

Ed and Jeane James

Recently Marianne and I spent a wonderful evening with Ed and Jeane sharing stories and laughing over many things.

Ed was born in Decatur, Illinois, but graduated from Banning High School in Wilmington, California. He also attended Harbor Community College.

Ed has a love of music. While in high school he played the violin in the band having given up the glockenspiel – it was too heavy to carry in the marching band. His violin lessons were taken from the 3rd chair in the LA Philharmonic Orchestra. When he was 20 years old he joined a barbershop quartet and participated in that for decades. In fact many of you may have seen him in *The Music Man* in the local theaters. His quartet actually sang in three different productions of the wonderful musical.

He was in the navy for 6 years (part in the reserves) and was a radio operator on a submarine.

Jeane was born in Los Angeles at the Women's Hospital. (No men allowed???) She attended different high schools but graduated from El Monte High. While there she was the senior class vice president. She also has a love of music and sang in the acappella and girls choir. She was in the women's version of the barbershop quartet – the Sweet Adelines. In fact her group was the district champions one year. She also sang with the Dreamers.

So guess how Jeane and Ed met – through their connection with the barbershop quartet/Sweet Adelines. They met in 1963 but didn't start dating until 1965 and finally married in 1967. Jeane had 3 children (2 sons and a daughter) from a previous marriage and they added a son to the mixture. They now have 10 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

Ed, until his very recent retirement (June 20), was a representative for 50 years in after market auto parts. That's how he was able to get such super door prizes for the NCRG Roundup that we held a few years back.

For several years Jeane was employed in the Human Resources Dept. of North American Rockwell Corp. This was during the Apollo space missions and during that time she met several of the astronauts. When they moved to Alamo ("the best thing they ever did") she worked at San Ramon High School.

Ed also enjoys woodworking and he showed us some of the things that he has made. They were absolutely beautiful. One interesting object was an all wood briefcase – literally a work of art.

Jeane, as most of you know, is a "master" canner. She loves doing it and the results are fantastic. The bids get pretty high when she brings some of her goodies to the auction.

Ed had a friend in high school who owned a Model A pickup which, according to Ed, they completely ran into the ground. When they moved to Alamo one of his neighbors had a Model A which he helped restore and so he decided he should have one of his own. One of his customers told Ed about a Model A in Chico so he went up to see it. It was a basket case – I know, I saw pictures of a beaming Ed with his "treasure." But Ed decided it was for him, he negotiated a price and bought it. He forgot to tell Jeane about it though. One night, as Jeane is cooking dinner and Ed is leaning against the refrigerator, the phone rings. Jeane answers it and is asked "Mrs. James, when is your husband picking up the "A" he bought from me?" Jeane said she looked at Ed and asked him the same question. They didn't go into detail about the rest of the discussion.

Moving forward 15 years from when the car arrived at their garage, Ed was given an ultimatum. He began the on again, off again task of restoration. This car was literally in pieces. It took a few years, but that rust bucket is now the beautiful *Midnight* – the award winning Tudor. (By the way, *Midnight's* body came from Bob Grady. It's interesting how different parts come from different people for our cars.)

The first night Ed went to a meeting of the Diablo A's he ran into a fellow neighbor he has seen on occasion who was also there for the first time – Steve Mick.

Ed is the Treasurer this year and Jeane is co-refreshment person.

When asked if there is something she would like to have done, the love of music comes through again. Jeane would have liked to have been a singer in a big band and also to have learned to play the piano. Ed would have liked to have been an airline pilot. (He's hoping to hitch a ride with his neighbor who owns a P-51.)

Jeane says the most exciting thing that happened in her life was having children. "I really love my children." For Ed, without hesitating, replied -- "meeting this lady."

We really enjoyed listening to their stories – they're a cute couple. Thanks for a great time Ed and Jeane.

