

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\(at\)yahoo.com](mailto:ron.nakamoto(at)yahoo.com).



ARDEN ANDERSON

“I have been volunteering at the Lucille Packard Children’s Hospital for eleven years. About five years ago this happened to me. I like to know the first name of a child who is in the operating room so that when I am with the parents I can refer to their child by his/her name. On this day, a one-day-old baby was having open-heart surgery. The parents said that they had not named their little girl yet as they were too nervous. I gave them a tour of the ICU and did what I could for the parents. The next day, the mom found me in the hallway and asked me to come see her little girl in the Cardio Vascular ICU and there on the crib was her name, ‘Arden’. So now there is a little five year old girl in Oregon trying to explain how she got her name.”

This is a great introduction to this month’s Member Profile member, Arden Anderson. Arden was born in International Falls, Minnesota located at the border between the U.S. and Canada. His parents were first generation Americans from Sweden and Norway. His grandparents migrated in the late 1800’s driven by then President Abraham Lincoln’s Homestead Act that offered any family 160 acres of land to call their own if they would stay and work it for five years. He was the youngest child in the family of six with two brothers and a sister. Soon after he was born, the family moved to Duluth, MN. His father had contracted tuberculosis in 1930 and spent most of his time in Nopeming Sanatorium near Duluth. (*Editor’s note: At the turn of the twentieth century more than 80% of the population in the United States were infected before age 20, and tuberculosis was the single most common cause of death. By 1938 there were more than 700 TB hospitals in the country.*) When Arden was a year old he also contracted TB and spent two years in the Children’s Building at the same sanatorium. Soon after he came home his brother suddenly contracted polio and died within four days. Polio had become an epidemic during that period. To support the family, his mother worked the graveyard shift at a manufacturing plant making tools for the war. In 1946 the doctor advised his father to move to a warm, dry climate so the family sold the home that their grandfather built and moved to Turlock, California. The climate change agreed with his father but he still died of TB four years later.

Arden enrolled in the third grade in Turlock where his future wife, Marilyn, was a first grader (Wow!) Although he knew her, they did not start to date until she was in high school. He graduated from Turlock High School in 1956 and enrolled at the University of Colorado. Realizing that Colorado was too far from Marilyn, he transferred to U.C. Berkeley and graduated with a B.S. in Chemical Engineering in 1961.

Arden and Marilyn were married in 1959 while they were in college. They both worked to support their education. Arden remembers that a highlight of the week would be splurging on a half-gallon bucket of Rocky Road ice cream with their spare 75 cents (Oh, to be young again). This past August marked their 57th anniversary. They have four children whom are all married and live in the Bay Area. They also have eleven grandchildren and spend a lot of time together as a family.

For three summers Arden worked as an Intern at the FMC Chemical Plant in Modesto, CA. So after graduation, even with other offers, he chose to work for FMC. He started in Processing Engineering in the inorganic chemical plant making specialty barium chemicals. He progressed to Production Supervisor and later to South Plant Manager of FMC'S phosphate plant in Carteret, New Jersey. In Arden's words, "It was either bad publicity that damaged phosphate sales or the famous line, '...Plastics', from the movie *The Graduate* that moved me to join a small plastics firm. After four years on the East Coast we moved back to Palo Alto and bought our current home.

"In 1980, I accepted a position in management with Siltec (one of two major American producers of silicon wafers) in Menlo Park. In 1984, Siltec decided to move all their production to Salem, Oregon so, wanting to stay in the Bay Area, I transitioned to NBK Corporation, (another small silicon wafer start-up) as Manufacturing Vice President. Within a year the company was sold to Kawasaki Steel and I agreed to remain on a three-year retention contract. After that period I again joined Siltec as a Product Manager so I could remain in the Bay Area. Siltec, by now was sold to Mitsubishi Silicon Corp. I retired in 1998 as Vice President of Marketing when Mitsubishi closed all California operations. I joined Silicon Genesis, another small silicon start-up for a year and then moved on to Semiconductor Equipment and Manufacturing International (SEMI), an industry trade organization for the next three years.

"I started planning my retirement when I was 55. I attended a panel discussion and heard that before you retire you should spend equal time planning what you are going to do with your money and what you are going to do with your mind. At that point, I started volunteering with Interplast, a non-profit, local organization that provided surgical packs and supplies to doctors and nurses who visit third world countries to help kids with cleft lips and palates and other feet and facial deformities. I went on ten trips with the teams to run the sterilization equipment and help turnaround the operating rooms in between surgeries. The teams would perform around 150 surgeries over two weeks. I had great experiences working on teams that deployed twice to Vietnam, Ecuador, Honduras, Philippines, Nepal, Bolivia and Peru.

“Early in our marriage we were visiting my wife’s grandfather and he brought out old photos and histories of my wife’s family. We discovered that one of our family stories was finding the home where my grandfather lived in Northern Sweden and holding his family bible. Scribed within was this, “... the next day I was leaving for America...” He never saw his parents or siblings again and he was just eighteen years old. I was hooked. I spend one day a week as a volunteer at the Family History Center, Menlo Park, helping people discover their ancestors. Genealogy has been one of my hobbies for more than forty years. If I have heard it once, I have heard it a hundred times, “Oh, how I wish I had asked my ...”, after the parents are gone. I believe it is our responsibility to write down our story and the stories of our ancestors. This is one of the best gifts we can leave to our children.

“For the past twenty-seven years we have taken our grandkids (without their parents) to a week-long vacation which we call ‘Cousin’s Camp’. We started out with two campers and toddlers so it was cartoons, popcorn, petting zoos, etc. As the number of kids and campers increased we instituted a rule that a camper must be potty trained and didn’t need to take a nap. When the oldest were ten to twelve, we decided we needed to upgrade the program. We were at Incline Village at the time and I took eight kids to Edgewood Golf Club and hired the pro to provide a group lesson. Then I hired the junior pro to go with us as we played the course to provide tips, teach course etiquette and the rules of golf. The junior pro played with the first foursome and then at the turn joined the other group. Money well spent! Today we have six grandsons whom are avid golfers and play extremely well and regularly.

“I play golf every Thursday at Spring Valley golf course. Also, Marilyn and I are very involved with our church, Menlo Park Presbyterian Church. We go on a European vacation with about fifty of our friends each year. This past May we went on a river cruise on the Danube from Budapest to Linz, Austria, ending in Prague.

“On April 2014 I received the ‘Presidential Award for Lifetime Achievement’ from President Obama for volunteering. I currently have served over 5,400 hours at the Lucille Packard Children’s Hospital. My advice to my fellow members is to ‘KEEP BUSY’.



As Forrest Gump said, “That’s all I have to say about that.”