

## **Rich Laucks**

I started out as a child in Sault Sainte Marie Michigan, which is located in the Upper Peninsula across the Saint Mary's river from Canada. When I was born, my dad was on Guam in the Pacific in the USMC. With only one trip back to the states during the war to do some to serve as an instructor at camp Lejeune. It was when my mom was able to join him that I was conceived. While he was gone, mom took care of family logistics while dad spent quality time in the Pacific garden spots like Guadalcanal. My dad was a talented, funny guy. For example, while in the Pacific he would write my mother letters with a native woman enter on the back, she started out as an old ugly woman. However, with each letter she got better and better looking until she was a raving beauty. He had the opportunity to stay in the core postwar, but opted to return to our hometown and his old job of working in a bakery.

We were basically a poor family, but I never knew it because I had cloths to wear and we never went hungry. I do recall that we didn't have a car until I was eight years old. After high school I joined the Naval Reserve. It was easy to get in as it was pre-Vietnam and the Navy was glad to sign up a kid who wanted to escape his hometown. No one in my family had ever attended college and I was determined to get a degree, so I slowly worked my way through Michigan State while working nights in a Fisher Body assembly plant. The 60s were a big time in my life as I did get that degree, got married, and then our first child was born. My normal work schedule in the factory was 6 PM until 4:42 AM and after a couple hours sleep, I would head off to class. I am pretty certain that I must've set the all-time Michigan state record for sleeping in class. After many years of this I graduated with a BS in criminal science. I took the graduate business school admissions test, scored well and decided to get an MBA. I got a job at the business school as a graduate assistant and life was good. I could sleep all night in my own bed and I even had a parking spot. My main job was grading undergraduate papers, and it seemed that many of my students knew more than I did.

After finishing at MSU, I was ready to go to work. I received what seemed like a great job offer from JL Hudson Company, Detroit's largest retailer. He wanted me for a new management position to investigate and provide solutions for their inventory shrinkage problems. The job wasn't formalized yet so they said I could work in their security department until it was ready. After several delays over many months, they informed me that they had decided not to add the new position. I ended up with two valuable years of experience in crime prevention. In Detroit's inner city, every day was an adventure. Our security department had an injury list like an NFL team. We prosecuted an average of 300 thefts a month and many of the thieves were quite unfriendly.

It was then time to move on to my next job with Forrest City Enterprises in Cleveland Ohio. I became the Director of loss prevention for the retail division. I really enjoyed my time there and stayed with that company for ten years. While almost everybody's job in a corporation is to create profit, mine was to keep the profit by pursuing wrongdoings, running investigations, and resolving cases. My last career stop was in Green Bay Wisconsin with ShopKo stores Inc. where I spent almost 20 years. I was mainly a management organization guy and my main task was developing a great work staff. During my last several years I switched from loss prevention to store operations. My very last job was as a Regional Vice President. I got the job as the two

employees who had it before me, both had nervous breakdowns. I recall a friend saying “you don’t get a nervous breakdown you just give them”.

Life here is good. My wife, Jennifer and I bought a home in Brooks Creek, an over 55 community, in Windsor. We especially like that it’s a close walk to several businesses. We have two daughters Rebecca in San Diego and Amanda in Seattle, so we’re kind of splitting the difference between the two of them.

I also enjoy sports, although I don’t seem to have the same enthusiasm I had when I lived in Green Bay as a Packer season-ticket holder/stockholder. I’ve always been passionate about the game of golf, and I really loved to play, but with my health issues, it’s been a couple years. I often think that I’m going to get back to it and golf was mainly why I joined SIR’s. I skipped the usual getting to know folks and having coffee and convinced one of my golfing partners Al Materri who was a Windsor SIRs member, to directly sponsor me. Now I do in fact go to coffee and never know, someday I just might play some golf.