

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Rich and Carol Clarke: It Feels Like Home Here!



TGN: Carol, tell us about your background.

Carol: I was born and raised in San Francisco. I graduated from business college there and went to work for an advertising agency in San Francisco. In 1960 I married Rich, and we started our family. We first had twin boys: Daniel who lives in San Jose, and David who is in Oregon. Then we had a daughter, Julie, who lives in Portola Valley. (We now also have 5 grandchildren: Kirsten, Brenna, Bradford, Stefanie, and Evan, ranging from ages 14 to 24.) I returned to school and earned my teaching credentials. I concentrated on early childhood education for pre-schoolers, ages 4 and 5. I have taught in Portola Valley and Redwood schools for 24 years. I continue to substitute teach today. I have worked on developing auditory memory skills for children by presenting stories without books. These are stories created by me using props such as puppets or other toys. The purpose is to develop understanding, listening, and remembering of my students. Sometimes these stories start out with a sad element but everything turns out happy.

TGN: What does your family do when they get together?

Carol: Once a year we have a family vacation, with a trip somewhere. I arrange for a single home somewhere to accommodate all 13 of us (including our children's spouses.) This year we all went to Lake Tahoe. The family likes to have BBQs.

TGN: Rich, it's your turn.

Rich: I was born in Redwood City and then moved to San Francisco. I graduated from USF, after an interruption for working, with a degree in business. My work started during college when I began with Bank of America. I worked in the mail department, and then went into their data processing unit. During this time I spent three years in London and two years in New York City, managing

Information Technology groups. I took an early retirement in 1995, and began my own consulting business doing project work for companies including Schwab, Bank of American, Apple, and small banks. I finally permanently retired in 2001.

TGN: What do you spend time doing during your retirement?

Rich: I enjoy golfing once a week. There is a group of four buddies who have been kicking the ball around at the SkyWest Golf course in Hayward for the last 10 years or so. We don't play in the winter time (too much rain and soggy terrain as well as the winter Holidays). I read spy novels and newspapers, work crossword puzzles, and play party bridge with Carol and friends when I can. I exercise regularly, using the treadmill here and do floor exercises at home. I am also on the board of directors here at Menlo Commons, since just after we moved here in July 2016.

Carol: We also like to travel - we have friends in Germany who recently visited us here, and who we like to visit near Frankfurt. We have also enjoyed Prague, Australia, and Vancouver. I play tennis doubles with two tennis clubs.

TGN: Tell us why you moved to Menlo Commons.

Carol: We were living in a house in San Carlos on top of a hill, and decided we needed to find a place with just one level. We looked for a place and finally found Menlo Commons. When I saw this place, I said "I like it". We went through downsizing to move. We are very happy, it feels like home here. And there are lovely people here.

TGN: Well, thanks for taking the time out of a busy life to share with us today!

Enjoying Our Riverboat Trip: Nashville to Memphis By Jim and Marilyn Palmer



Taking a vacation trip is one thing we enjoy. This October it was a riverboat trip around Tennessee. We flew into Nashville and spent the first couple of nights on land, seeing the birthplace of the Grand Ol' Opry, a country music gem which began on the national radio network from station WSN in Nashville. The Ryman Auditorium in downtown Nashville was the site of the golden years of the Grand Ol' Opry beginning in 1943. The auditorium still regularly hosts country music stars but the Grand Ol' Opry moved to another location in 1973 and is now next to the Gaylord Opryland Resort a few miles from downtown, where we stayed the first two nights. The Ryman Auditorium used to be a church until a steamboat captain named Ryman donated enough money to convert it to a theater venue. Next door to



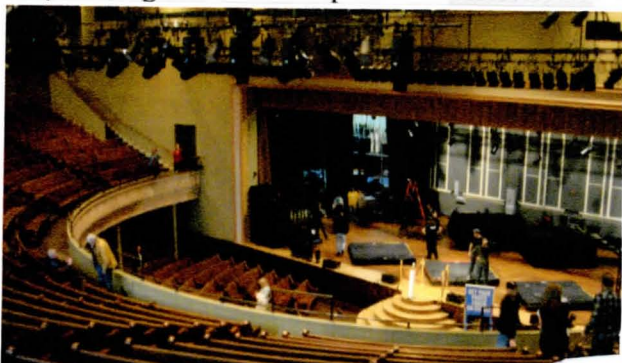
the auditorium is the Country Music Hall of Fame which features the stars of from the early years of country music. We toured downtown Nashville the day before we boarded the paddlewheel *American Queen Steamboat* for our adventure on the river.

On the Cumberland River the boat was docked in nearby Clarksville, TN. We had a room on the forward part of the starboard side of the boat, deck five. The first couple of days were on the Cumberland, and then it was flowed into the Tennessee River, then to the Ohio River a few days later, and finally to the Mississippi. Autumn colored trees lined the banks of the Cumberland and we were able to watch the view from both inside our room and outside on the deck in front of our room. The weather was mostly partly cloudy, with only one of the seven boating days partly rainy. The *American Queen* served us very good food, breakfast and lunch on the "front porch" of deck three, and a great dinner with a fine selection of entrees in the restaurant on the main deck. We had dinner after the entertainment show every night. The show varied from the "Steamboat

Stompers" band, the boat's young singers and dancers in performances of Hits from Broadway, Songs of the 70's, and other shows. Also added were special guest appearances of blues singers and band, from Memphis. Our boat experience was enhanced by the fellow travelers which included alumni groups from several colleges. The largest contingent was from Wisconsin which we enjoyed getting to know the alumni director and her husband, Kate and Justin, who joined us for dinner time several nights.

After Clarksville, stops along the way included Paducah, Kentucky where we visited a railroad museum and quilt shop. Also we stopped at New Madrid, Missouri, site of the strong earthquakes of 1811 and 1812. We wound up at the end of the trip in Memphis, where we visited the Graceland mansion of Elvis Presley and all of his memorabilia, and stayed overnight.

Our vacation was a total of 11 days (including travel time), and when we arrived home we were happy to be back and refreshed from our experiencing both the boat trip and a visit to the South. We recommend it to y'all.



Ryman Auditorium, Nashville, TN, original home of Grand Ol' Opry



Graceland mansion of Elvis Presley, Memphis, TN