

Earl Howe
(AKA - *The Car Guy*)

Becomer's Mystery Person of the week - October 29, 2006

Born in 1935 in a small farm house in Brownfield Texas and relocated to Central California with my parents in 1936.

I grew up on my Father's farm in the Kingsburg area and later we purchased another farm in the Clovis/Fresno area where I graduated from Clovis High in 1953.

My first loves were music and sports. My mother played the piano. Father played the fiddle and guitar, I played the guitar, piano & mandolin and with other friends from Texas, we made great music together.

Played clarinet and bass sax in the high school dance band and marching band. I was chosen to represent my school at the Teacher's Institute in Fresno County where I won second chair clarinetist of all the Fresno County schools.

Living on a farm gave me the opportunity to learn how to drive machinery at a very early age and I found my love affair for music slipping as I became obsessed with cars.

Proud owner of his first car at age 13-1/2 and legally obtained my first driver's license at age 14. As you can guess, my popularity soared. It was much safer in those years and hot rods were my specialty. Owned six cars while in high school and all but two of them were racers.

Drove them at the drag races in Fresno at Hammer Field and at one time, had the fastest time in my class for nearly nine months. As of today, I have owned a total of 27 cars, most of them very fast.

Played varsity football, basketball, softball and ran track. During my senior year, four of my buddies and I would meet a small church school group at one of the Fresno playground gyms and we would scrimmage their basketball team.

I also had my own basketball team in the Fresno City League at nights until I was 25 years old.

I also loved to hunt and fish all over the Sierras both with a gun and archery. I raised pheasants and fighting game chickens for a hobby but not to fight. I also raised hogs as a project in the FFA and brought home several blue ribbons from the county fair.

On our farm we grew mostly cotton, grapes and alfalfa. We had a milk cow, four milk goats, and several feeder pigs for home meat. We also tried to keep a calf for butchering. I enjoyed riding my horse. Smoky and had a wonderful time growing up.

I attended a small country church where I sang in the choir and met my first wife.

We were married two weeks after graduating high school and I went to work for her father who was a building contractor and this was my introduction into carpentry and construction trades.

Our first child was born two days before our first anniversary and died five months later.

We were blessed with two more wonderful sons.

Sad to say, we were too young get married and we were divorced after eight years of marriage.

Because of a slow period in construction in 1955, I went to work for Bank of America and was

the vault teller at the Fresno Main Office but left after two years as soon as construction work opened up again.

I have worked on custom homes, tract homes, rough & finish, commercial buildings, restaurants and train stations. I built Carl's Jr. Restaurants for 10 years as construction manager & estimator and was project manager for all types of homes for Mission Viejo Co. and other contractors for several years. My last job was as Project Engineer and Project Manager for Amtrak, building the new Amtrak Locomotive Facility in Los Angeles, a \$23,000,000.00 project. Because of this Joan and I have lifetime passes on Amtrak

While working, I attended numerous classes in Construction Technology, Construction and Business Management, Psychology, Computer Technology and several other miscellaneous classes. My part time education was completed at Fresno Junior College, Golden West College, Orange Coast College, Fullerton Junior College, Coastline Community College, University of California Berkeley and UCI Irvine. I also attended California Contractor's Licensing Service and obtained my Class "A" General Contractor License in 1975.

I met Joan in 1972 and she invited me to her church. After a few months we were married by Dr. Beckering and Garden Grove Community Church also became Earl's church.

In 1974, we started a new Sunday School Class called The Navigators for people in the 30's and 40's. This was before the Becomers class existed. Sadly, the class only lasted a few years because it could not obtain a steady teacher. We still enjoy getting together with some of the old Navigators at times to bring back old memories.

In 1980, we joined the Becomers where we have been ever since. Joan & I have held every position of class officers in the Sunday School Classes. We have always volunteered for the Care Conference, the Robert Schuller Institute, New Hope and other jobs at different times around the church.

Something very important to me is fairness. Three times in my life I have performed a citizen's arrest after chasing down individuals who were breaking the law. Two of these were "hit and runs" where the accident happened in front of me. The third happened when I was at my father's gas station one night. A car with three people drove in and filled up their tank and drove off without paying. I grabbed my brother-in-law's car and chased their car for 45 minutes around the Lomita area before catching them in a dead end street. My brother-in-law had grabbed another kid's car and appeared at my side at the end of the chase. We held them until the police arrived.

I retired in 1998 at age 63 and LOVE RETIREMENT I enjoy having the time to go to the fitness club and doing anything I feel like doing. Like out for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Maybe a classic car show with the guys or visiting some of our Becomers or traveling. We have met many wonderful friends at church. Some people just don't know what they are missing.

Isn't life grand?????