



Meet Verena Florence & Dave Foley

“Good things have come my way.” That really sums up Verena Florence’s outlook on life. She has had many challenges in her life, but always pursues the positive. Some of the good things occurred when she and a friend decided to tour a US Navy ship, the *USS Albany* when they visited Palma, Mallorca, from their native Interlaken, Switzerland. The officer on deck was intrigued by this Swiss girl who was curious about everything on the ship, as Switzerland has no Navy. This gunnery officer, Ken Florence, dated her and a year later married Verena when she came to the United States. Her family thought she “was crazy”, but she proved them wrong. She and Ken were married 35 years and best friends until his death in 2002.

Verena and Ken were both very physically active. They enjoyed biking, running, golf and tennis. They were members of the Road Rats, a running club in Southern California and a San Diego Ski Club.

Ken was a management labor lawyer and mentored Verena in many ways. She attended Berkeley and then UCLA where she got an MS in pharmacology. During that time she developed an autoimmune disease, and it was through Ken’s support, drive and encouragement that she survived. He told her “You can give up or fight” and fight is what she did.

Verena also got into computers when she helped her husband set up business procedures for his practice. Then she began her own business in which she installed computer networks for companies, employing subcontractors for the cabling. She brought in the clients and had the business for ten years.

Eventually she and Ken decided to buy a place in Morro Bay, which they remodeled in 1998. Their “dream house” on the hillside overlooks the bay and ocean. It was with the help of neighbor, Gil Peter, that she rode her first Wildflower in 1994. She transferred over to a road bike after she joined Joan Petersen and a group on a ride to Montana de Oro. She often rides with the Frequent Feeders, Flyers and North County group. She just loves to ride because it “helps me heal.”

Dave Foley has begun to cycle, too. He describes himself as an Army brat and traveled a great deal in his youth as his father was an Army doctor. He spent his last two years of high school in Colorado and decided to stay. So for 25 years he worked with start up companies in Colorado as the CTO (Chief Technology Officer). His last company was bought out by another and relocated to California. He and his family lived in the Bay Area and Irvine. Eventually Dave and his wife, Trudy, also decided to retire and looked from San Diego to Marin County finally settling on Morro Bay. Unfortunately, three years ago his wife passed away. Nowadays, Dave keeps busy traveling, working out and visiting his daughter and his five grandchildren.

Verena and Dave were introduced to each other this year by a mutual friend at the gym who said that they would have a lot in common. And they do. They both love art, traveling, reading and skiing. Dave is planning to spend the winter in Vail this year honing his skiing skills he learned as a child. They both plan to go to Mammoth in February to ski there also.

As you can see their positive attitudes and outlooks are taking them far. Verena and Dave enjoy everything life has to offer them—close friends, vigorous activity and good companionship.

