



Tech Rotarian Starts Late, Finishes at the Top

By Holly Rodriguez
Editor

Eric Sundin says he did everything late in life – he got married late, started his career late, and even later than that, started his own business.

But when it comes to his business savvy and commitment to Rotary, Sundin is right on time – though he admits it is no easy task to make it to an early morning breakfast meeting once a week. He joined Innsbrook Rotary in April 2000, and considers his fellow Rotarians his friends – more so than any other group of people in his life.

"The people in Rotary are like the Army at West Point," the husband and father of two says. "They are good people, hard-working and smart."

Sundin not only associates with people who possess these qualities, he comes from a family of similar stock, and duplicates those qualities in his life as well.

An Army brat, Sundin grew up traveling the globe with his family. He lived in 10 places by the time he graduated high school, and, decided to continue the family tradition when he enrolled at West Point in 1971. After 11 years with the Army, he got a job in Richmond with Control Data, a software company, as a sales representative, selling general application software.

"I decided to do sales because I was older, had no master's degree, was not into management training and had no desire to become a financial guru," he says. "Sales gave me the opportunity to learn about different businesses."

From Control Data he moved on to Wang Laboratories, and worked there for four and a half years as a sales rep. As his time at Wang came to an end, he decided to take the knowledge he'd gained from the industry and pour it into his own operation. He sold property he owned in Kiawah Island in South Carolina, and invested the money into his own company – Internal Computer Services. "When we started, the idea was

that we wanted to work with small businesses because the larger companies almost always have in-house tech staff," he says. These days, with Dell, Gateway, Hewlett Packard and others selling computers directly to the customer, the focus of his business has shifted from hardware to software.

Sundin handles sales and can set up computer systems, but he has network engineers who handle advanced technology concepts, maintenance and troubleshooting. He carries his tech savvy into his role with Rotary by hosting and maintaining the Innsbrook Rotary website.

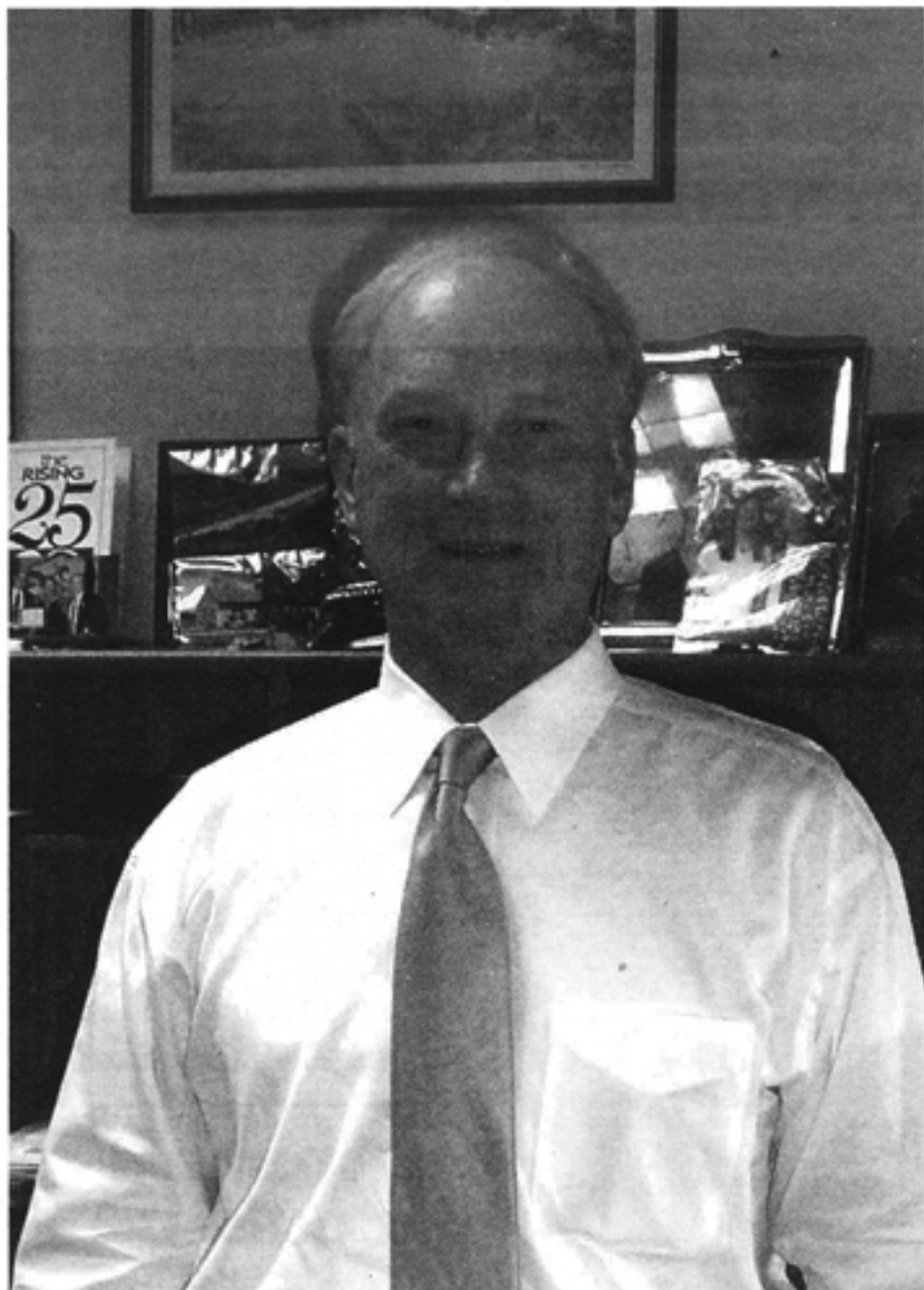
"I'm in the middle of the pack – there are people who spend a tremendous amount of time out there, and I take my hat off to them," he says. "But the website is how I make my contribution."

When Sundin attends the weekly Rotary breakfast meeting, he says he really enjoys himself once he's there. Each meeting has a speaker, and he says the audience learns far more than they can from reading about the individual in the paper. And, there is an opportunity to meet with friends and draw inspiration from them.

"The people in Rotary are multi-taskers," he says. "Half of them are small business owners [and] raising families, and they still make time to donate to the community."

When Sundin is not at a Rotary meeting or managing his business, he spends time with his family. He is currently planning a trip for the foursome to Goppingen, Bavaria, Germany where he met his wife. "My wife was working there for the [U.S.] Department of Defense as an American schoolteacher, and that's how we met – it was the late 1970's," he says.

Winter weekends are spent at Wintergreen to ski, and in the summer, they are off to Nags Head to relax in the sun. The family also visits his mother's home on the beach at Martha's Vineyard, where Sundin says he's seen celebrities such as Mike Wallace, Carly Simon and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.



Eric Sundin, owner of Internal Computer Services, has been an Innsbrook Rotarian for more than five years.

A man who has achieved through hard work and perseverance, Sundin is not one to overly boast about his accomplishments. He only takes credit for some of his success – the rest he credits to fate.

"I'm not a rich guy or anything like that ... just lucky." 