

## **Don Jerome**

### **Becomers Mystery Person of the week - February 18, 2007**

I can trace my ancestry in America as far back as the late 1600's. My grandmother came across the Oregon Trail in a covered wagon. My parents moved from southwest Missouri to California in the 1920's.

I was born June 9, 1933 at the Anaheim Community Health Center, the same place another Becomers member was born within a few days of me.

The other Becomers member and I also attended the same church nursery and Sunday school and were probably dedicated together, although we weren't aware of any of this until we chatted recently at a Becomers meeting.

One night when I was five years old I was hoisted to the roof of our three bedroom ranch home during the Santa Ana River flood. Our house was knocked off of it's foundation and I sailed with my family on top of our house for a few hundred yards down river. We were rescued the next morning by a school district boat that took us back to dry land.

I was an industrious little kid always looking to make a buck. Growing up I raised chickens and sold the eggs, I delivered the old Santa Ana Register newspaper as well as the Fullerton News Tribune, and worked in my father's Santa Ana grocery store, though there was no paycheck associated with that job.

I bought my first piece of Real Estate when I was just 15 years old, a duplex across the street from my family's home, and, due to my age, had to have my parents sign the escrow papers with me.

During high school I worked at a gas station and a sugar factory and spent whatever time was left chasing the girls, so as you can see there wasn't much time to study.

After I graduated high school I attend junior college, then Uncle Sam requested my services in the US Navy. When I got my orders to North Island, I thought I was being shipped overseas to the Pacific. When I asked how I was supposed to get there, the old salty Navy man in old salty navy talk told me that I could swim or float because it was right there in San Diego harbor.

After my experiences in the Navy I went to school to become a mortician. I worked in that field for a few years, but couldn't see myself doing it for my whole life, so I made the transition that many morticians do and became a milkman.

I followed those careers up by working in a chemical plant and owning my own used furniture store, but real estate investing was, and still is, my real career.

I was a real estate broker and had my own real estate office called Allstate Realty.

Once, we had brand new "For Sale" yard signs made and I wanted to see how they looked, so I stuck one in the lawn of our newlywed dream home, and boy, was my new bride mad when, within two hours, someone made us a full-price, all-cash, offer for the house and wanted to move-in immediately. What else could we do except start packing!

We had two perfect children, a boy and a girl. We were involved in their lives: school, scouts, sports, etc... and when they got a little older we took up square dancing and round dancing.

The other two main interests in my life are going to the movies and traveling.

I have been on some amazing adventures to some of the most remote corners of the earth: photo safaris in Africa, Machu Picchu in South America, China, India, but out of the 70 countries I've been to I'd have to say that New Guinea was the most interesting.

My life nowadays consists of morning drives with my wife by all of our rental properties, a walk

with my son, a little work here or there, seeing my five grandchildren, who all live nearby, and looking forward to Sundays when I can be with the Becomers.