Biographical Sketch: Mike Tenneson, PhD
Professor of Biology

I grew up in California, mostly in Napa. From an early age I was fascinated with animals. I had as a pet at one time or another every amphibian, reptile, bird, or mammal I could catch. As a youngster I raised and sold lambs through my 4-H club, and played a lot of tennis. I entered college planning to become a dentist. After a couple of years in the biology major, though, I found my real love was field biology.

My wife, Cheryl, is also a biologist, and we were married during the summer between our sophomore and junior years of college. Two summers later, while working for the US Park and Forest Services, respectively, my wife and I converted to Christianity. Our quest for God’s will has pretty much guided our adventures since then......

we helped to pay for college by working in the Summers as US Forest Service firefighters. Cheryl (trombone) and I (clarinet) enjoy playing music, and were in a variety of musical groups throughout HS and college, including the UCLA varsity and marching bands. We currently play regularly in our church orchestra. Our family enjoys camping, snorkeling and SCUBA diving, and my youngest son (Josh) and I especially enjoy dirt biking.
After we completed bachelor’s degrees in biology at UCLA, we earned MS degrees in biology at the University of North Dakota. I studied mink frog communication and my wife studied porcupine winter foraging behavior. We then served nearly three years in the US Peace Corps as science teachers in Samoa. Upon our return to the States, my wife became a stay at home mom, and I completed an MA in missiology/biblical literature at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, and a PhD in Science Education at the University of Missouri, Columbia.

My current research interests are in developing ways to teach critical thinking, especially using the Origins debate. After graduate school and the Peace Corps, I joined the faculty of Evangel University in 1987. I am currently a Professor of Biology at Evangel. Perhaps the most rewarding professional activities I am regularly involved in are co-leading short term medical missions trips overseas (Honduras, Belize, Sri Lanka, and El Salvador) ....

and a marine biology field course involving two-week field trips to the Florida Keys. We have three children, Gabe, Josh, and Anna, a pack of dogs, and a cat. We live in a log home in the woods outside of Buffalo, MO. My brother and his family live in N. California, and my mom lives in N. Idaho. And remember, science is serious business...