

## BIOGRAPHY OF DUANE REGISTER

"I grew up in northern Florida, and later moved to South Georgia, where I learned the true meaning of hard work. If I wanted to get ahead in life, I quickly discerned that no one was going to give me a free ride. In high school, I found a car for \$350.00 that I wanted to purchase, so I found a job, actually having 2 jobs in high school, and finally earned the money for the car. I really learned to appreciate the car since I had earned it by my own toil. During the summers, I picked cotton, harvested tobacco, sweet potatoes, etc., having realized that I would have to make my own way in life. Hard work is a quality that has to be acquired, for one to be proud of a job well done.

During High School, I entered an art contest and submitted some sketches. One day, two people showed up at my home and offered me a scholarship to an Art School up north. In addition, they offered to pay my expenses and give my Mother a monetary gift, but she turned down the offer, stating she did not want me to go so far from home. I still wonder how much different my life would have been if I had taken that art scholarship.

I took Agriculture class in High School, where I learned some basics in Welding. I began working at Greenfield Metal Products in Ellaville, Georgia, after being hired by my father-in-law. During the seven years that I was employed there, I learned about all of the machinery at the factory, especially welding. I found that I was interested in not only Welding, but in all of the machinery. The main welder taught me a lot about the craft, but then he was suddenly killed in an accident. At that time, I became the welder for the company. Later I became employed by Proctor and Gamble Company in South Georgia for 17 years, where I worked my way up through the ranks to become Plant Building Inspector, overseeing the machinery for the company.

After leaving Proctor and Gamble, I became Instructor for South Georgia Technical College (SGTC) in Americus, Georgia, teaching Welding. I had previously attended this college, but never took a Welding class! However, my on the job experience was my best teacher. The program that I taught at SGTC was one of the best in the State of Georgia. My students participated in State competitions each year and won 1<sup>st</sup> place in State for 13 years. One of my female students was the first woman to ever win the State Championship in Welding, where she went on to the National finals and placed very high.

Retiring from SGTC after being an instructor for 17 years, I decided to open my own Welding Shop in Ellaville, Georgia. Working with the public, demonstrating my love for Welding and varied talents and meeting new people has been very rewarding for me. Many requests of unique items to be created have made my life very interesting!"