

## Spotlight on Irene Ashkenas

### Life after Azusa High School

After graduation from high school, I went to the University of California at Santa Barbara. While there, I contracted polio and spent a year and a half bedridden and underwent treatment to learn to walk without assistance.

In 1964, I began a career in banking, working for Home Savings until 1980 when I was hired by HomeFed Bank. While with Home Savings, I went from teller to Operations Officer and was transferred to San Diego to open the first branch here. At HomeFed Bank, I changed direction and became a technical writer implementing their Policy and Procedure manual system.

In 1991, with the demise of the savings and loan institutions, I accepted a contract position at Camp Pendleton and remained there until the end of 1994 when I accepted a 6-month contract as a technical writer at ATT Global Information Systems. That contract lasted for 6 years and a change in ownership from ATT to NCR. In 2000, I was offered a full-time position as a Senior Technical Writer. In 2007, the company was spun off into Teradata Corporation and I remained with them until my retirement this January.

I currently share my home with a 14 ½ year old Shetland Sheepdog named Bailey and a very talkative Macaw named Midori. As many of you know, in 2007, wildfires burned through San Diego County and we spent 13 days evacuated from home. Fortunately, when we returned, there was minimal damage to the home, mostly to the backyard. I have finally completed the replanting and can, once again, enjoy the wonderful San Diego weather!

Over the years, I pursued the creative arts by doing knitting, crocheting, cross-stitch, and needlepoint. For over 20 years, I was a detail artist for both Festival Artists and Fiesta Parade Floats. During that time, I decorated animals on many award winning Tournament of Roses floats. I also began quilting in 2000 and have won awards at various quilt shows and have had my quilts bought internationally.

During the late 1960's, I made several trips to Hawaii and since 2000, I have taken cruises on the Mississippi River (including a stop at Graceland), the Mexican Riviera, the Sea of Cortez, and Alaska. This October, I am planning a tour of Bali to celebrate this latest phase of my life's adventure.



*Irene in Baja*



*Irene in Puerto Vallarta*