

Irene Hicks – Bio

When Opportunity Knocks.

Irene Ranner Tietz-Hicks lives her life with one maxim: “When opportunity knocks, answer it.”

A trained accountant in South Africa, Irene specialized in re-organizing failing companies. It wasn't glamorous work, but it was challenging and paid the bills for her and her young daughter.

After one successful reorganization, Irene was asked to take over the reins of a German-based company manufacturing hazardous gas detection instrumentation for the South African mining industry. Ready for a new challenge, she said yes.

Accepting this opportunity changed her life. Instead of reporting to an office each day, she traveled into the mines to understand the requirements of the devices that thousands of miners worldwide relied on daily for their lives.

It wasn't long before this young, female accountant found herself 3 miles down in the earth working side by side with men twice her age. Not only did Irene learn first-hand the strengths and weaknesses of the equipment, but she found a new respect for the miners that worked in these harsh conditions.

For Irene, more importantly, she found the world of manufacturing exciting compared to sitting in an office. She realized she had the skill and determination to turn a business around with more than moving numbers on balance sheets.

After her success with the German company, they asked Irene if she would be willing to head up their US facility. Ready for a new challenge, Irene moved from South Africa to Ann Arbor, Michigan with a very unhappy teenager.

It was during her time in Michigan that she met and married her semi-retired husband Ray Hicks. Ray was a successful entrepreneur and engineer looking for a new project. He became fascinated by the air-quality technology being used in the mines. As the result of their shared interest, Irene and Ray founded CO2Meter.com, an e-commerce company that provides best-in-class solutions for CO2 gas detection in the HVAC, beverage, agriculture, safety and scientific industries.

Today, Irene lives in Florida full-time with Ray. When they are not running their company, they travel the world reviewing new gas-detection technology with occasional side-trips to share their passion for downhill skiing.