

Orlando Sentinel

**PIXAR SHACKDOWN!**  
Could Cars be the long-overdue comeback?  
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## ETHNIC IDENTITY: FOCUS ON A HOMETLAND

Author Kevin McKiernan has spent years among the Kurds of Turkey, Iran and Iraq, and he offers a captivating portrait of them in *The Kurds: A People in Search of Their Homeland*.  
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**CAFE'S  
ENTREES  
SHOW FLAIR**  
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## life in short



SARA A. FIANO/ORLANDO SENTINEL  
Marvin McKiernan will miss a neighbor's treats.

### Condo conversion vs. sugar cookies

The place I love is growing without me. I was getting by on my paycheck at a time. Now it appears I'll have to work a second job at a hotel to stay in my apartment, because it's being turned into a condo. I have to buy or leave.

Moving is an option. But there aren't as many apartments available these days. Plus I would be spending more on gas to commute.

The elderly woman across the hall, who baked the best sugar cookies I ever tasted, went back north to live with relatives. She said she didn't have the strength to move elsewhere in town nor work a second job.

I am trying to keep the thought of moving "back home" out of my mind.

— MARVIN MCKIERNAN  
ORLANDO



COURTESY OF ASHA PINTO  
A special day: Asha Pinto (right) is thankful for the strength and love of her mother, Joyce Acharje.

### The gift of a mother's touch

A woman with many strands of her own gray hair, and the mother of a 10-year-old, it's not very often that I get to hold my mother's hand.

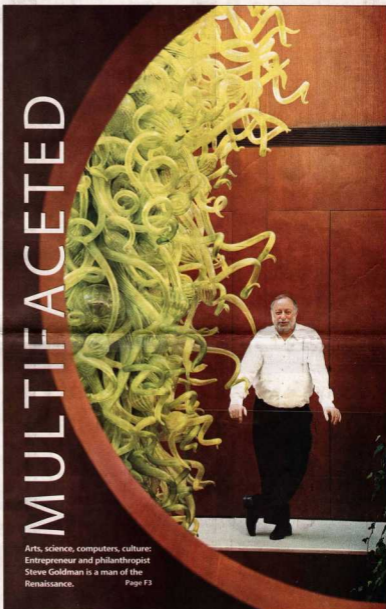
On a recent Sunday morning, while sitting in the pews, the opportunity presented itself.

As I felt her strong fingers and soft skin, I was reminded of the strength and softness of her mind and heart. Wow! Mom has loved me unconditionally for 40 years, never measuring me against unrealistic expectations, always supporting me.

From her, I have received the gifts of faith and hope and a very rare kind of love—one not to be taken for granted.

— ASHA PINTO  
ORLANDO

**Life in Short** gives readers an opportunity to write about recent moments in time or insights into life. Keep your submission to about 100 words and send along a photo of yourself that illustrates what you're writing about. Send the essay and photo (high-resolution JPEG if by e-mail) to [LifeinShort@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:LifeinShort@orlandosentinel.com) or, by regular mail, to Life in Short, Orlando Sentinel, MP-240, 403 N. Orange Ave., Orlando, FL 32801, include a daytime and evening phone number. If we decide to use your story, you'll hear from us — and we'll pay you \$50. Submissions are edited.



# MULTIFACETED

Arts, science, computers, culture:  
Entrepreneur and philanthropist  
Steve Goldman is a man of the  
Renaissance.  
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ROBERTO GONZALEZ/ORLANDO SENTINEL

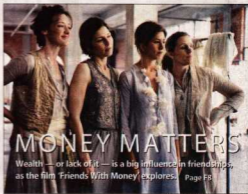
## ART FARE

Diners, such as Susan and Roger Chapin, benefit along with artists when restaurants hand works.

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JOE BURBANK/ORLANDO SENTINEL



## MONEY MATTERS

Wealth — or lack of it — is a big influence in friendships, as the film 'Friends With Money' explores.  
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MARK UPSON/SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

## PEOPLE

faces in the community

## Mr. Abstract Random

Steve Goldman has a finger in a lot of pies and a helping hand for the cultural community.

By LISA ROBERTS  
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

Welcome to the Renaissance, Steve Goldman style.

At 53, he is a successful computer entrepreneur, a benefactor of the arts, a pianist, an award-winning music composer, a gourmet and a collector of art glass. He's a talented cook, a former rock musician, a world traveler who has played polo atop an elephant and a member of the boards of area arts, science and music institutions. He's a balding guy with a perpetual half-grin who straddles a mean Harley, one who is disturbed to see so much of Central Florida's green space disappearing. Oh, and he devours physics.

"It asks the big questions," he says. "What is matter? What is time? What is space? What is the origin of the universe?"

But many of Goldman's questions about life are more localized.

"I try to look at the big picture instead of getting into the details too much. You have to ask yourself, 'What's the goal?'"

"I had a friend who used to say all he wanted in life was to add a drop to the sandcastle. That's what I want to add a drop to that sand castle. To improve the quality of life. What else have you got?"

He retired in 2000, after selling his Mailand-based computer business for millions. Goldman set up to do just that in Central Florida. He changed into the infrastructure of the local cultural scene like a kid doing a high-dive cannonball.

"I didn't want to be a guy who just sits in a chair," says Goldman, who resides at a glass-top desk in his Winter Park home office.

"There is no 'old' system of support, no long philanthropic tradition in Orlando" for the arts. He helped to change that, leading by example.

Before long, Goldman was serving on the boards of the Festival of Orchestras, the University of Central Florida's College of Arts and Sciences and the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra, of which he was also president. He set up an orchestra endowment and funds the Central Florida Young Composer's Challenge, which encourages youths to pursue the art of writing music. As a board member and trustee of the nonprofit United Arts of Central Florida, he gives \$100,000 annually. Recently, he donated a 10-foot steel sculpture by French artist Jean-Claude Fauriol to the Orlando Museum of Art.

On the science side, he was appointed to the Orlando Science Center's board, and he took the center's helm for nine months until a CEO was hired. Goldman also developed "Wired Science," an interactive animation program he then donated to the center for use in its displays.

He regularly opens his home—a modern minimalist structure of his own design that he shares with his partner, Melanie Love—to cultural groups and friends.

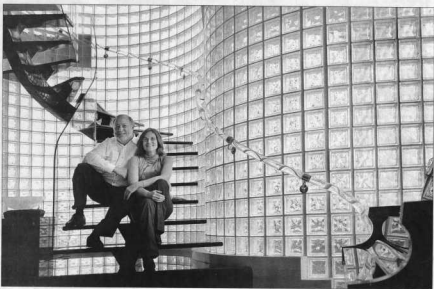
Margot Knight, who heads United Arts of Central Florida, recalls a party Goldman threw for her and glass artist the Chubbly. "We sang, we danced. It was a wild night. . . . The man knows food, the man knows wine, the man knows how to grab a drink."

Though his face is familiar in cultural circles, Goldman is rarely seen as the community's spotlight. Truth is, Goldman is as unassuming as his grippily peaced Columbia-brand shirts and well-worn loafers. In conversation, he's apt to share the latest nugget from Scientific American or launch into a comparison of the arts at Thai restaurants.

"I call him 'Mr. Abstract Random,' because there are no short latches with Steve," Knight says. "Conversation ranges from physics to astronomy to classical music to the inner workings of groups in town. I always walk away having learned something and feel that I leave with my appreciation of the arts revived."

## From the start

As a boy growing up in Winter Park and Mailand, Goldman was introduced to the arts by his parents, cultural benefactors Sig and Marilyn Goldman of Mailand. His creativity



Steve Goldman and Melanie Love sit on the stairway of his home, a modern minimalist structure he designed. He often throws open his doors for cultural groups and friends.



An early love of music persists, and in retirement, Steve Goldman has plenty of time to indulge his love of composition. But for a hard-core science junkie, physics asks the big questions, he says. "What is matter? What is time? What is space?"

and enthusiasm for the arts was evident from the start. He learned to play clarinet and piano. Later, he segued to drums and piano in garage bands. During summers, he attended music camp, where he concentrated on composing.

Sam Meiner, a Central Florida restaurateur, remembers his childhood friend recruiting neighborhood kids to appear in movies that Goldman wrote, filmed, directed and edited. "But science was there too. 'Steve was a gadget guru when we were growing up,'" says Meiner, who calls his friend "Dr. F." Goldman was always coming up with something. There was, for instance, a machine that made static electricity. "You'd put your hand on it and your hair flew up in the air."

"The lanky kid with the mop of dark hair found physics particularly fascinating — so much so that he chose to pursue the subject at Georgia Tech instead of accepting a music scholarship to attend Stetson University in DeLand.

"That was tough, because I love both of them," Goldman says. "But at the time, I didn't see a way to make a living in music."

Later, however, he couldn't resist giving music a go. After transferring to the University of Florida and graduating with a physics degree, Goldman moved to Los Angeles, where he played in a rock band and wrote music. A couple of tough years later, he found more gainful employment in the computer industry, which had

launched like a rocket. "It was a case of right place, right time," he says. "They had just invented the microprocessor."

## Goals met, reset

In 1977, Goldman returned to Central Florida to join his father in business in Mailand. Eventually Goldman's company, Distributed Processing Technology, spun off on its own in 1984. But the going was tough in what Goldman called the "Silicon Swamp."

"What would have been a natural fit in California's Silicon Valley was hard to start in Central Florida," he says. "Coming back was not necessarily a good move in that respect."

"Hiring engineers was hard. They didn't want to move here." There was no "critical mass" of high-tech opportunities that would have given engineers some security, and the area lacked a cultural taste. "We were known for our theme parks, but we didn't have a vibrant cultural commu-

nity."

Goldman persevered, eventually moving the company into a multi-million dollar business specializing in storage technology. "My goal in business was to do something interesting and make a contribution. I like to feel that I've made a case."

Retirement, of course, has brought new goals. "I figure I spent the first third of my life in school, and the second third being productive. So, I figured I'd spend the third third being totally unproductive," he says with a grin. "This last year, I wanted to sit back and try to figure out how I want to spend my time."

## The 3rd third

So far, he has had no problem feeding his appetite for adventure and fun. Several months ago, he and Love took a six-week motorcycle trip up the U.S. West coast, during which he took more than 2,000 photos (he's a crack photographer). This summer, the couple will make their annual trek to Eze in the south of France, where they plan culinary discoveries, motorcycle rides through the countryside and a foray into caves that hold prehistoric art.

"Cooking is always on the couples' front burner, and in November they whipped up a Thanksgiving meal for friends visiting from France. One of the dishes Goldman created was a chestnut puree. "The recipe? 'First you suckler all your friends into coming over the day before to peel chestnuts,'" he says laughing.

Soon it will be time for the "chill thing" — for which Goldman concocts a few pot of chack-roast chili the weeks about 100 servings. "He's incapable of making a small pot of chili," Love says.

But it is "Dr. Fu," who may have the last word in deciding Goldman's future. Whoever has involvement in the arts, he always will be a hard-core science junkie who remains in bed with physics books such as *The Elegant Universe* and *The Cosmic Landscape*, who devours publications such as *Science News* and *Scientific American*, and regularly checks out the Web site [Spaceflightnow.com](http://Spaceflightnow.com). He and Love are brushing up on calculus — just for fun. And Goldman is even considering going back to school to get a graduate degree in physics.

Recently, he spent two nights in a UCF astronomy lab as he watched astronomer Dr. Yan Fernandez take measurements that could help determine the composition of a comet.

He left the lab with the question of pursuing physics looming large. "I'm still trying to figure out if I have enough bandwidth and if I'm willing to sacrifice to focus on physics and nothing else."

Right now, in his universe, it's the biggest question of all.

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Steve Goldman and Melanie Love took a 6-week motorcycle trip along the California coast during which he took more than 2,000 photos.