

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).

## DAVID JOSEPH (JOE) ENOS



Joe seems a friendly fellow with a pleasant demeanor when you first spot him from afar. As you introduce yourself and engage in conversation you find that he listens well and when you pause he banters back with his falsetto voice. His disposition is non-threatening and self-assured, and you leave thinking that this is one of those nice guys that could be a friend.

Here is Joe's story.

"In 1997, I went to Russia to watch my youngest daughter compete in the Synchronized Swimming Junior Olympics in Moscow. I didn't know that the protocol in Russia was to reconfirm my return airline reservation three days before departure. The process required the hotel employees to dial and redial the airport until they got through to the airline. When they finally got through, they found out my reservation was cancelled. The only suggestion they offered was to go to the airport and try to fly standby. I did this and at the last minute, barely got on a flight home on the day my visa expired. The Moscow airport was a mess. There were weeds growing on the runways and the airport looked run down. Aeroflot was still run by the government and the Russians were noticeably (by our standards) unfriendly. The USA Junior team (Santa Clara Aquamaids) took 2nd place behind the Russian team. (*Editor's note: The Santa Clara Aquamaids have produced over 60% of all Olympic Synchronized Swimmers representing the United States since the sport became an Olympic event in 1984.*) Since then, both my daughters have competed all over the U.S. and overseas in Germany and France. Swimming was a big part of our family life, at that time.

"I was born in Willows, CA, a small farming community 80 miles north of Sacramento, exactly two years after D-Day. On entering first grade at Willows Elementary, my parents told me that I was registered as David, not Joey as I had been called since day one. It seems my parents always wanted a Joe Enos Jr., but were concerned about the confusion that would cause, so they named me David Joseph Enos. But, by calling me Joey instead of David, they just managed to start my life off confused. It was awkward as half my friends were calling me Dave and the other half Joe. People were always asking me why I had two completely different names. I had to tell them the same story over and over again. Finally, in frustration at the age of six, I just told everyone that my

name was Joe. Things improved after that. My lesson learned was 'Don't give your son two names!'

"I spent my childhood on my dad's Grade-A dairy farm where, among other animals and fowl, we had a herd of Holsteins and some Guernseys. My early years were spent hunting, playing sports and working on the farm. I truly loved the farm, but there were two problems. The first was that I had bad asthma, which limited what I could do around the farm. The second and bigger problem was that my mother was an alcoholic. My mother's alcoholism caused her to behave badly and my parents constantly argued. As a child this home environment affected my behavior, my social life and my schooling. Once I figured out that going to college would get me off the farm and away from my horrible home life, I buckled down and became a straight "A" student. My overall GPA improved enough to get me into college.

"After one year of excellent grades at Chico State University, I declared a double major in Mathematics and Electrical Engineering. Of course, as any mathematician would tell you, there is Math and then there is Math. I liked Math (Calculus, Vector Analysis, Linear Algebra) but then I discovered there was some Math (Numerical Analysis and Advanced Calculus) that was absurdly abstract, which led me to conclude that I was more an applied mathematician than a theoretical mathematician. I did enjoy engineering.

"As with most college students, the freedom from parents was liberating and I thrived as a model student with a good academic record and now a wholesome, fun social life with my Willows roommates. It is wondrous how the human spirit is able to heal itself after such a traumatic start in life. In my junior year, my clique of neighborhood friends left college for various reasons so I decided to join the Phi Kappa Tau fraternity to gain some new friends. Two-thirds of my fraternity brothers were from large cities, and I was 'shell-shocked' trying to get along with them. The big city fraternity brothers were a lot more liberal than my Willows friends. This wild bunch seemed out to do nothing more than have a good time every waking moment. They were potheads and pleasure seekers, behaving like children with immature moral values. There were no engineers or science majors in the group and I did not find many friends among them. Their one redeeming value was they were great party animals! During my pledge semester, my grades went south from the never-ending parties, so I moved out of the fraternity house and my grades soon recovered. The fraternity eventually split in two with a party, drug infested group and a more responsible/conservative group. I, of course, stayed with the small town group. The one big upside with fraternity life was its socials with the sororities. I always went to the socials and that is where I met my future wife. It was crowded and I spilled beer on her, which started our conversation. I recall that she wrote to her parents telling them she had met a nice guy named David. Then, two weeks later, she wrote that she was dating a guy named Joe (also me). Her parents were concerned that she was playing around and not studying. She was actually a very good student, but the confusion over my names was evident until she explained that David/Joe was the same person. We have been married for some 48 years and we are planning a special event to celebrate our golden anniversary.

"I graduated from Chico State in 1969 with a BA in Mathematics and a BS degree in Electrical Engineering. I chose Electrical Engineering because I was extremely interested in the space program. In 1969, Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon and I was really proud of my chosen profession. After graduation, I took a job at McClellan Air Force Base and traveled to many Distant Early Warning (DEW) sites in Canada. *(Editor's note: DEW was a military radar system to detect incoming Soviet bombers during the Cold War and provide early warning of any sea or land invasion).* I was transferred to the Satellite Test Center (STC - also known as the Blue Cube) in Sunnyvale, CA in 1970. That same year, Carol and I were married. *(Editor's note: The Air Force purchased land from Lockheed Corporation in the 1960s and built the Onizuka Air Force Station that housed STC. It served as the command facility for the government satellite constellation (weather, communications, classified, experimental). At that time the Sunnyvale location was a rural area occupied predominantly by orchards.)*

"There were a lot of problems in the U.S. government civil service. Over the next twelve years it seemed I was always on the verge of being laid off. During this time, I went back to school and obtained my Master's degree in Electrical Engineering at Santa Clara University by taking very-early-in-the-morning classes before going to work. Growing weary of the Civil Service, I joined IBM as a Systems Analyst, working on a new project called DSM (Data Systems Modernization). The project had a lot of problems, and after the new equipment and software was installed, I spent many years fixing it. My specialty was command and control software and the communications links to the Remote Tracking Stations. Over the next ten years, the companies changed as the aerospace industry consolidated (IBM, Loral, Lockheed-Martin) but I kept the same job at the Blue Cube.

"In 1998 I left the development world and went to work for Scitor Corporation as a System Engineering/Tech Advisor (SETA contractor) to the Air Force. *(Editor's note: The federal government employed SETA contractors to augment their civil service employees to monitor their technical contracts.)* I worked on highly classified satellite programs and supported satellite operations and launches. As a SETA contractor, those defense contractors didn't always appreciate me! (Regular ribbing from members like Ron Nakamoto.) When the Air Force decided to move out of Onizuka my time at the Blue Cube was over. I had spent 37 years working there. My last job was with Lockheed where I finished my career as a sub-contractor on the Space Based Infra-Red System (SBIRS) contract. *(Editor's note: SBIRS is a military world-wide early warning missile detection system for defense against countries like North Korea.)*

"On the home front, Carol and I raised two daughters in San Jose. Our daughters are now professional women with families of their own. One of my daughters is an acute pediatrics RN at the UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento. She received her nursing degree from the University of Pennsylvania. My other daughter went to Stanford University and majored in Sociology. I tried to convince her to major in some other field but I was wrong. She is now a Human Resources Director at a large law firm in Palo

Alto and is doing great. Carol and I have four delightful grandchildren. In 2006, Carol and I moved to Half Moon Bay to be closer to our daughter's family and the ocean.



Joe at the finish line

I retired in 2010, which gave me the time to indulge in my hobbies – running, gardening, growing orchids, golf and bowling. Last year, I won the Big Bunny Fun Run in my age group (A 5K run sponsored by the Cupertino City Recreation Department.) My pace was 9.0 minutes per mile.

I've always enjoyed gardening and have an interest in exotic and rare plants. I grow about 100 orchids in my greenhouse. One of my most exotic plants is the *Deppea Splendens* (Golden Fushia). It is one of the rarest plants in the world. You can view one at the San Francisco Botanical Gardens.



“I joined SIR Branch 35 in 2012. I really enjoy the SIR gang. SIR has provided me with excellent opportunities to meet new people and stay active. I found out that Darryl Walker (the February Member Profile) was living in Redwood City and we started commuting to golf tournaments together. Now we even get together for non-SIR golf, movies that my wife won't go to, and bowling. Joining SIR has helped me transition from a working life to retirement. If asked, I would strongly encourage SIR members to take advantage of the many activities our branch has to offer.”