

This monthly article highlights one of our branch members. We hope that you enjoy knowing a little more about your fellow members and the interesting life they have had. If you have someone you would like to nominate or if you would like to help author an article, please email the editor, Ron Nakamoto, at ron.nakamoto@yahoo.com.

DOUG ANDERSON - Bowling League Co-Chair



“The Curious Case of Benjamin Buttons” was an 1860 short story authored by F. Scott Fitzgerald about a baby born as a 70-year-old aged elder who grows younger with each passing year. Our “Benjamin Buttons” may well be this month’s Members Profile personality. In addition to helping run the SIR Area 16 bowling league, he spends time as a musician playing drums for the Los Trancos Woods Community Marching Band; he is a member of the San Mateo Golden Tones Chorus; he has volunteered to provide assistance to his 102-year-old neighbor; he is a regular attendee of the ragtime music hosted by Harry’s Hofbrau every Tuesday night; he spends time with his grandkids; and of course, as a single person, he is constantly juggling his schedule to make time for some special company. He is Doug Anderson, our candidate for this month’s “Member Profile”.

Doug was born in Sioux City, Iowa. He was the oldest child in a family of five. His father owned and ran a service station. In the late 1930s the family decided to move to Cutler, California, a small town located in the San Joaquin Valley. Unfortunately, his mother passed a few years later and his father eventually remarried. Doug grew up as a typical boyworking at his father’s service station for some pocket change while attending school. Doug was on the tennis, basketball and baseball teams and was the senior class president for his graduating class at Orosi Union High School. (Editor’s note: Doug hastens to point out that it was a VERY small high school.)

Music was always a big part of Doug’s life starting in his early years. He played snare drums in high school and at Visalia Junior College (College of the Sequoias). He became a bit restless with his life and decided to join the Air Force. He enlisted and was trained as an electronics technician and assigned to Tashikawa Air Force Base in Tokyo, Japan. As life often unfolds, the base needed musicians and Doug was soon transferred to Special Services as a member of the Air Force band servicing all the formal events in the area. After a great four-year assignment, Doug left the Air Force and enrolled at California Polytechnic College in San Luis Obispo and graduated with a mathematics

degree. His first job was as a Philco WDL employee in Palo Alto. After a year he moved on to become a Lockheed employee working at the Satellite Test Center. As a young mathematician he enjoyed the next four years working on real-time satellite tracking and support. However the repetitive nature of the job soon made him restless for something new. A little older, with more experience in the field, led him to join IBM working in sales. *(Editor's note: Selling timeshare computer services to companies that did not have their own dedicated mainframes was a growing business and IBM moved quickly to satisfy the need along with consulting to eventually grow it to a fourteen billion dollar business.)*

After a few years of success it became obvious to Doug that he should start his own business to provide timeshare for small and medium businesses. His Mission Computer Services Company was a success and in a couple of years he agreed to sell it to Boole & Babbage. He moved on sometime later to start an electronics import business selling components to Fry's Electronics and other similar companies. Doug tells, "Just before I retired I was asked by then Mayor Frank Jordan's office to participate as a delegate to organize a 'Sister City Program' with Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) in Vietnam. I was the only Caucasian amongst the dozen delegates. We met with the Vice President, Nguyễn Hữu Thọ, and other lesser dignitaries during this assignment. I had a blast and the delegation was successful."



Doug has been retired for some fifteen years. In his words, "My waking hours are very busy and I'm on the 'go' every day. A lot of my time is involved with music, as well as the time I spend with my 102-year-old neighbor. In addition to my 'Uber driving' for him, I help him with his eyedrops four times a day as he recovers from his cataract surgery. I currently play snare drums (left) for the 56-year-old Los Trancos Woods Community Marching Band. We perform fifteen times a year with the Fourth of July parade in Redwood City as our largest attended event. We don't get paid but any contributions from the various sponsors goes to our always-present beer cart. A few years ago the band was highlighted in a segment on KPIX, Channel 5 CBS 'Evening Magazine'. I am a current member of the San Mateo Golden Tones Chorus. We have weekly rehearsals and perform at assisted living facilities in San Mateo County. I find it a very rewarding experience to bring music to

those in their last years of life. I regularly attend Banjo Night every Tuesday at Harry's Hofbrau in Redwood City. It is a great pick-up for me to listen to the upbeat rhythm of the banjos.

"I joined the SIR Area 16 bowling league sometime ago and agreed to co-chair the bowling league three years ago when the league chair stepped down. We started with a small league of 16 players. Since that time we have doubled in size. I expect we will soon be at 40 players which will allow us to host ten teams. Bowling gets you out of the house for a few hours (1:00-3:30 pm on Tuesdays) and currently costs about \$15 a week of which a good portion is awarded back to every player. We started to encourage members to include their wives if it made it more enjoyable for them. So far, we have two wives that are participating. The women seem to enjoy themselves and feel quite comfortable amongst the men. They enjoy the group activity for its social interaction and the exercise of moving around. *(Editor's note: We noticed a marked drop in the use of bad language since the women have joined. (Just joking ...or am I?))*

"I've had a diverse life experience always anchored to my love of music. Music shapes your mood and when I listen or play music I am moved by its melodies. I have done odd things like ride a unicycle while juggling tennis balls and remember my picture in "Stars and Stripes", the Far East edition of the U.S. Military newspaper. My philosophy is to enjoy oneself and surround yourself with music. It may make you a happier person as it did me."

And so we conclude this Profile with a few observations. Doug will tell you a joke at the drop of a hat. Some of the jokes are actually funny. Being around Doug with his inexhaustible energy and his love of life uplifts all whom interact with him. He seems to be ageless or at least you never hear him complain about his back or aches and pains like the rest of us.

Benjamin Buttons? Maybe. How old do you think Doug is today?