

Otto Burgess

Otto Burgess was born in 1958 just around the corner from, and seventeen years later than, another Hall of Famer, David Griesmeyer. What is now known as the U.D. ghetto was Otto's home for the first nine years of his life until his family moved to Northridge in 1968. Otto was (and still is) a curious, active, and sociable fellow. At NHS Otto played tennis and chess, was a member of Key Club, Science Club, National Honor Society, and "As Schools Match Wits" team, worked at the radio station, and was a set builder for theater.

After graduating from NHS in 1978, Otto continued his education at Bluffton College. He continued some of his extra-curricular activities as a member of the tennis team, the academic team, and the radio staff. He also was a member of the Peace Club, the International Student Club, the yearbook staff, and played some football. He graduated with a B. A. in Mathematics in 1982. Returning to Northridge, Otto worked as a free-lance photographer and at Schwabe Studio before earning an M. S. in Applied Statistics at WSU in 1985.

Otto began working for Mead Data Central in 1985 as a data analyst until 1994, when it became Lexis Nexis and he became a z/OS capacity and performance engineer until 2008. He currently works in Washington, D. C., for a government contractor, Compuware Corp., as a z/OS system consultant.

Otto was a member of the American Statistical Association (1983-86), the Kiwanis Club of Northridge (1986-2008), and the Tripoli Rocketry Association (since 1987). As a Kiwanian, he was quite active, serving several terms as president. As a photographer, Otto volunteered his expertise at many Kiwanis events and for various charities, including the Hall of Fame, until he left for D. C. He is currently a member of the Northern Virginia Photographic Society.

Over the years, Otto has been active in tennis, golf, football, volleyball, and softball, and is active in several Meetup.com groups with an emphasis on adventure—walking, hiking, white water rafting. He is an avid movie-goer, and is a member of the DC Sunday Night Film Club.

"I was raised in a loving blue collar family with little emphasis on education. I somehow became the first in my family to complete high school, let alone college and graduate school. Looking back, I know that family, caring teachers, and great friends make all the difference in the world. I am very thankful that I had the Northridge High School and the Bluffton College experiences."

Four tidbits of advice from Otto: "First, be forever curious. It started for me with a visit to the Natural History Museum. Second, be there. Interact. Nothing happens if you don't show up. Third, be humble. Fourth, do the right thing, especially when it seems to be the hardest thing to do."