

### **Gary Jensen**

Gary was born in Gardena, California and was raised by his mother and father along with his younger brother. Sadly, he lost his father in a car accident when he was 12 years old. From this point on Gary's mom raised the two boys on her own while working and owning a variety of businesses. Upon graduation from high school Gary enlisted and served six years in the Army reserve and six months active duty.

In 1963, he married his wonderful wife Linda. Gary was working for Anheuser Busch in beer sales, then in 1966 he was fortunate and given the opportunity by the company to move to Santa Rosa. In February 1967, Gary went to work for RCA Distributing Corporation as a territory manager and sales rep calling on TV and stereo stores covering eight counties from Santa Rosa to the Oregon border. Gary and Linda also started their family in 1967 welcoming their first daughter Karen in June, and then just 12 months later in the following June, they welcomed their second daughter Valerie.

Gary always had a desire to be an entrepreneur and be independent by owning his own business. So in 1977 he used his knowledge of the electronics industry and moved his family to Clearlake where he purchased Lakeside TV & Appliance and later a coin-op laundry. Then in 1984 Gary ventured in a new direction in the electronics industry "rent-to-own" opening his first Home Rental Center store. In 1985, he sold the appliance store to focus on the rent to-own business and its expansion. Next they moved back to Santa Rosa and started opening stores in other cities and counties, eventually growing to a chain of 9 stores. In 1997, a large corporation made them an offer to purchase all the stores and so began their retirement.

In retirement, Gary and Linda ventured to Sun Lakes AZ where they enjoyed 17 years in the desert. But in 2016 Sonoma County drew them back and they moved to Windsor to be closer to their daughters and their families; one living in Windsor and the other in San Jose. Unfortunately, Gary lost his wife Linda in 2020. They were married for 57 years and he continues to miss her very much.

Today, Gary enjoys doing some woodwork, mainly on the wood lathe. He has been very active in the Sirs Organization enjoying every minute of it, and especially the friends made.