



SENIOR SOFTBALL PLAYER PROFILE: BRUCE WATKINS
By Larry Wolfe

Jane...softball...Jane...softball...Jane...softball. When I interviewed Bruce Watkins, those were the answers to many of my questions.

Best life memory? Meeting and marrying Jane. Best sports memory? This year's 70+ Travel Team winning two World Championship Softball Titles. Highlight of your life? Meeting and marrying Jane. Another sports highlight? Playing on the first Sun Lakes team to go to a national tournament and being named a 2nd team All-America player in that tourney.

You get the picture.....but there is more.

Bruce is a native of Portland, Oregon and graduated from U.S. Grant High School where he was a fleet-footed centerfielder for the Generals and a lineman on the football team. Shortly after graduating, he joined the Marines, but was assigned a desk job because of his typing skills. He wasn't crazy about that, so after his two-year assignment, he left the

military and went to Clark College in Vancouver. Bruce said it took him “only” nineteen years to get his degree, because he worked full-time and went to night school. Thanks to Jane’s urging (and pushing?), he did finally get that degree in Social Sciences from Portland State.

Bruce’s entire business career was in the insurance industry, mostly in California. He held many positions, including broker and job superintendent. He was also Chief Client Entertainer and Schmoozer, wooing new clients and pampering existing ones. Golfing, going out to nice dinners, etc. Somebody’s got to do it! Bruce was good enough at it that he was able to take early retirement and concentrate on his two loves: Jane and softball.

After his retirement in 1995, Jane and Bruce began house hunting in Arizona. They saw the Sun Lakes sign on I-10 while driving back to California from Tucson. Bruce saw the old Field of Dreams on Riggs Road, and, as they say, the rest is history! They put a down payment on a Sun Lakes house that very same afternoon.

Since then, Bruce has been an active participant in all things that are Sun Lakes softball. He’s been a member of the 55+, 60+, 65+ and now 70+ Travel Teams; he was the manager of the 65+ team; and, he served on the Board of Directors and was the Association’s Treasurer for six years. While Treasurer, Bruce was instrumental in raising significant funds for the construction of the new Field of Dreams. And today he’s still smashing line drives as a player in the regular Sun Lakes League, as well as playing on the 70+ championship team.

Bruce and Jane both golf and they enjoy returning to the Portland area every summer to visit family and friends. They also have enjoyed a close friendship with Craig McCarty, a former Sun Lakes player, and his wife. They’ve been both business associates and best friends for over 40 years.

Remember when you were a kid and couldn’t wait till Saturday so you could play ball all day long? To Bruce, every day is now a Saturday!