In Memoriam

Frank Reyes (1937–2015)

It is with great sadness and sorrow that we inform you of the passing of our dear friend and colleague, Mr. Frank Reyes. Frank was a long-time supporter of the Instrumentation and Measurement (I&M) Society and selflessly gave his time and expertise by being a wonderful and effective volunteer serving in several capacities. In addition, Frank was also actively involved with the Aerospace and Electronic System (AES) Society, AUTOTESTCON and Systems Council.

Professional Contributions

IEEE I&M Society:
2006–2009 AdCom Member-at-Large
2007–2009 International Instrumentation and Measurement Technology Conference (I2 MTC) Board Member
2007–2008 Vice President for Finance
2009–2015 Treasurer
2012 Recipient of the I&M Society Distinguished Service Award
2006–2011 AUTOTESTCON Board Member (I&M Society Representative)

IEEE AES Society:
2009 Vice President for Finance
2010–2012 Member of Board of Governors
2013–2014 Member of Board of Governors
2011–2013 Secretary
2012–2015 AUTOTESTCON Board Member (AES Society Representative)

IEEE Systems Council:
2014–2015 Systems Council Representative
2014–2015 Systems Council Treasurer

We will miss Frank terribly. Rest in peace my dear friend. —Reza Zoughi I&M Society President

Family Remembrances
Going over Frank’s life is painful, his death was not expected and we still are not ready to let him go. Our hearts are broken and we can barely believe he is gone. But at the same time we truly want to celebrate the man he was and remember how much we all loved and cherished our time together with him. Frank became my step-father when I was 14, some 40 years later I consider him my dad.

Frank and Max were born in El Paso, Texas, on Feb. 10, 1937; they were identical twins. Frank had three brothers Max, Nacho, Robert, and two sisters, Emma and Carmen. He grew up and went to school in El Paso thru high school. Frank and Max attended Catholic school and were honor roll students. They both were active and very competitive in sports; baseball was their favorite, but they enjoyed all sports. Frank was also an altar boy, his life as a youth consisted of family, school, sports and the church. One thing Frank told me about being a twin was that he hated it when people didn’t know who he was and would say “which one are you?” It was a sore spot for Frank in his youth. Although he loved his brother dearly and loved being a twin, he still wanted his own identity.

After Frank graduated from high school he followed his older sister Carmen to California where he attended UCLA:
1961 B.S.E.E. UCLA Major in Electronics
1962–1980 Post-Graduate courses in Engineering, UCLA and UC Irvine
1973 Completed Certificate in computer Science Program at UCI
1981–1987 Courses in Management, UCLA, UCI and Northrop In-house courses
1983 Completed Engineering Management Program at California Institute of Technology

In 1955, Frank joined the National Guard of California as a Reserve of the Army, and served from 1955 to 1964. His qualification was Marksmanship, Sharpshooter and Expert of the M1-17 Rifle. It seemed so unlike him, but he was a man of many talents. From 1961 to 1963 Frank worked for Northrop Electro-Mechanical Division, in Anaheim, CA. From 1963 to 1967, Frank worked at Hughes Aircraft, in Fullerton, CA. That’s where he met my mother Opal Elizabeth. She told me he would walk by her desk everyday trying to get her attention; finally he got up the nerve to ask her to lunch. My mother was a beautiful woman with great legs (one of the things that attracted him to her), and she always wore high-heels. The problem was, in her high heels she was taller than Frank, so she started bringing flat shoes to work with her, to wear to lunch with Frank every day. And so their lives began, they married on August 18, 1967.
When Frank married Opal he acquired her five children, I was the youngest at the time and the only child still living at home. All of my siblings and their spouses adored Frank and he fit into our family perfectly. He became friends and golfing partners with my sister’s husbands. There was not one person in our family who didn’t love Frank, welcome him and embrace him into their lives. We shared all the holidays and family gatherings with games, joking and fun, those are memories we will cherish forever.

In 1968 Frank began working for Northrop Electro-Mechanical Division again. He was proud of his work on the Laser Target Designation System for the F-5, and the SEEHAWK Infrared System for the Coast Guard. From 1983 to 1993, he reached first, second and third level management. He was Responsible manager for development of Electro-Optic Test Console subsystem for the CASS program. Then in 1993, he retired at 56 years old. In July 1969, Opal and Frank welcomed a new baby into the family, Robert Allen Reyes was born and Frank was in his height of glory. He was always meant to be a dad and he was good at it. He took great joy in having a son and enjoyed going to all of his son’s sporting events. I can’t remember Frank ever missing one of Rob’s games; he was always in the stands supporting his son. It was fun times and now looking back at pictures and remembering all the family times together, it seems to have gone too fast. We had a wonderful time together and family meant everything to Frank.

Frank was an incredible dog lover; there was never a time when he didn’t have a dog. After he retired he was given a golden Labrador Retriever for his birthday and he loved that dog. He became active in an informal dog club; it was a group of people in the neighborhood who would meet at the park every day with their dogs. He gained a whole new group of friends, but that was Frank. He was very outgoing and friendly, and made friends where ever he went.

In 1993 when Frank retired, my mother decided she was also ready to retire and pretty much gave up cooking. Frank took over the job and truly embraced it. He told me he wanted to learn how to cook and so the cooking lessons began. He would find a recipe he wanted to try and I would come over and teach him how to follow the recipe and basically cook. It was great times full of good food and lots of laughter. One funny memory I have was he wanted to make a recipe that called for Italian sausage. What he bought was summer sausage that was wrapped in paper, but he didn’t realize it was wrapped in paper because the paper was the same color as the sausage. He chopped up the sausage without taking the paper off and made the recipe with it. It turned out very good except we had to keep picking the paper out of our mouths. It was a great
meal with lots of laughs, we giggled about it for years. I will truly miss his dinners, he was so proud of the cook that he became.

In his retirement, Frank was able to devote time to the Professional Organizations he was interested in. IEEE, I&M Society, Optical Society of America and AUTOTESTCON were the organizations he belonged to. He enjoyed his time with these groups, meeting new friends and traveling made it even more enjoyable. His stories about the different countries and the people in these organizations were things he loved to talk about; it was great times for him.

In my mother’s later years, she became a victim of the horrible disease of Alzheimer’s. Frank was a loyal loving partner and cared for my mother. When she was finally moved into a care facility down the street from their home, he would go see her twice a day, every day. He was amazing, and I am so thankful to him for how he took care of my mom and I will always respect and honor him for that.

Last October 2014 my mother departed this world and entered her eternal life. At that time, we had no idea that 6 short months later Frank would be following her. It still seems so hard to comprehend and yet what choice do we have. We are thankful for the wonderful life we were able to share with Frank and are very thankful that we have such incredible memories of our lives together. It has been a blessing to our family to hear from so very many people, telling us what a wonderful man Frank was, believe me we know, but it’s still so wonderful to hear and be reminded of. He will be missed terribly; he has left an empty spot in our lives that will never be filled. —Brenna Arbello & Family

Professional Colleague Remembrances
I had the distinct privilege of working closely with Frank Reyes over the years on the I&M Society AdCom. He had already served as both the I&M Society Vice President for Finance and the Treasurer, when I was first elected as the new Vice President for Finance in 2011. He served as an invaluable mentor and friend to me as I attempted to understand the complexities of the IEEE budgeting process. I will never forget the very first IEEE Finance Workshop I attended with Frank. We met in the hotel lobby several hours before the program began on the evening of the first day of the workshop. Frank and I sat together with the budget open on each of our laptops, and he kindly and patiently began explaining the process to me by breaking it down into bits and pieces that made sense. When I walked into the actual workshop later that day, I knew I
had been tutored by a master! Over the next three years, he was always available to answer my countless questions and provide both advice and encouragement. He taught me a lot about the Society’s finances and budgeting, and I will always be indebted to him for sharing his vast knowledge with me. But, through working with each other, I also had the pleasure of enjoying meals together and visiting about our lives and families. Frank had the gifts of an inner calmness, quick wit, and gentle smile. It was impossible not to feel good when in his presence. I truly was blessed to have Frank as a colleague and a friend, and I will deeply miss his wonderful spirit.

—Ruth Dyer I&M Society Executive Vice President

I can’t remember when I first met Frank, for the simple reason that Frank was one of those persons that you think have always been there. To me Frank was not only a colleague, a member of the AdCom, the guru of the Society finances, as Vice President for Finances at first, and then as our Treasurer. He was a friend, and friends are always there, a discrete presence that reveals itself with a smile, a joke, or simply the words you need to hear, when you need them.

This was Frank. One of the gentlest persons I’ve ever met. In so many years of work together in the AdCom, I’ve never seen him losing his temper: an example to me I unsuccessfully tried to follow…

Despite his apparently frail look, Frank was also a strong person. Once again an example to all of us in the way he faced the terrible illness that took his beloved wife Opal away, and in the way he faced his own illness. Frank never gave up: this little, gentle man stood in front of life as a giant.

We all miss him. But I know that his discrete presence, his smiles, his gentle words will remain with me. Because a friend is always there, and forever.

—Alessandro Ferrero Editor-in-Chief IEEE Transactions on Instrumentation & Measurement

When you lose a friend it is always very difficult to express in words what you feel. Frank was a very good friend and I will never forget him. I remember the first time we met. It was in October 2005. Both of us had just been elected as new AdCom members and although our terms started in January 2006, we were invited to that meeting to start learning how the society was managed. Frank and I were sitting together and we could not believe what was going on during the meeting. Everything was difficult to understand and we thought that maybe we made a mistake in participating in the AdCom. Then, time showed us that Frank not only learned very quickly
how to manage the society’s finance but also that he became a reference to all of us because of his expertise. I also remember the time we spent together during the after-office hours when we went out to walk and enjoy those short moments in life. One of the funniest moments happened in Pompeii together with Reza, also a good friend. The three of us stepped into a place inside the ruins, which then we learned it should have been closed to tourists. Suddenly, a guardian who was a hundred meters from us, started running and shouting in Italian, which we did not understand, but obviously he was angry. When he reached us, Reza had to apologize for our actions and both Frank and I were hiding behind Reza like two kids. We spent a lot of time with Frank where you could really get to know him as a very good and charming man. I will always miss you, my friend. You left a significant mark in my life.

—Jorge Daher I&M Society Senior Past President

Frank Reyes......what can I say about Frank Reyes? Well, whatever I put on this page will never be enough.

For as long as I have been involved with IEEE, Frank has been there. He has served in so many capacities. Nearly every meeting I worked, Frank was there. The I&M AdCom...Frank was there. The AESS Board of Governors.....Frank was there. Systems Council....Frank was there. The I2 MTC, AUTOTESTCON, year after year.... Frank was there!! Frank was one of my “travel buddies.” We flew together on occasion, always could sit down to dinner together, and would always take time to do a day of touring. My fondest memory was a day in Paris with Frank and Jim and Donna Howard. We walked so much our feet hurt! It was a spectacular day of seeing all the sites in Paris, finding our way together, navigating the metro, laughing so hard at the number of stairs we climbed, worshiping silently in glorious Sacre Coeur....it was truly a magical day. And one evening, he and I had a wonderful dinner with Marina Ruggieri. The three of us talked and laughed and enjoyed wonderful friendship together. There are dozens of stories exactly the same. Frank was always there. Frank was always kind. Frank was always comfortable and easy to be with. I just returned from meetings with the I&M Society and AESS. Frank’s absence was palpable. I miss him very, very much. Yes, of course, Frank will be missed for his contributions to IEEE and all that it entailed. He was an excellent, knowledgeable team member. But, for me.....I will miss Frank, my friend; a dear and wonderful friend.

—Judy Scharmann I&M Society Executive Assistant
Director of Client Services, Conference Catalysts, LLC
I first met Frank in 2011 when I was elected in the Society AdCom. He was a man of extreme kindness and humility, thoughtful and respectful to others, with fair and reserved attitude. I was strongly impressed when he opened his heart to us telling his unbearable sorrow for having loss of his beloved wife, Opal. I think that sharing his sorrow with us was a great gesture of friendship and consideration for us. I will be always grateful to him for that. A short time after his wife’s departure I had the honor to start working more closely with him. I learned so much from Frank, not just on matters related to the finance of the society, but above all as a person. He was always very patient with me, answering exhaustively all my questions. I really appreciated this. Now, that he is no longer with us, I realize how much I’ll miss him. Rest in peace my friend, I will hold your memory in my heart forever.

—Dario Petri I&M Society Vice President for Finance

I started on the AdCom as a graduate student, and Frank had always made me feel welcome. He felt a bit like an AdCom grandfather to me. My favorite memory of Frank takes place in Venice during my first trip to Europe traveling alone. I, along with Frank, Jorge Daher, and Reza Zoughi, had one free day before we all returned home from the Fall AdCom meeting. So, we decided to take the bus to Venice. I was amazed with the city when we got there, so much so that I kept getting sidetracked in all the shops. I would come out, and Frank would be standing there, waiting for me. This went on for a good part of the morning (truthfully, all three of my companions were pretty good sports about it.) Thinking back on that day, I can picture so clearly the three of them, Frank, Reza, and Jorge (who all happen to be fairly short men), standing along the streets of Venice, waiting for me to finish my never-ending shopping spree. It felt like I was visiting Venice with my own set of the Three Amigos. I have thought about this frequently over the last month, and it gives me a smile every time. Frank, thanks so much for all the smiles over the years. You are missed!!.

—Kristen M. Donnell I&M Society AdCom Member

I have known Frank Reyes for almost 30 years, and am the one responsible for getting him involved in IEEE activities, starting with IEEE AUTOTESTCON, and then I&M Society, AES Society, and the Systems Council. Frank worked for Northrop Grumman in Hawthorne, California, and a colleague and I convinced him to be the Registration Chair for IEEE AUTOTESTCON 1991. Frank retired from Northrop Grumman a few years after that and the post-work involvement with IEEE kept him active and busy and he thoroughly enjoyed it. Frank commented often that he met the nicest people in IEEE, but the reality is that we in IEEE found
Frank to be about the nicest, most polite, pleasant, and hard-working individual WE had ever met. Frank was courteous, always complimentary, and became as good a loyal and trusted friend as you could want. Frank was devastated when his wife of over 50 years, Opal, passed away last year and his IEEE involvement kept him going and gave him purpose. Frank was compassionate and friendly and touched the heart and soul of everyone he met. We will miss his ready smile and encouraging ways and the joy he brought into the hearts of so many.

—Robert Rassa IEEE Systems Council President

It was our distinct pleasure to know Frank Reyes for an all too brief time of mutual service to the IEEE I&M Society AdCom. Fortunately, even for the unassuming Frank, it didn't take long to become fast friends. His soft spoken comments to AdCom meetings were always well thought out and timely. Frank was a man of service that inspired us all. His unselfish offering of time and talent was extended to us as if we were family. Just last February, Frank showed me a picture of his beloved late wife and I felt that he was including me in his family. Such a wonderful warm feeling from a wonderful warm man. Shirley spent time with Frank when I was busy with conference meetings and she connected quickly and closely as well. He often accompanied a small group on side tours and was comfortable in Uruguay or Italy. It was like having an older brother along to guide and guard the group. She enjoyed his quick wit and easy friendship. It was obvious to all the Frank enjoyed the company of many. We will certainly miss Frank dearly.

—Max and Shirley Cortner

I&M Society Vice President for Education, I2MTC Board Chair

I met Frank around 2005 at an AdCom meeting in Orlando. We really did not talk to each other at that time. Then, we met again in Sorrento, Italy where the 2006 I2 MTC and the follow-up I&M Society AdCom were being held. Interestingly enough, we both arrived in Naples about the same time and took the same bus to Sorrento, but still really did not know each other. After getting off the bus and while waiting for a taxi I walked up to him and re-introduced myself. We shared a taxi to a beautiful hotel where he and I were given two of the smallest and darkest rooms. We both called our room a “dungeon” and each other “dungeon-mates”! This is when Frank, Jorge and I went to Pompeii, as Jorge explained above. That was a fun day, which we laughed about for many years after.

Over the years Frank and I became closer friends and spent a lot of time together at the AdCom meetings. I always enjoyed his wit and his thoughtful comments. I learned a lot from Frank both
about finances and also about interaction with others. We were in close contact during the last
days of Opal’s life. He was incredibly dedicated to her. At her funeral I saw how much pain her
loss had brought to him. I also called him regularly during the time he was dealing with the
awful cancer in him. Last year, Mary and I invited him to our house after Christmas. He did not
want to be away from home at Christmas time since he wanted to spend time with his family and
prepare Christmas dinner for them. So, afterwards he spent a short few days with us, to get his
mind off of his terrible disease for a while. One morning after breakfast we asked what he
wished to do that day. He said: “It may sound corny, but I would like to visit the Anheuser Busch
Brewery” (in St. Louis, Missouri where we live). He said this was on his “bucket list”! So, we
spent a half-day there and enjoyed the brewery tour, a great lunch and a cold glass of beer. I am
so glad we did that.

People constantly come into and leave one’s life. Frank came into our lives quietly, but made a
wonderful and ever lasting impression. He was a dear friend who touched our souls, and will
always be with us in our hearts. We miss his laughs, thoughtful interjections, his open-mind,
kindness towards the weak and the needy, dedication to all he loved, patience, and love for what
is good and right. We will miss him terribly.

—Reza and Mary Zoughi I&M Society President

This print article includes a photograph.