its developers argue that such communities can actually contribute to people's health by giving them a succession of choices in their day-to-day lives.

Dr. Harrison Sadler, a consultant and

specialist in ambulatory and community medicine, says studies show that people are healthier when they are actively involved in decision-making.

"Helplessness is not conducive to good health," he said. "What you want to do in designing a retirement community is to give people options in their lives."

Dr. Henry Grausz, president and CEO of Medical Retirement Communities, adds that no retirement community has ever been designed quite right because of mis-

— Please see RANCH, H5

RANCH

From H1

perceptions about the life style of senior citizens.

"We felt that our own perceptions about life at 65 just weren't relevant. If you're not at that stage, you just can't understand it," said Grausz, who is 45.

To better understanding, thousands of questionnaires were sent to prospective residents and seminars were held for the roughly 300 people who responded.

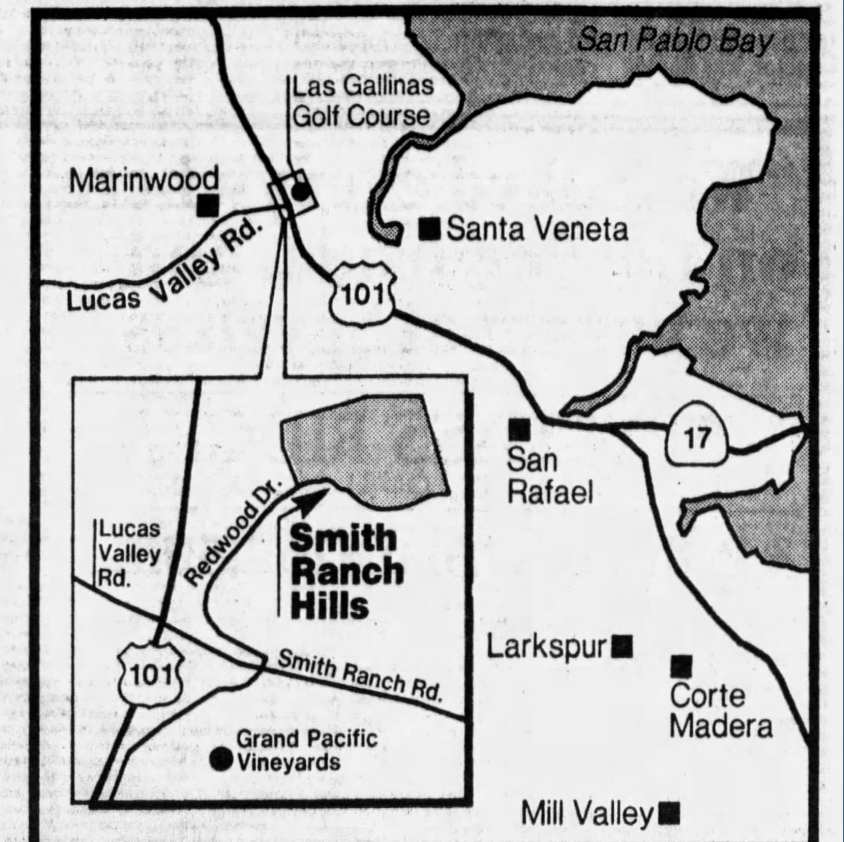
"We soon learned that these people were not who we thought they were," said Grausz. "They weren't a step removed from the nursing home; they were active and viable. They were most certainly not interested in shuffleboard. Call them during the day and you'd most likely reach their answering machine."

Grausz says there has never been a healthier, more vigorous crop of 70-year-olds. "Most of them have never experienced a chronic disease and many will never be ready for institutionalization."

"These are people who no longer need the four-bedroom house. They need a place to live more efficiently, where they can remain productive and continue contributing to society. They may no longer want to do all their cooking, but they are not ready for airplane food."

Smith Ranch Hills will not be cheap. The developers are targeting people who have a substantial equity in their home and are willing to convert some of it into services.

To lease a two-bedroom home at Smith Ranch Hills, for example, a resident must establish two trusts at \$200,000 each.



The first trust is invested in tax-free municipal bonds, with 20 percent of the principal going back to Smith Ranch each year until the trust is fully dissipated. The balance is refundable should the resident move before then.

The second trust is loaned to the community at 9 percent interest. Residents can use the interest to help defray the monthly residence fee, which range from \$1,000 to \$2,200, or any other way they choose.

Grausz says the idea is to provide homeowners with a means to tap their equity.

The developers are careful to differentiate Smith Ranch Hills from "life-care" projects, in which health services are provided as part of the package, usually on a pay-as-you-go basis. Grausz says traditional life-care communities underestimated the rising cost of medical services and "ran into financial problems by trying to pace their health-care programs with inflation."

Smith Ranch Hills is not Grausz's first development, although it's the first of its kind for the doctor-turned-developer. His company has also built medical and office buildings in Marin County and Berkeley and condominiums in Sacramento.

Dr. Grausz is shown in this October 1985 San Francisco Examiner article displaying a model of the complex. It included restaurants, community gardens, underground parking, fitness center, pools and a man-made lake.