

Bio for Karen L. Foley

August, 2009

I was born in a small town in Utah. When I was eight years old, my father accepted a job in San Francisco, where I lived until I married in 1958.

Ed Foley and I were married on March 15, 1958, while Ed was serving in the U.S. Navy. We left shortly after for Boston, where he was stationed. Within four months, I was pregnant with our first child. We later had two other children. When Ed was released from the service, we moved to Oregon, where Ed enrolled at Oregon State University. At that time, it was very, very difficult for us to find work and found after the first year, it was necessary to move back to San Francisco, where we both were able to find jobs.

I went to work in the evenings at the old Crocker bank so Ed could go to school during the day. He was then home during the evening to watch the children. After being with Crocker Bank for two years, I was offered any opportunity to move to San Jose. We moved in 1961. Ed was working in San Francisco and commuted by train from San Jose. He also continued his schooling with evening classes. I continued to work at Crocker Bank becoming the first women at the bank and possibly in the state to become a computer operator. When the bank closed their processing operations in San Jose and moved it back to San Francisco, we decided to stay in San Jose, where we lived for 33 years. I wanted to stay with the bank however, women were not allowed to become Operations Managers, so I quit and went to work for Fairchild Semiconductor as their first computer operator. I later was chosen to enter a special training program to become a computer programmer. I left Fairchild after five years after having our third child.

After staying home for a year, I found it necessary to go back to work. I applied at IBM and Hewlett-Packard Company. IBM refused to hire a woman as a computer operator. HP offered me a different type of job and I took it. I spent 28 years with HP. This was one of the greatest places I have ever worked. I worked in the Employment office for three years and then worked in a new department, which turned out to be the start of the Semiconductor Industry. I continued with this department for 25 years. During that time period, I work my way up to Marketing Communications Manager for the division. I continued in that position for ten years. In 1998, my job was eliminated and I was offered a very generous buy-out package. I had the opportunity of continuing at HP in another division but decided to retire.

Ed and I had been looking for quite awhile for the right place to retire. We finally found Sun City Roseville and decided that was the place to be; however, they sold out before we could retire. We then found Sun City Lincoln Hills. In January 1999, I retired from HP. On February 17 (a day after my 60th birthday) we bought our house in Lincoln Hills. And, then on September 25 (Ed's 61st birthday), we took possession of our house here in Lincoln Hills. We have always been grateful to find Lincoln Hills as we just love it here.

During the ten years we have lived here, I started the first Shared Interest Group to be formed, The Travel Group, which is now the largest and one of the most successful groups here. In 2001, The Association tried to put together an event to showcase all the groups and clubs. It did not go well, so I asked if I could put together and chair what is now called the Groups Expo. It is now also being done to showcase the Service and Support Groups as well as charitable organizations. This has become a very successful yearly event. When the Association Board of Directors decided to form a committee called the Chartered Groups and Community Organizations committee, I applied to be a member. I was elected chair and was in that position for four years. Sometime in 2000/2001 I was asked to help form a non-profit organization to raise money for senior citizens. Having absolutely no experience in this area, I jumped in feet first. With a lot of help from a great group of people, The Lincoln Hills Foundation was formed and continues to be very successful. I served as Treasurer for a year and as President for four years. I remain a director of this organization and continue to chair several of the fundraising projects.