

Jeff Daggett

Growing up:

I was born in Ionia, Michigan on June 27, 1945 the first of six children. Shortly thereafter, my mother took me to Corvallis, Oregon where my father was being discharged from the army at Camp Adair at the end of WWII. We lived in Corvallis until I was four then moved back to Perry, Iowa where my mother's family was from. My father started a successful construction company and built many homes in Perry until an economic downturn caused his business to fail. We were in Perry until I finished 3rd grade. Dad then went to Greenland to work building the Thule military airbase and repay the creditors from his failed business. During this time we moved from Perry to Carlisle, Iowa where I went to school in a two room school house with an outside bathroom. I was here through the 6th grade when we moved back to Corvallis, Oregon. During this time my mother was diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic and spent much of the rest of her life in and out of mental hospitals. When I was 15 my parents were divorced and we lived with my mother in Iowa until she went back into the hospital. We then moved back to Oregon with our father who had subsequently remarried and became an instant family of 10 – six of us kids and two stepbrothers. This new household situation did not work very well for me and shortly after turning 17; I left home, returned to Iowa and got a job working as a busboy, bellhop and janitor for room and board in an old hotel with the bathroom down the hall. This job enabled me to finish high school and graduate in 1963.

Military:

The day after I turned 18, I had to wait until then as I had no guardian, a friend and I enlisted in the US Marine Corps. I went to boot camp in San Diego and ultimately was stationed in Hawaii with an airborne outfit, ANGLICO, which provided air and naval gunfire support to foreign nationals in joint operations. From Hawaii, I spent two tours in Vietnam as a forward observer. I met my first wife while in Hawaii. The first tour to Vietnam I was assigned to work with the Vietnamese Army in Pleiku and the second tour (which I volunteered for) was with the Korean Marines out of DaNang. To my knowledge this outfit had the highest casualties of any during the Vietnam War. My CO was later awarded a Medal of Honor. I was discharged as a sergeant in 1967 from Treasure Island in San Francisco after serving for a little over four years.

School:

I had received an early discharge from the Marine Corps to go to school and I started college at Oregon Technical Institute in Klamath Falls, Oregon. I went there for one year before transferring to Santa Rosa Community College to complete an AA degree. From Santa Rosa I went to San Jose State University where I graduated with honors and a Bachelors Degree in Civil Engineering in 1972.

Work:

After graduation, I went to work for Southern Pacific Transportation Company in Oakland, California. I began in the engineering office and then transferred to Los Angeles as Roadmaster for the Los Angeles district. The district included Watts, Compton, Hollywood, Santa Monica and Long Beach. The next move with the railroad would have been to Houston but we did not like living in big cities, especially having started a family (a new son and a daughter on the way) so we moved back to Oregon and I started on a Masters degree in mathematics at Southern Oregon College in Ashland. During this time a job came available with a consulting engineering firm in Bend, Oregon. Needing money for a growing family, I took the job in 1975 and stayed there for nine years becoming a Vice President. In 1978, I joined the Bend Rotary Club and have been a member continuously since then in four different clubs. While employed there, I met my second wife, Lorena, my first true love, and we have been married for 30 years this year. In 1980 the company transferred us to Spokane to start a new office which I ran for four years. While in Spokane I learned of an opening with an engineering firm in Bellevue and we relocated there in 1984. In 1988 my partner and I bought the Bellevue and Portland offices of the company and started our own company, WHPacific. In 1991, I enrolled in the Harvard Owners/Presidents Management class and spent parts of three summers in Boston getting a Readers Digest version of an MBA. I was the President or CEO and Chairman until we sold the company in 2000. During the 12 years we operated the company we grew it to over 300 people with nine offices in three northwest states. While active in the business I also was active in the community serving as Chairman of; the Bellevue Chamber, the Seattle/King County EDC, the Eastside King County Cancer drive. Professionally I served as the Chairman for the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC)/Washington. Subsequently I went on to serve as National ACEC Chairman which allowed my wife and me to travel extensively both nationally and internationally. I retired in 2003 from regular work but still serve as a business consultant and on boards. I currently serve on the Edmonds Transportation Committee.

Hobbies:

At various times in my life I have been involved in many activities including: skiing, scuba diving, flying (single engine private pilot), mountain climbing, running, hiking, biking (I biked from Canada to Mexico), and kayaking. I've been kind of a dilettante – lots of interests but not very good at anything. At one time we owned a sea kayaking company on San Juan Island which our daughter ran. We also enjoy reading, theater, golf and gardening.

Family:

We have two grown children, a son who is a dentist in Tucson and daughter who works in accounting in Bend, Oregon. Both kids have given us a grandson and granddaughter so we currently have four grandkids. We have been in Edmonds for five years now and spend our time between Lopez Island, Edmonds, visiting family and other travels.