

## *Marie Vallejo—From Intel to Author*

This month's subject is Marie Vallejo who retired from Santa Clara in 2004. At Intel, she began as a Customer Sales Associate with Sales & Marketing (no sales office then) and continued on to IT doing billbacks and data security. Next was Internal Audit as an auditor, Planning & Logistics as a business analyst, Intel Online Services as a security administrator, and back to Sales & Marketing with the Intel Inside Program as a Finance project manager. When reflecting back on her Intel experience, Marie misses the camaraderie and having goals. She liked the structure to be creative - as she puts it "organized chaos in all the projects and meetings!"



*Marie (second from right) with half-sister, Isabel, half-brother, Tony Jr. and brother John.*

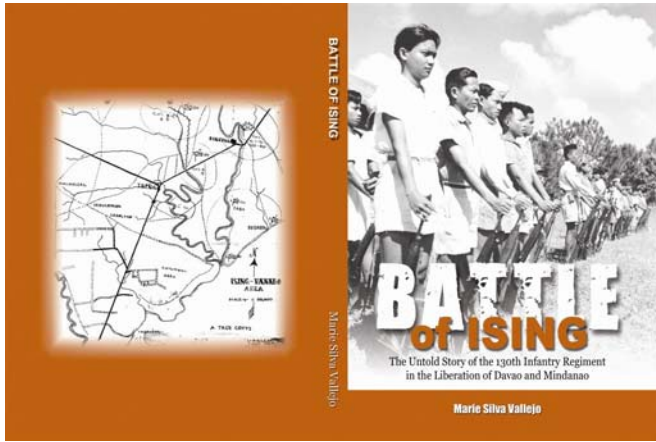
Her plan was to retire in Hawaii and she did live there for two years after retiring from Intel. Her husband's work, managing the Manila branch of a travel company located in San Jose, kept him away most of the time so they decided to continue the trek across the Pacific Ocean to settle in Manila. They travel a lot more now, visiting their daughters and grandkids in San Jose and to other countries, particularly other Asian countries of Hong Kong, Singapore, Macau, China and India since they are closer to those areas.

A travel highlight was flying to Chile and taking a cruise ship around the Cape of Good Hope, stopping at the closest town to the South Pole ("End of the World"), before arriving in Buenos Aires. After ten days in Buenos Aires (the Paris of South America), they wondered why it had taken so long to visit it! She indicated she could live there! "The sultry tango, steak you can cut with a fork, Malbec red wine and a city on the UNESCO list with the most trees and one of the easiest to walk around in." She heartily recommends this vacation route to other retirees with a desire for adventure!

Two fateful events led her to what she is involved in now. In her own words...

"Since I was nine years old I knew from being nosy one boring afternoon, that I had an older half-sister who was born in Australia. I kept it to myself and promised that "when I grow up" I will find her someday. When the Internet came up around 1990, I continuously searched for her and my father's name. It was many years before that midnight in 2007 when I got a hit on an email thread between a mother and daughter also searching for the same father's name. My half sister's daughter was helping her to find our father. An exchange of emails and photos of our father made her come to Manila from Australia with her two eldest daughters, my half-nieces to meet her new siblings"

"Three months later, a niece from the southern part of the Philippines sent me a pamphlet of a town whose high school students reenacted a WWII guerrilla fight with a Japanese garrison. The people were so proud of their victory in repelling the enemy on their own before the Americans returned. And there was my father's name. He had led the guerrillas to attack the enemy. At this point, I definitely had to know what else this man did. One of the biggest regrets of my life is that I did not ask or listen to him while he was still alive."



“For the past three years, whenever I visited my daughters and grandkids in the US, I would go off for three weeks at a time to the archives of the MacArthur Library in Virginia, the US National Archives in Maryland and the US Army Heritage and Historical Center in Pennsylvania to research my father’s military path, and his unit’s history. The detailed research brought me into the world of the US Army and Philippine WWII history. Source documents on the latter are hardly found in the Philippines making it practically impossible for any Filipino student, researcher, teacher or interested person of WWII history to learn more

about that time in history. With the help of sponsors who are WWII history lovers, I went on to compile and publish a book from the libraries’ source documents on the Battle of Ising, the battle that my father led. A historical exhibit of the battle followed.”

“Now that I have finally almost convinced myself that I can write and not just compile, my current project is to write the story of several of the men in my father’s US Army military unit who had different and interesting assignments during WWII. They were the first to undergo jungle training in US military history. But first I have to go through two 1-ft stacks of documents from my research trips. I realized in the course of uncovering documents that not much has been written about these men who volunteered to go back to the Philippines and fight for their land of birth. A special group of them went behind enemy lines to be the eyes and ears of MacArthur two years before he returned in October 1944.”

In between research projects, Marie teaches customer service skills, business email and English grammar in her husband’s office to all new employees. In return, she gets an airline ticket to interview 90-year old veterans, or to review documents hidden away in some musty closet or archive for the last 65 years.

### ***Marie’s advice for retirees:***

Take a close look at what you enjoy on your own, without your husband or partner. This way, you can keep yourself busy and happy without being dependent on someone else. Be open to new things to do, even if you do not know anything about it. Marie says, “ I did not expect to do and enjoy research and learn about formatting a book, or curating and mounting an exhibit. It was a bit stressful as with all unknowns at first, but I kept an open mind and became excited that I could do the work as I went through the learning process.” Marie can be reached via email at:

[gowhenever@yahoo.com](mailto:gowhenever@yahoo.com).

If you, like Marie, have something interesting to share with other retirees, we would love to hear from you. We have created a [template](#) that will help you with the input for your article. When we receive your input, we will work with you to finalize the article. We look forward to hearing your story!