

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).

## ANDY DANVER

Andy's life experience is representative of the consummate energetic and ambitious "Baby Boomer" generation. He is the 11th generation of independent New Englander ancestors who made major contributions to society including; founding Hartford, CT; appointed Supreme Court Justice; laying the first Atlantic cable; traveling west, George Morrell (distant cousin) was owner/publisher of the Palo Alto Times and also owned the top of Black Mountain. As the family historian, Andy has lots of oral stories, pictures and letters written by many of these people.

Some of Andy Danver's own life experiences include:

1. Fifty-four years ago he set the Darien High School 100- and 220-yard dash records, which still stand today. Unbelievably they were run on cinder tracks, not the faster rubberized tracks used today.
2. As a junior in high school, he helped sail a 72-foot schooner from Bermuda to Rhode Island through the leading edge of a hurricane. "Waves high above our masts kept rolling towards us. The boat would 'pop' to the top of the wave and we could look down the other side into the deep 'valley' before the next wave hit us."



Finish line in the 220-yard dash.

3. In 1982 he was part of a small group of Caucasians from America to ride colorful 10-speed bicycles on local roads along the Yangtze River in eastern China. Every time they stopped they were swarmed by Chinese youth who wanted to touch their colorful bikes and practice English.
4. In 1984 his wife Jean organized a trip to Nepal and spent a month climbing in the beautiful Annapurna Mountains. His highlight was going over the Thorong La Pass at 17,769 feet. They broke camp at 4am in freezing temperatures at about 12,000 feet with headlamps to light the way and reached the top in time for lunch in the clean white snow. After lunch they literally skipped down the other side singing all the way!
5. In 2008, the Los Altos Mountain View PTA Council awarded Andy with the "Volunteer Parent of the Year Award" for over 16 years of volunteering in local schools. Over that

time Andy designed and implemented a computerized system to communicate with parents (still in use today), mentored a robotics team and raised millions of dollars for the local high schools as a 10-year member and officer of the MVLA High School Education Foundation.

Andy was born in the Naval Hospital in Newport, RI where his father taught Seamanship and Navigation at the Naval Officer Training Center at the end of WWII. Earlier in the war his father had been the Executive Officer of a Squadron of PT boats sent from New Orleans to the Aleutian Islands to defend the country from a potential invasion from the north. After the war his family returned to his father's hometown in Darien, CT. Andy remembers "... we were blessed with open fields in which to play sports during the day and hide and seek at night. Across the street was over 60 acres of woodland in which we roamed and built dams, huts and tree houses."

At Darien High School Andy lettered in football, basketball and track and was Co-Captain of the football team. In his junior year he was awarded the "Harvard Book Award" as the most accomplished academic junior male student-athlete. In his senior year he and his future 'best man' were a 2-man team who won the Connecticut High School Track Championship. At the end of the school year he was awarded the trophy as Darien HS's "Most Accomplished Male Athlete".

Andy was recruited to play football and run track by a number of Ivy League schools. He chose Dartmouth because of their athletic program, and closeness to a family summer home in New Hampshire. He lettered in football, track and rugby at Dartmouth and graduated with honors in economics. He was the starting 'Free Safety' on the 1962 undefeated Ivy League Football Champions, which also won the Lambert Trophy as the top team in the East after beating an undefeated Princeton team on TV. Andy arrived at Dartmouth when the school introduced the first on-line campus-wide computer system called the Dartmouth Time Sharing System (DTS). He was an early user. As Andy said, "I have been lucky enough to be involved with leading edge computers and computer networks ever since."

Andy married Jean Mitchell Harrison in 1968 and they have just celebrated their 48<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Jean graduated Magna Cum Laude in mathematics from Tufts in 1967 and from Harvard's Graduate School of Education in 1968. She was a competitive sailor at Tufts on a co-ed team which was nationally ranked. In the 1980s she earned a Masters Degree in Computer Engineering from Stanford. Andy was accepted by the Stanford's Graduate School of Business, Class of 1972 and Jean was hired by Hewlett-Packard's newly formed mini-computer division as one of the first professional women to join the firm.

Andy helped put himself through business school by working for professors and the administration. He wrote computer programs to analyze the performance of stocks for a Nobel Prize winning economics professor and developed a computerized administration system to assign students to classes and maintain class lists including grades. He

graduated in the top 25% of the class (which he knows because he wrote the program which ranked the students).

### The '70s: Kid-Free – Hard Work, Hard Play, and Travel

After graduating from business school, Andy joined Jean at HP as a network product manager and worked to convince customers to share data between computers. Later both he and Jean were early members of the team formed to lead HP into the business-computing marketplace. He marketed the avant-garde concept of “Distributed Computing” working with customers and speaking at conferences (he once co-chaired a computer symposium with Capt. Grace Hopper) about the economics of future computer technology. Jean and Andy’s social and recreational lives embraced friends from the GSB and HP with whom they hiked and skied the Sierras, Rockies and Wasatch mountains and rafted the American, Colorado, Klamath, Rogue, Salmon and Tuolumne Rivers.

### The '80's: Changing Jobs and Evangelizing for Mobile Computing

Andy left HP in 1982 to join a Silicon Valley startup, GRiD Systems, to market the first fully functional laptop, which downloaded software and data from a server, ... the advent of mobile computing. Years ahead of its time, Business Week called it “the Porsche of computers and nearly as expensive.

### The '90's: Settling Down and Family Focused

At age 41 they decided to have kids (Joan – now a 7 year alum of Williams College with a master’s degree in Cell Biology) and a second just a month after the Loma Prieta Earthquake (Jay – an alum of Brown and a computer engineer at Intel). Their focus changed from SELF to FAMILY with vacations to Family Club Med, Hawaii and east to family summer homes on Long Island and in New Hampshire. In the late '90s Andy joined a newly formed corporate organization working for Carly Fiorina to help HP become more customer focused using a new tool called the Internet. He wrote and taught about the new concept “1:1 Relationship Marketing”. (He says, “It is fun to see how all the issues we discussed in the '90s are worse today.”)



*“Nothing like  
a nice brew”*

### The 2000's: Working harder than ever for Free

In the spring of 2000, Carly Fiorina announced HP's first "early retirement" program. After awhile Andy found that, for purely financial reasons, he had to accept it. Since retiring he has acted in many capacities supporting his daughters' nationally ranked soccer team and mentoring and fund raising for Los Altos HS. He also took up golf with SIR at the age of 67.

Andy, an individual with a great love for people and the outdoors, lives by two old Native American Proverbs:

- *We will be known forever by the tracks we leave... and*
- *We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children...*

Meeting Andy with his infectious smile, shock of white hair and friendly demeanor puts one at ease much akin to meeting a teddy bear. At least that is what I think every time I see him. (*Epilogue: Andy sent me this comment after his review of the article; "When I left HP in 1982 my team took me to lunch and gave me a 'teddy bear' as a going away remembrance which they all had signed. They said that it reminded them of me. I guess some things never change."*)