Now They Ask Me



By John Joseph Schutz III (Jack)

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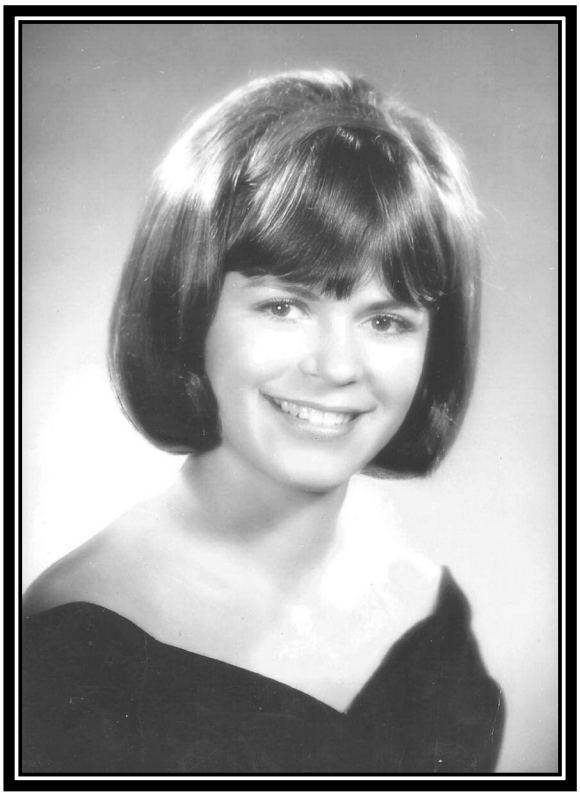
Dedication

This book is dedicated to my best friend and extraordinary wife, Liliane, who has not only been a loving and faithful companion for nearly 50 years, but also a patient and understanding witness to the many years I have pursued my obsession with genealogy. She has accompanied me to hundreds of churches, cemeteries, archives and interviews. She also was the main reason that I have undertaken this book, which is as promised, a continuation of my previous book ***"Who Do I Ask Now?"***

The best decision that we made in our marriage was for Liliane to become a full-time mom. The results of that choice speak for themselves.

I have always been amazed at how tirelessly Liliane toiled to teach our children the principle values that we wanted them to adopt. Raising a child is a lot of hard work. I think that is what makes the overall experience fun and rewarding. I am particularly proud of Liliane for her enthusiastic willingness to take on the most crucial responsibilities in our children's development to adulthood. She made sure that they were safe, comfortable, healthy, educated, disciplined, and respectful; that they learned proper manners and were appreciative of our core values. Those are just the major things. She also made sure they were well fed, clothed and clean. Most importantly, she taught them right from wrong and helped them establish a good moral bearing. I was pretty much in the background as the breadwinner and while I relished the time I spent with the kids, I was a relative slacker in their day-to-day upbringing.

In the age-old argument of "Nature versus Nurture" Liliane and I were both blessed with family genes that provided our children with good innate qualities. On the nurture side, Liliane clearly overshadowed me in her tireless work to provide a proper environment for the development of their characters. I am very grateful that her love of our family inspired her to make the effort essential to produce an outcome that I am extremely proud of.



"Grow old along with me. The best is yet to be – the last of life for which the first was made."

Robert Browning, 1812-1889

"There are three things that last: faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love."

I Corinthians 13:13

"No matter how many love poems I have written to you, I can never adequately express what you mean to me."

Jack, 2013

Prologue

Obsession Progression

Liliane has been patient with my continuing genealogical effort to, as she says, "go all the way back to Adam and Eve." Actually, that is not my goal, but since the publication of "***Who Do I Ask Now?***" I have added over 5000 individuals to the 1500 that I had in my database at that time. It is impossible to go back further than the 17th Century as records, at least for our tree, do not exist. My recent efforts have been to expand the tree horizontally, often to relatives far removed.

In "***Who Do I Ask Now?***" I closed a chapter by stating "This has been a story of the lives and legends of my ancestors through six generations." I also indicated "My intention here is to provide an understanding of the type of life experienced by my parents, yet avoid turning this history into an autobiography. I will save that for another effort." Now, in 2013, it seems fitting that my writing should continue with a chronicle of my own life as I remember it – a memoir. Hopefully our children and grandchildren will value these narratives and share them with future generations. Hence, the story will continue.

In addition to Liliane's urging to keep that promise and write about my life and that of our immediate families, I recently received an unexpected wake-up call from our two youngest grandsons – John Joseph V (Jack) and Lucas John.

Tell Me a Story

While spending the night with them in early January of 2012 while their parents were away with friends on a one-night outing, the boys requested a very specific story for bedtime. I was accustomed to telling them bedtime stories about my childhood, as my father had told me about his early years – but their request this particular night was for me to tell them about "the naughtiest thing I had done as a child!" Bev and Virgil, my siblings, would probably agree that my dilemma would not be an inability to come up with a story to tell them, but to make a choice among many! At this time I won't share what story I conveyed to the boys that evening, but I was surprised that they expressed such an interest in my life. Their request prompted me to get serious about documenting it.

A Promise Kept

A couple of months later I was having difficulty sleeping one night while Liliane and I were in Valencia, Spain. When insomnia occasionally affects me, I try to remember all the strokes I took in a golf game, recall all the stops made on one of our round-the-world trips or other similar mind-benders. This usually puts me to sleep very quickly and is more fun than counting sheep. For some reason on this night, I thought of the book I was being encouraged to write and pledged to myself that I would commence with the effort upon our return home. I was partially finished outlining it in my mind when sleep overcame me. The next morning I told Liliane about my decision to begin writing so that I would, with her as a witness, be formally committed to the project. The relative urgency of this venture became clearer as I have accepted the fact that my time for completing the book might be limited. An appropriate metaphor might be an acknowledgement that I'm playing the last few holes on the back nine and I want to finish before I make that final putt.

So now I begin writing about events that took place slightly before my birth to the present.

The organization of the book will be rather haphazard in that the chapters will present vignettes from many different aspects of my life such as education, humor, employment and entertainment. As such, the stories will continuously move between people, places, times, and events, but not necessarily in chronological order. Sometimes stories may seem out-of-place. For example, I have a chapter on ***Travel***, yet I tell the story of our pre-marriage trip to Europe in the chapter on ***Courtship*** because that trip was so integral and essential to the topic. Occasionally I will repeat some stories that were included in ***Who Do I Ask Now?*** as they are important to complete, to the extent possible, the narrative of a particular chapter. Their omission would deny readers

unfamiliar with, or far removed from the earlier book, a comprehensive recounting of events. Similarly, I have repeated a few narratives in two different chapters because they completely satisfy the theme of both.

I have related events in my life as if they were non-chronological diary entries. Included are several subjects that will, perhaps, be rather uninteresting to anyone who did not grow up in Adrian, or is not a member of our immediate family. Some of these mind-numbing accounts include detailed descriptions of the downtown area, our home and hardware store. Similarly, I have included some subjects that only I have an interest - listing all the cars I have owned, for example. Many of these narratives have been included simply because they were part of a random thought process that challenged my recollection of the past. The reader may choose to merely peruse these probably boring entries, or skip them altogether

Finally, as you will see particularly in the chapter on ***Entertainment***, I have taken the liberty of subtitling some of the chapters with song titles. This choice reflects my nearly lifelong love of musical theatre and songs from the first half of the last century. It made the writing more fun.*

I am very grateful to my parents for their lifetime of loving support, and to Bev and Virgil along with their spouses for the special relationship we have had through the years. I am also indebted to Liliane's parents, who so warmly welcomed me into their family.

I am delighted that similar relationships have developed and advanced between our children, their spouses, our grandchildren and us. I'm particularly pleased when the younger generations exhibit an interest in our family history and that –

"*Now They Ask Me*"**

"No man is rich enough to buy back his past."

Oscar Wilde, 1854-1900

"My father used to say that stories are part of the most precious heritage of mankind."

Tahir Shah, 1966-

"Don't part with your illusions. When they are gone you may still exist, but you have ceased to live."

Mark Twain, 1835-1910

"You live as long as you are remembered."

Russian proverb

** Another thing that made the writing enjoyable was the knowledge that I had an incredibly proficient editor to detect the numerous grammatical and structural errors that I made in the manuscript. My son-in-law Christopher Dehning is by education and profession, an experienced and talented writer. I am grateful to him for guiding me through the many months of this very pleasant undertaking.*

*** Liliane and I are known to our grandchildren as Oma and Opa, the German version of Grandma and Grandpa. We asked them to use those terms because we are proud of our heritage and it eliminates confusion with their other grandparents. Our children addressed Liliane's parents as Oma and Opa.*

The Family Schutz

Three years after their first meeting, John Joseph Schutz II and Ann Dorothy Finke were married on 26 January 1926 at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in Wilmont, Minnesota. Lucille Finke, sister of the bride, was Maid-of-Honor and Isadore Schutz, brother of the groom, was the Best Man.



Mom and Dad
January 26th 1926

They bought a home in Adrian located on Main Avenue in the block just south of the Catholic Church. They lived there for the next thirty-five years and raised three children before retiring to a newly built, single-level home in 1961. Virgil Nicholas was born in 1927, Beverly Jean in 1932 and I, John Joseph III (Jack) in 1939.

Virgil, Bev, and I are appreciative of our parents and the fond memories we have of our childhood while growing up in that first home. We are all now married; Virgil to Mary (Schraad); Bev to Gerald Knips and me, to Liliane (Kauls). Our parents lived to see all of their grandchildren and many of their great-grandchildren.

Mom and dad's leisure time was subject to the demands of their business. The hardware store required long hours and few breaks from the work routine. They worked hard and enjoyed simple pleasures. Fishing, hunting, dancing, and playing cards were the pastimes they enjoyed most. There were many satisfying events along with a few difficult times in their lives.

In my previous book ***Who Do I Ask Now**** I stated that, "My intention here is to provide an understanding of the type of life experienced by my parents, yet avoid turning this history into an autobiography. I will save that for another endeavor." This book will be the culmination of that effort as it will be my memoir.

The following chapters present some random excerpts of my life from my earliest years to the present.



The John Schutz II Family (Circa 1950)

"After a certain age, the more one becomes himself, the more obvious ones family traits become."
Marcel Proust, 1871-1922

"It is not until much later, as the skin sags and the heart weakens, that children understand; their stories, and all their accomplishments, sit atop the stories of their mothers and fathers, stones upon stones, beneath the waters of their lives."
Mitch Albom, 1958-

Each of us is merely a small instrument; all of us, after accomplishing our mission, will disappear."
Mother Teresa, 1910-1997

** **Who do I Ask Now** presented a comprehensive history of my parents and their families. Consequently this chapter is merely an abridged overview of their years together.*

The Family Kauls

In 1911 Liliane's father, Hermann, was born to Teodors Kauls and Sara Neibur in Alexadrovsk (now Zaparozya), Ukraine. He grew up there through his early teens when he witnessed some of the horrors accompanying the Russian Revolution. He related many of those stories to me – but the two that captivated me most profoundly are as follows:

Bolsheviks And A Visitor

During the revolution the communists took control of the area they lived in. They arrested anyone that they thought might be a dissenter. On several occasions Hermann and his brother, Teodors, would climb onto the roof of a temporary jail and observe the torture and killing of prisoners in an outdoor courtyard. They were horrified, but at such a young age, curious as to why this was being done, sometimes to people that they knew.

On another occasion the family heard a heavy rap on their door late one afternoon. When they opened it they saw a military officer with another man. The officer barged in and told them that they would be hosts for the night to the man he had brought with him. There was a lot of military action in the area at that time and the family was trying to keep as low a profile as possible. They knew that they had no choice in the matter and brought the man in for a meal and the best bed in their home. At a later time they saw a photograph in a newspaper of a then well-known figure. It was the man that had stayed in their home -- Joseph Stalin!

First Big Move

In 1924 the family moved to Riga, Latvia, which after World War I was an independent country. It had been the birthplace of Hermann's father Teodors. A few years later Hermann began studies at the University of Riga. He was a member of Lettgallia Fraternity when he graduated as an accountant. He remained in contact with fellow fraternity members until his death.

Edith Krause was born in Riga, Latvia in 1913 to Julius Krause and Olga Bollmann. In her early years her family lived in St. Petersburg, Russia before returning to Riga when she was about five. These moves were to be just the beginning of her travels. As an aside, when Edith was a teenager she visited a palm reader at the Baltic seaside resort area called Jurmala just outside of Riga. The fortune-teller told her that someday she would take a long voyage across the ocean.

On 31, October 1939 Hermann and Edith married in Riga and began raising their family there when WWII, which began only one month before, created a major dilemma for the family.



Herman and Edith –

Early In Their Marriage.

The War Years

1939 was a significant year in this chronicle. I was born in June, WWII began in September and Edith and Hermann were married in October. Also in that year Latvia was forced to grant military bases on its soil to the Soviet Union, and in 1940 the Soviet Red Army moved into Latvia, which was soon incorporated into the Soviet Union. Then German armies marched eastward and the occupation of Latvia was completed on 10 July 1941. Latvia became a part of Nazi Germany's Reichskommissariat Ostland - the Province General of Latvia. Anyone who opposed the German occupation, as well as those who had cooperated with the Soviet Union, were killed or sent to concentration camps. The Kauls family again observed atrocities committed by both sides. On several occasions, confrontations with family members resulted in threats of imprisonment or death.

In mid-July 1944, the Soviet Army once again crossed Latvia's pre-war eastern border, and by October 13 had re-captured Riga. As in 1940, most western governments did not recognize the incorporation of Latvia and the other Baltic States into the Soviet Union. After the war, the United States applied the most persistent pressure on the Soviet Union regarding the Baltic States' wish for independence. Throughout the entire period of occupation, which lasted until 1991, the embassy of independent Latvia continued to function in Washington D.C. Approximately 150,000 Latvians ended up in exile in the West.

Once Germany occupied Latvia in 1941, many German families who had settled in the Baltic country were given the "opportunity" to return to the “fatherland” as displaced persons.

The Big Quandary

The difficulty of choosing between staying in the country they now called home, but which was soon-to-be re-occupied by a regime that they knew was cruel and ruthless versus emigration to an unknown fate as displaced persons in a country ruled by an equally wicked regime was agonizing. They knew, of course, that they were also choosing between unknown winners and losers in this worldwide conflict. This made the decision even more difficult.

The reason that the Hermann Kauls family was given the choice to emigrate to Germany was because Edith's maternal grandmother was German. Therefore, they considered her, and by extension, her whole family -- German.

Second Big Move

Many chose to leave Latvia following Germany’s occupation and were assigned to a displaced persons camp. Many of these camps existed throughout the occupied countries of Western Europe. They were sent to their unknown destinations by train or ship.

Edith's parents, her sister Gretel, her brother-in-law Erich and her sister Irmgaard, were assigned to a portion of a family home in Poznan (at that time *Posen*, the German name for the city), Poland, displacing a Polish family. They felt terrible about this situation but were given no choice. Erich was conscripted into the German army leaving his wife Gretel with a newborn child.

Meanwhile, Hermann, Edith, and their two sons, Guido and Hermann, were sent to a camp in Sontheim, a suburb of Heilbronn, a Germany a city located between Stuttgart and Heidelberg on the Neckar River. They were assigned tiny quarters in a former Jewish hospital located at Umsiederlager 19. Two years later they were provided a small upstairs apartment above a metzgerei (butcher shop) in Neckargartach, another suburb of Heilbronn. Edith and Hermann were somewhat despondent about being separated from their siblings, parents and other family members but they were able to stay in communication through mail correspondence.

Hermann's brother Teodors’ family consisting of his wife Alma, their four sons (Teodors, Ivars, Zigurds, Juris) their sister, Frieda with her two children (Victor, Astrida), their parents, Teodors and Sara, and Alma’s mother left Riga in August of 1944. Teodors and Frieda’s husband, Arvides, were forced to remain in Latvia to help the Germans in the war effort. Teodors joined the family some five weeks later, but Arvides never left Latvia and was never seen by family members again.

A Short Reunion

Teodors family was assigned ship passage from Riga to the German city of Danzig (now Gdansk, Poland). From there they made their way to Heilbronn to join Hermann, Edith and their two children. They stayed with them until crowded conditions and objections from the landlord forced them to move into temporary quarters in a school building refugee center. Eventually they were sent to a camp in Ausig, Czechoslovakia while Hermann and Teodor's parents stayed on with Hermann and Edith in Neckargartach.

Hermann, an accountant by education, was assigned to work in that capacity for Koch & Mayer, a construction company headquartered in Heilbronn. He and his company spent much of the remainder of the war building and repairing German-built landing strips in Germany, and occupied areas of France.

A Birth In Poznan

Edith and Hermann had two sons, Guido and Herman, who were both born in Riga. They were expecting a third child to be born in the winter of 1942. With Hermann's work assignments changing unexpectedly, Edith desperately desired the dependable support of family members at this time, so she sought and received permission to travel to Poznan, Poland to be with her parents and two sisters. Traveling by train via Berlin, Edith, Guido and Herman arrived in Poznan a couple of days before she gave birth to Liliane Marlene, at 3:25 a.m. on 17 February 1942. Edith's parents and sisters welcomed them to their temporary home in apartment 4 of a former single family home located at #58 *Von der Goltz Strasse*. During the war the Germans renamed all streets in occupied countries.



Liliane Marlene

The night Liliane was born, there was heavy bombing by the Allies in Poznan. It was difficult to get to the hospital for the birth, but Edith now had the family help that made it possible. Within three weeks after Edith and Liliane were discharged from the hospital she set out on her return trip to Heilbronn, now with three children in her care. Liliane and I re-created her trip in the 1970s when Poznan and all of Poland were communist. With some difficulty we were able to visit the home where her grandparents and aunts lived at the time of her birth.

Saved By The Bombs

Late in 1944 Hermann was conscripted to join the German army and was ordered to report for duty in the occupied eastern regions of the Third Reich. On December 4th, the night before he was to depart from his family, much of Heilbronn including the train station was totally destroyed by Allied bombing and, since he had no other means of transportation, could not report as ordered. He was told to go back to his company, Koch & Mayer. This bombing probably saved his life, as most conscripts serving on the Eastern front did not return.

Home on the Neckar

The family lived out the rest of the war in Neckargartach where Liliane, although very young, can recall rushing to shelters as Allied bombs rained on nearby Heilbronn. During the war the city was bombed many times by both the British and the Americans. The largest air raid occurred on December 4, 1944, the one which saved Hermann from military service, but there were many previous attacks targeted at Heilbronn that were almost as damaging. These raids continued until the end of the war. In 1944, Heilbronn was attacked to a point where alarms in the city were almost daily occurrences. Altogether, an estimated 7,000 inhabitants lost their lives during the bombing. In addition to the bombing, Liliane also clearly remembers the advancing Allied armies coming through their town near the end of the war.

Heilbronn is the home of Knorr, an internationally known food and beverage brand. It is also well known for its salt mines. Located hundreds of feet below the city, they became a repository for stolen works of art during the war years. After the war, the discovery of the vast holdings in the mines brought an Allied recovery operation to Heilbronn. Officially dubbed the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Section, the elite organization eventually

numbered more than 350 men and women from the armed forces of the United States and a dozen other nations. Its ranks consisted largely of art historians, museum curators, artists, architects and other such specialists. Their primary task after the 1944 allied invasion of France was to protect statues, historic buildings and other important cultural landmarks.

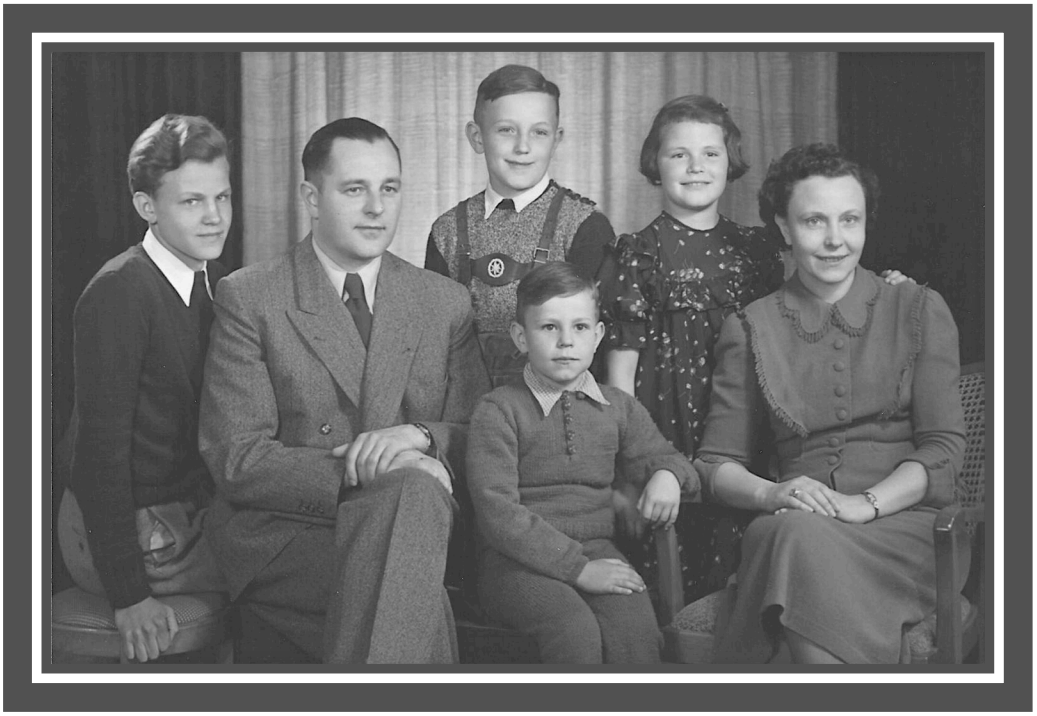
One of the group's first priorities at Heilbronn involved some stained-glass windows from the Strasbourg Cathedral. According to captured documents, authorities in this French city had removed the intricately designed windows, some of them dating from the 13th century, at the war's outbreak and stored them for safekeeping in southern France. Later, the Nazis, who had always maintained that Strasbourg was actually part of Germany, shipped the treasured windows in 73 cases to Heilbronn. When General Eisenhower heard of this, he ordered the return of the windows to the cathedral. They were the first stolen works of art restored to their rightful owners.

Almost Over - Over There

As the war ground to an end in the spring of 1945, Hermann and other members of his construction company had retreated to an area between Ulm and Augsburg in southwestern Germany. The advancing Allied armies were nearby and were attacking small pockets of German resistors in the area. One evening, Hermann was out for a walk on the outskirts of the small Village of Hoselhurst when he saw a group of Allied soldiers approach a farm with the intent of capturing some of the retreating German military. At one point Hermann saw a German soldier come out of a farm building where he was spotted by the allied soldiers. They ordered him to surrender and he raised his hand, which held a smoking pipe. It was construed to be a weapon and he was gunned down and presumably killed. It was 27 April 1945.

When the war ended and Hermann returned home to Heilbronn, one of the first things he learned was that his brother-in-law, Erich Schwechheimer, Gretel's husband, had been killed on 27 April 1945 near the village of Hoselhurst. Further descriptions of his death gleaned from others convinced Hermann that he actually saw the killing of his brother-in-law!

Shortly after the end of the war in Europe, Hermann and Edith completed their family with the birth of a son, Peter, in June of 1945.



The Kauls Family in Germany – Circa 1951

Opportunity Knocks

Hermann continued to work for Koch & Mayer after the war ended. There was plenty of work and the family was confident that their situation would eventually improve in Germany. However in talks with his brother, Teodors, whose family now lived in Wurzburg, they discussed immigrating to the United States.

It was a long, drawn-out process for both families, but Teodors, his wife Alma and six children (Andris and Mara were born after the war ended) were granted permission and emigrated in December of 1949. The Norton Taylor family of Forest Lake, Minnesota was their sponsor.

In May of 1950, Hermann and Teodors' parents immigrated to Kalamazoo, Michigan with their sister Frieda and her two children, Victor and Astrida.

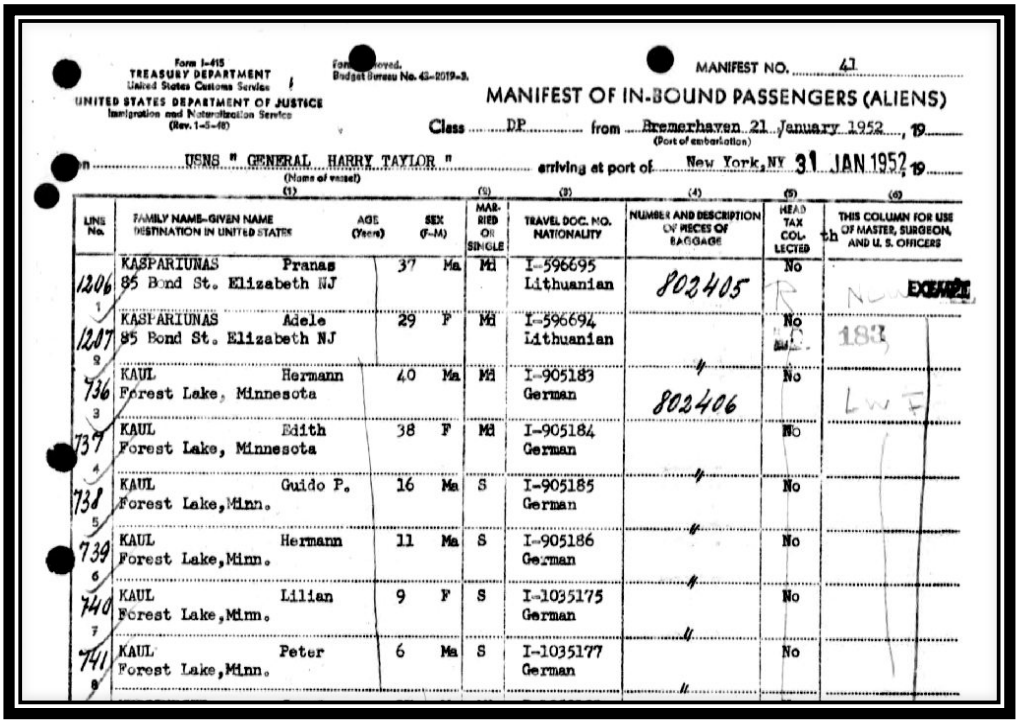
Hearing of the successful settlement of his parents, his two siblings and their families in America, Hermann became totally committed to a plan to emigrate with his family.

The Final Big Move

There was so much distrust of the German bureaucracy that Hermann insisted that no family members speak to anyone about their planned emigration to America. They were rejected on several occasions but Hermann kept exploring every possibility and endeavored to meet every requirement until they finally received all of the necessary authorizations.

Although his employer Koch & Mayer was disappointed to lose Hermann they wished him and his family well and provided them with several wooden crates to hold the few meager possessions they were taking on their voyage to America.

They sailed from the port of Bremerhaven on January 21st, 1952. The journey on the former troop carrier, the USS General Harry Taylor, took 10 days of sailing until it arrived in the port of New York on January 31st. In all, their ship transported nearly 40,000 displaced persons from Germany to the United States after the war.



Form I-415
TREASURY DEPARTMENT
United States Customs Service
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Immigration and Naturalization Service
(Rev. 1-3-52)
Form Approved. Budget Bureau No. 43-R019.3.

MANIFEST NO. 47

MANIFEST OF IN-BOUND PASSENGERS (ALIENS)

Class DP from Bremerhaven 21 January 1952, 19
(Port of embarkation)

USNS " GENERAL HARRY TAYLOR " arriving at port of New York, NY 31 JAN 1952 19
(Name of vessel)

LINE No.	(1) FAMILY NAME—GIVEN NAME DESTINATION IN UNITED STATES	AGE (Years)	SEX (F—M)	(2) MARRIED OR SINGLE	(3) TRAVEL DOC. NO. NATIONALITY	(4) NUMBER AND DESCRIPTION OF PIECES OF BAGGAGE	(5) HEAD TAX COLLECTED	(6) THIS COLUMN FOR USE OF MASTER, SURGEON, AND U. S. OFFICERS
1206 1	KASPARIUNAS Pranas 85 Bond St. Elizabeth NJ	37	Ma	Ml	I-596695 Lithuanian	802405	No	EXEMPT
1207 2	KASPARIUNAS Adele 85 Bond St. Elizabeth NJ	29	F	Ml	I-596694 Lithuanian		No	183
736 3	KAUL Hermann Forest Lake, Minnesota	40	Ma	Ml	I-905183 German	802406	No	LWF
737 4	KAUL Edith Forest Lake, Minnesota	38	F	Ml	I-905184 German		No	
738 5	KAUL Guido P. Forest Lake, Minn.	16	Ma	S	I-905185 German		No	
739 6	KAUL Hermann Forest Lake, Minn.	11	Ma	S	I-905186 German		No	
740 7	KAUL Lilian Forest Lake, Minn.	9	F	S	I-1035175 German		No	
741 8	KAUL Peter Forest Lake, Minn.	6	Ma	S	I-1035177 German		No	

Kauls Family Listing
Manifest – USS General Harry Taylor - January 31st 1952

The journey was difficult. High seas caused sickness in many of the passengers including Liliane's mom. She could not keep food down and ended up losing nearly 25 pounds during the crossing.

The passengers were separated by sex with the exception of small children, who were kept with their mothers. All able-bodied men and boys were required to work during the day on such tasks as scraping paint, washing decks, etc. Hermann worked in the kitchen, primarily as a dishwasher.

This Is America?

When the family arrived in New York they immediately boarded a train that took them to Minneapolis via a Chicago transfer. After their joyful experience of sailing past the Statue of Liberty they were shocked to see the conditions surrounding their port of arrival in Brooklyn. Their expectations of America were quite different from their initial view of the seedier sites that lay before them as they walked off the USS General Harry Taylor.

After arriving at the Milwaukee Road depot in Minneapolis they were picked up by Hermann's brother, Teodors, in his newly-acquired green Studebaker along with the minister from Forest Lake's Faith Lutheran Church who brought another car.

Another Reunion

For two weeks they joined Teodor's family in their small rental home in Forest Lake. The two families constituted 15 members. It was wintertime and the home had an outhouse and very few amenities. Most of the newcomers slept on the floor for two weeks before Hermann was able to find an upstairs rental unit in what had formerly been a single family home in Wyoming, a small town seven miles further north. There were no rental opportunities in Forest Lake itself, which was a disappointment because of the complicated logistics that now confronted them for traveling to and from work or school.

Their new home consisted of four rooms. The kitchen didn't have a sink, so dishes had to be washed in the bathroom. It also didn't have any cabinets so Hermann fashioned some out of the shipping crates in which they had brought their scanty possessions from Germany. Hermann and Edith had their own small bedroom and all four children slept in the only other bedroom.

Assimilation

Hermann and Edith had waved good-bye to their birthplaces in Europe to give their children a new and more promising life in America. They worked hard to help their children assimilate into their new culture. There was no welfare and they refused charity.

Hermann's brother Teodors introduced him to a job opportunity at the King-Koil mattress factory in St. Paul where he worked. Hermann had to abandon any hope of having a professional career although he was college educated. His inability to speak English was a major hindrance for any but blue-collar jobs. He ended up working at King-Koil for many years.

Edith got a job as a maid in a Forest Lake motel. Since they didn't have a car she had to take a bus or finagle rides to and from work as best she could, again without being able to speak but a few words of English. She even hitchhiked on occasion.

The kids all began school immediately. The youngest three, Herm, Peter, and Liliane started in the Wyoming Elementary School. Guido, the eldest, began as a mid-year junior at Forest Lake High School. There were no special language classes. They simply were assigned a grade appropriate for their age and began classes while learning English by immersion. They were able to pick up the language speedily enough to maintain their class positions although, no doubt, they were hampered somewhat by the greater academic burdens inherent in learning with a new language. They also had to adapt to a different culture and learn the history of their new country.

The following summer, the family found a rental home in Forest Lake. It was a huge upgrade from their cramped and rustic upstairs rental in Wyoming. The new home sufficed for about a year, but Hermann wanted his family to own a home, which he saw as part of the American dream. He found one for sale on West Broadway in Forest Lake, which was a main thoroughfare to the downtown area from Highway 8, the primary route to the Twin Cities. They bought the small, two-story home with one upstairs bathroom. The three boys slept in one upstairs bedroom and Edith and Hermann in the other. Liliane slept in a small entryway off the kitchen, which was also used to access the home's back door entrance and the basement.

We Belong!

Within a few years all family members achieved the ultimate and most gratifying goal of their new life in America – Citizenship!

Their life became more routine but still hectic. Hermann was a faithful worker at King-Koil for many years. He was able to buy a car and he drove to work on weekdays to St. Paul on the dangerous Highway 8, well before the construction of Interstate 35. Edith worked several jobs in food service, finally getting a job as a cook in the Forest Lake School District. Eventually, she became the Head Cook for Forest Lake High School. After retirement from King-Koil, Hermann took a job as a janitor at a local supermarket for several years.

Parting Ways

All of the Kauls children became graduates of Forest Lake High School and then set about to seek careers and begin families of their own. Two of Liliane's brothers, Herm and Peter, served in Vietnam and Guido had a long career as a high school German teacher and soccer coach.

Liliane graduated from high school in 1960 and then enrolled at the University of Minnesota the following fall. While attending college she worked as a waitress at the Campus Club, which is a membership organization for University faculty and staff, located in Coffman Memorial Union. She also worked at Ruth's Dress Shop in downtown Minneapolis. She lived in boarding houses on campus and, when not working, she would spend weekends with her parents in Forest Lake. It was through three male friends and eventual housemates living in a boarding house adjacent to hers, that I was introduced to her.

After two years of college, still undecided about a major and just scraping by financially, she decided to become an airline stewardess for Northwest Airlines. Her interest in returning to Europe to visit relatives was one of the motivations for choosing this career. She was happy to have a job that, at the time, was respected, well paid, and allowed her to travel inexpensively.



Singin 'In The Rain

As an aside, Liliane was asked to pose for the 1962 Spring Fashion Issue of the ***Ivory Tower***, a supplement to the ***Minnesota Daily***. She was featured in several photo layouts that are now quite faded, but here is one of them. She was so beautiful and, in my opinion, still is.

In the Chapter on ***Courtship***, I explain the circumstances of our meeting and our on-off relationship through the early sixties when we both were in transitional points in our lives. Fortunately, our temporary parting did not hinder our eventual reunion into what has resulted in a very long, gratifying, and happy marriage.

My Second Family

I was welcomed into Liliane's immediate family and thought of her mom and dad as my second parents. We have also become good friends with her cousins, particularly Ivars and his wife Gloria. Our lives have been so intertwined socially and through mutual travels that their kids call us Uncle Jack and Aunt Liliane, and likewise, ours call them Uncle Ivars and Aunt Gloria. I consider Ivars my best friend – after Liliane of course.

A poem by Emma Lazarus is graven on a tablet
within the pedestal on which the Statue of Liberty stands.

The New Colossus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"



The Early Years - Adrian

In the Beginning

I was born on 24 June 1939, a Saturday; at 5 p.m. in the Adrian hospital, which was a large, converted home. There was never a question as to what I would be named. I would become the third in our family line to inherit the name John Joseph Schutz. In addition to honoring this tradition, I was born on the feast day of Saint John the Baptist, which, I'm told, made the name mandatory in the eyes of my godmother, Clara Hennekes. I would not retain the formality of this name except in school where the nuns insisted on using baptismal names rather than nicknames. Outside of school I was known as Jackie, which helped distinguish me from my father who was referred to alternatively as John, Johnny, J.J. or Jack. In high school, I decided that Jackie was too infantile and asked my friends to call me Jack. Surprisingly, they complied. Some of my relatives, namely all of my aunts, continued to call me Jackie until their deaths. I never objected as they meant the moniker to be endearing.



Little Did I Know

Fortunately, I was too young to remember much about World War II. But among my elders it was a time of sacrifice and anguish. The war began just three months after my birth. I do remember some air raid drills late in the war that required us to darken our homes following a siren alert. Even in rural small-town America people were totally committed and supportive of the war effort against the despotic regimes of Hitler and Tojo.

My most traumatic memory was that of seeing my brother leave to join the Navy. Although the war was seemingly winding down with the defeat of Nazism in Europe mom was terribly despondent about Virgil's entrance into this conflict, which had already taken the lives of several Adrian men. Victory in the Pacific theater was far from assured.

Rationing of many consumer goods took place during the war. Tires, cars, bicycles, gasoline, fuel oil, kerosene, stoves, rubber footwear, shoes, sugar, coffee, meats, canned fish, butter and cheese were among the many products that could not be purchased without the proper ration coupons which were distributed to each member of a family. I recall gasoline ration stickers that were placed on the car windshield indicating the category of rationing. An "A" sticker had the lowest priority, which would allow the vehicle only 3 to 4 gallons per week.

There was much relief and celebration when the war finally ended in mid-August of 1945 with the defeat of Japan. The collective angst of the nation was now over, and we looked forward to the return of our wartime heroes and the beginning of a new life of post-war prosperity.

Happy Days Are Here Again

Growing up in Adrian was sooo great! When I was six the war was over, my brother returned home, rationing ended and American industry turned from the war effort to a domestic rebirth. Pent-up consumer demand fueled exceptionally strong economic growth in the post war period. The automobile industry successfully converted back to producing cars instead of the instruments of war, and new industries such as aviation and electronics grew by leaps and bounds. A housing boom, stimulated in part by easily affordable mortgages for returning members of the military, added to the expansion.

The Main Drag

When I had reached the appropriate age, and achieved, presumably, enough maturity to wander about on my own it opened up a whole new world. My friends and I played whatever sports we could on an informal basis.

When we didn't have enough kids for teams, we just made up "stuff" to do. I can't imagine a better place to grow up as a boy. *It was the best of times. This is what I remember. This is what I will always treasure.*

First I'll attempt to provide a picture of what Adrian was like when I was a boy. The downtown area consisted primarily of a two-block-long section of retail stores, restaurants, bars and a theater. I may be mistaken about some of this business inventory but I'll present what I recall to be the layout of the downtown area.

Starting at the north end of the two-block section on the west side of Main Avenue were the following businesses in order from north to south: A chicken wholesaler/wool buyer, a bar, a dry cleaner, a grocery store, an electronics repair and sales shop, the ***Nobles County Review*** newspaper, a barber shop, a pool hall, a drug store, a ladies fashion shop, a dime store, and the Adrian State Bank with the telephone company switchboards located in back of the building.

The next block started with Schutz Hardware, a theater (later a men's clothing store), a grocery store, a bakery, Mrs. Viessman's cafe, a bar, a hardware store, a grocery store, a furniture/funeral services building and a department store. Directly across from the department store on the east side of Main Avenue from south to north was a Ford dealership, a shoe repair shop, a jewelry store, a barber shop, a library, a cafe, a meat market, a bowling alley and a hardware store. The next block started with the famed Slade Hotel, which housed an accountant and a barbershop in the lower level. The hotel, on the National Register of Historic Places, had been converted to apartments and my Uncle Nick lived there for a while. The back of the hotel contained the doctor's offices and a dentist office while the post office (there were no in-town deliveries) was on the main level in the southwest corner. Next to the hotel was a billboard honoring war veterans from Adrian, a cafe, an auto dealership and a gas station.

Scattered north of this concentration of businesses were three lumberyards, the railroad depot, the municipal power plant, a block factory, a cooperative creamery, a highway department building, feed stores, a motel, a restaurant, gas stations, an auto dealership, an auto repair shop, a hatchery, a produce company, a plastics manufacturing company, a drive-in restaurant, a grain elevator and the municipal ball park.

Similarly at the south end of this concentrated business district we had a feed store, an animal rendering business, a fire station, a blacksmith, an upholstery store, a dentist office, a trucking company, a veterinarian, and two beauty salons.

Scattered about the streets behind Main Avenue were implement dealers, construction companies, an auto body shop, a creamery, and a few in-home businesses such as accountants and tax analysts. Also sprinkled about town were the schools, churches, the hospital, city park and, I can't forget, the town dump, which along with the water tower, were located high on a hill in the far west part of town. There was no swimming pool, campground or golf course, all of which came later. The two cemeteries were one mile east of town.

The Store

Schutz Hardware was integral to our family life. Dad started it in 1924 in what was, when I was a boy, the town bakery. In addition to hardware, he also sold farm machinery until the depression when it became too risky and difficult to profit from that part of the business. In the early 1930s he and his two brothers, Nick and Henry, bought the two-story former department store known as the Adolph M. Becker General Store & Grocery building, which was built in 1891. At that time it was the largest establishment in Nobles County. It was located at the busiest intersection of the downtown Adrian business district.



1910 Photo of the A.M. Becker building on left Building later became Schutz Hardware.

The majority of the upstairs was eventually converted into a ballroom and leading bands of the day – including Lawrence Welk – headlined there. In its department store days, the building included a pneumatic tube system for internally transporting documents and a spiral staircase. During my teen years the ballroom was used for a while as a roller skating venue. For many years a smaller portion of the upper level was used as the headquarters for the local chapter of the Knights of Columbus. The upstairs area was accessed by a separate Main Avenue stairway entrance or by a basement-to-upper-floor rope-and-pulley operated elevator located at the rear northwest corner of the building. A fire escape was located on the back of the building

The King Theatre occupied the street-level, southern part of the building. The rest of the building, including the entire basement, was occupied by dad's new hardware store. The massive building was heated by coal and discarded shipping materials. The coal was delivered via a chute, which had its floor ingress in the entrance area of the theatre.

There were several entrances to the building. Furthest south on Main Street was the entrance to the upper level ballroom. Next to it was the entrance to the theatre. The northeast corner of the building had a diagonal entrance to Schutz Hardware with display windows on either side. Near the rear on the north side of the building was another entrance to the "back room" of the hardware store. Finally, there was a ramped entrance at the back (west) side of the store that led to the basement. One of the store's pickup trucks was driven down the ramp each evening for storage.

In the 1950s Percy King built a new theatre mid-block south of its old location and most of the former theatre space was remodeled into a clothing store. The back (west) part of the former theatre became expansion space for dad's hardware store. The expansion was used for additional storage and for glass cutting. It also provided a delivery entrance on the south side of the building. Eventually, when the clothing store left, the entire street level front portion of the building was converted to hardware merchandizing.

When I was a boy, the store had a hand-stamped tin ceiling and a wooden floor. The front two-thirds of the building featured merchandize and sales counters with side displays extending nearly to the ceiling. At the rear of this section was the office area, which had a low ceiling to accommodate a mezzanine above it, which was an office area for my Uncle Nick's insurance business. Next to the office area was an appliance display area.

A wall separated the merchandize floor from the "back room" with a swinging door, which separated these areas. The "back room" had another mezzanine, which was used for storage and was located nearest the separation wall. There were four shelving/bin aisles under the mezzanine used for storing plumbing and farm machinery parts. The remainder of the "back room" was used for repair work, tin, stovepipe and machinery belt storage, glass cutting, and displays of seasonal merchandize. It also had access to the basement via a stairway and the aforementioned elevator.



Schutz Hardware in 1952

L-R - John Schutz, Phil O'Toole (employee), Virgil Schutz, unknown customer, Clara Hennekes (employee, family friend, and my godmother)

Schutz Hardware was truly an old-fashioned hardware store. Nails came in 100-pound wooden kegs with bowed staves. There were few pre-packaged commodities and you could buy many products in bulk or small quantities. Screws, bolts and nails were sold either by the piece or pound. You could purchase rope, electrical and standard wire, chain, pipe and even garden hose by the foot. We sold a lot of paint. Popular colors were stocked but by adding specific combinations of dyes to a tinting base you could make any color. We sold fishing gear, rifles, shotguns and BB guns along with ammunition. Hunting and fishing licenses were also sold. Paper sacks were used for most purchases, but we had big rolls of brown paper at the ends of sale counters to use for wrapping some purchases. Gift purchases for weddings, birthdays or Christmas were wrapped in appropriate paper along with a ribbon and bow. (Virgil was particularly good at this.) 🙂



Nail Keg

We would fix nearly anything. In the summer we would sharpen the blades on reel or rotary lawn mowers. In the winter we would sharpen skate blades.

In addition to the considerable business we did outside the store installing plumbing, heating and electrical wiring, new innovations brought about a surge in certain installations. Perhaps one of the most important innovations in farm plumbing was the development of roll polyethylene pipe. This product allowed us to bring water from wells to any location on the farm property. It became particularly useful in livestock barns for cleaning and providing drinking water. These installations were very common in the early 1950s and kept us very busy. Trenches dug to depths below the frost line allowed burial of the lines for year-round use.

Another development for farm use was the milking machine. This laborsaving innovation allowed one person to milk many cows simultaneously with the milk conveyed to a central storage tank for pickup by a local creamery. Again, this became a common installation made by store employees.

During the time that I worked in the store we had a number of fairly long-term employees who worked primarily on outside plumbing, heating and wiring projects. Among them were Cliff Graf, Al Stoffel, Fritz Koens, Warren Miller and Phil O'Toole. Clara Hennekes, my godmother, started as the store bookkeeper when dad bought the original store in 1924. She was by far our most tenured employee.

Virgil worked in the store from his youth through dad's retirement in 1959 when he and Mary purchased the store. Dad continued to spend some time in the store after the sale. Without the responsibility of ownership, helping in the store at his leisure allowed him time to wean himself from the routines he performed for so many years.

For Virgil, the only break from working in the store came with his service in WWII and the Korean conflict. He continued to work while attending college in Worthington. He and Mary sold the store in 1992. They had a few retirement years in Adrian before building a new home in Luverne, one block from their daughter Cheryl and her husband Mike.

Loss Of Adrian's Historic Landmark

On December 26th 2004, Virgil, Mary and the entire town of Adrian was shocked and devastated by the huge fire that engulfed the hardware store he'd worked in for so many years. The building was totally destroyed and razed. The location is now an empty lot. The loss of the Adrian Hardware store and its famed building will have a lasting impact on this small town.

Our entire family was stunned by the loss of the building, as it was central to our lives for so many years. We have many fond memories of the place, which provided a very comfortable life for our family. For Virgil the store was the focal point of his entire working life. Losing that structure was like losing a dear friend or family member. The only consolation was that it didn't occur on his watch.

For me, the best part of growing up in a hardware store family was the skills I learned from dad, Virgil and other employees in some common, but useful, trades. Specifically I learned, and later used, many of the fundamental skills used in plumbing, heating and electrical wiring. In addition, I learned the uses and applications for most of the hardware, tools and appliances sold in the store. I have detailed some of these lessons in the chapter on ***Chores and Jobs***.

Dad loved the hardware business. Whenever we were vacationing he would often stop at small-town hardware stores just to see how they arranged merchandize and generally how they operated. The hours were grueling but most people at the time had similar work schedules. He always took a mid-day break for lunch and a short nap.

Dad was a well-known and respected merchant in Adrian. He was elected mayor for several years. His popularity was demonstrated in a rather macabre way. During my youth I became aware that dad was asked to be pallbearer at many, many funerals. In my genealogy research I have read many back issues of the ***Nobles County Review***, the local Adrian newspaper. While reading the obituaries of local residents, I noted that dad was pallbearer at an estimated half of all funerals in Adrian while he was a merchant. I was always proud of dad and never heard any negative comments about him. He was beloved by all.

Our Home

The home I grew up in was located on Main Avenue one block south of the St. Adrian's Catholic Church. We were the last home in the block as the southernmost lots were vacant. They would later be occupied by two new homes. Our lot extended two lots in depth between two streets. It had a very large lawn with beautiful trees.

The house sat on the west center of our lot with a gravel driveway on the north edge of the property leading to a detached double garage. Behind the garage and extending into the yard behind the house was a sizeable vegetable garden. Near the rear of the lot was a rather large concrete and stone in-ground pond that mom had asked dad to build for goldfish. Later when it became unused and a hazard dad had it covered with dirt. It is probably still there. The rear of the next-door empty lot was wooded. There, Virgil helped me build a tree house, which was a great place to hang out.

The double garage was too short for the newer autos so dad had it extended to accommodate his vehicles as well as storage for lawn mowers, garden tools etc. The house itself was nearly the shape of a square with a porch extension on the southeast corner. The front (west) side had a wraparound open porch, which gave the house some character, but it was removed as it went largely unused when the wood began to deteriorate. A small entrance addition with a coat closet was built to replace the porch.

There was a walkway that led from the garage to the house where it passed a sloping basement entrance door covering a stairway. These doors were common to nearly all houses of that era. Our house was built in the early 1900s. Also located on the east side of the house were the propane tanks that supplied our cooking and water heating gas and the supply inlet for our heating oil which was delivered by my cousin "Shiny" Neuroth.

As you walked into the porch entrance, which doubled as a mudroom and weather buffer, you would take an immediate right turn through a door into the kitchen. There was a wall-hung crank telephone in the corner as you entered. Then you passed our kitchen table followed by our refrigerator (Frigidaire) on the left and our cook stove and sink on the right. I can remember this as my bathing sink when I was a tot. After passing cupboards on the north side of the kitchen you could turn left where mom had a small pantry inside the entrance to the basement stairs.

The basement was quite primitive until dad had the main room remodeled with a finished ceiling, paneled walls and tiled floors. If you went straight ahead (west) as you entered the basement you would enter a small room where dad had installed a crude shower, which was used sparingly. Alongside that room was an enclosed "fruit" room, which was also a standard for all homes of that era. The center of the basement was the remodeled room where I had my train layout and dad had a poker table used for games with his poker club buddies. A room on the back (east) side was for the furnace, water heater, water softener and oil storage tank. Another room was for

mom's laundry where she had her wringer washer and auxiliary sink. There was no dryer. Clothes were hung on our clothesline in the back yard year around. Yes, they froze in the winter months.



Virgil at the front of our house. The porch wrapped around the entire west side and a portion of the north side. Window was in the living room. Front entrance was to the left.

Nine-month-old Jack on the south side of our house. Protruding windows were in the dining room. Back entrance and kitchen are on the far right with the living room on left.



Turning left when you came into the kitchen from the porch would bring you into our rather large dining room followed by an equally large living room. Passing through the dining room, which had a very nice built-in china cabinet in one corner, you would approach the stairway entrance, which doubled back, to the rear of the home. As you reached the second level you would pass our small and only bathroom immediately to the left, which was at the east extreme of a hallway through the middle of the upstairs. Next to the bathroom was my and Virgil's small bedroom which we shared for eleven years save for the time Virgil served in the Navy at the end of WWII. Going down the hall you would pass Bev's MUCH larger middle bedroom. As the only girl she was doted upon – I would even say "spoiled rotten". Mom and dad's bedroom, located at the far end of the hall, extended across the entire front of the house above the living room. There was a scuttle door in the hallway, which allowed access to the attic.

This was a great house. It was of adequate size for our family and while it was not pretentious or extravagant it was certainly one of the nicer homes in Adrian. But perhaps my fond memories are clouding my perception.

Out-of-Town

There were few items that could not be bought in Adrian or the selections were very limited. The most notable of these was clothing. We would go to Luverne, or more likely, Sioux Falls, to purchase our wardrobes, which were quite modest. Dad would make frequent trips to Sioux Falls to pick up merchandise for the store and mom and I would accompany him so that we could shop downtown stores on the main thoroughfare, Philips Avenue. My hand still has residual pain from the tight grip she had on me during these forays. After all, this was the big city, which undoubtedly brought many bad people into our midst.

When I was older and could be trusted on my own. I was allowed to see a movie while mom shopped. We would meet at a designated time at the corner of 10th Street and Phillips Avenue in a Woolworth's store where I would always enjoy a 20 cent strawberry milk shake while waiting. Occasionally I would be dropped off at the municipal swimming pool for the afternoon.

The other reasons for travel from Adrian were for recreation or entertainment purposes. Most of these events are chronicled in the chapter on ***Entertainment***, but consisted primarily of drive-in theatres, roller skating rinks, dance halls, festivals, parades, and amusement parks. In the summer we would swim in either Lake Okabena in Worthington, or the municipal pool in Luverne.

Make Believe

My earliest recollection of play consisted of sitting for hours in a sandbox, which was next to our detached double garage. I primarily used mom's kitchen utensils to play "pretend" with the sand. I specifically remember using the cup end of a potato ricer to sift sand. I did have some toy trucks and cars to run on my carefully groomed "roads."

I would use a ball of string to make miniature fences in our yard. The fence posts were small sticks that I would pick up and break to size. The fenced-in areas would hold my pretend animals and some of my crudely constructed buildings.

In the winter mom would let me play in the kitchen, again with her utensils. I would run string through the cabinet handles and then hoist objects to a higher level. One advantage of playing in the kitchen was to take advantage of mom's baking. Whenever she made cakes with frosting or cookies I got to "lick the pan."

These crude and rather primitive play activities would be sooo boring to today's electronic-generation kids, but I think fondly of the games I would play with nothing but a few household trinkets, sand, sticks, string and a vast imagination.

Choo-Choo

My best friend Dave Nealy and I had one major thing in common. We loved trains. We each had model trains in our basements and would spend hours improving our layouts and operating the sets. Our love of trains wasn't limited to models. We anxiously waited for the daily passenger train that stopped in Adrian and the non-stop evening freight train as it sped through town to make it up the steep grade east of Adrian. Coal-fired steam locomotives were used to power all of these trains. We frequently visited the railroad yards and watched freight trains drop off and pick up cars on sidings. We kept away from the depot so we could better see the train when it was moving and also to avoid a scolding from Mr. Nelson, the depot manager.

One day, the engineer released steam from the side of his locomotive while Dave and I were standing alongside admiring this mechanical marvel. It scared the heck out of us and we thought we would die. Surprisingly, by the time the steam got to us it was just a cool mist. Ed Miller, an engineer whom we befriended, played this trick on us. While stopped in Adrian, we would talk to him and tell him of our love of trains. Eventually, he let us step into the cab of the steam locomotive where he showed us all the operating procedures of his job. We were thrilled! (Imagine doing that today with OSHA, etc.)

One day Ed asked us if we would like to ride with him to Luverne. We had to get permission, of course, from our parents and one of them would have to drive to Luverne to pick us up. The next day we made the trip and Ed allowed us to hold the "dead man" control and even blow the steam whistle. What an adventure for us train lovers! Mrs. Nealy picked us up in Luverne, and we didn't stop talking about our trip for weeks.

Splish-Splash

When we first learned to swim, we took a bus from Adrian to Worthington where the Red Cross sponsored swimming lessons from beginners to Life Guard certification. The water in Lake Okabena was never very clear, but we didn't care - it was cleaner than in the Kanaranzi Creek at B.A.B., another place just north of Adrian where we went to swim. (A hint to this acronym – we swam sans clothing and the last word was "Beach.")

Eventually the choice swimming venue was the pool in Luverne. We would get a ride with one of our parents to the pool for an all-afternoon outing. I can still smell the chlorine and remember the hours of fun we had playing games, learning to swim underwater and finally, diving from the low and later, the high, diving boards. When we were a little older, perhaps 10-12, we were allowed to hitchhike to and from Luverne. Imagine parents allowing that today! We always found a ride within minutes. Occasionally it was a stranger that picked us up, but more often it was someone from Adrian who knew us. Luverne was just 14 miles from Adrian. On really hot

evenings or weekends mom and dad would drive me to the pool, and they would just sit and watch for a couple of hours.

Misbehavin′

There were a few activities that I participated in that were rather frowned upon but tolerable.

Before I could read, I would go to the Dime Store and sit on the floor to peruse the comic books they sold. I was somewhat addicted to these books, which included superheros like Captain Marvel and Superman. There were also Disney characters, Tom and Jerry, Archie and, of course, my cowboy heroes, Roy Rogers and Gene Autry. The ladies in the Dime Store didn't like loitering but they tolerated it since we would occasionally buy a 10-cent book. When dad needed me to help in the store, he knew where to find me. That became rather embarrassing.

There was actually an anti-comic book movement in the 1940s with an editorial by Sterling North denouncing the medium. His article spread like wildfire throughout the United States and caused uproar amongst many. Entitled "National Disgrace," he claimed that parents were guilty of criminal activities if they allowed their children to read comic books, and he then added that comic books are one of the main causes for the decline of America. Then in 1946, the ***Ayers Newspaper Directory*** reported that comic books had outsold traditional print books. This fact outraged parents and librarians. Comic books actually helped me to read and as far as I can tell my participation did not contribute to any decline of America, however my critics might suggest that this illicit background explains a lot about my future behavior.

When I was about eight I received a Daisy Red Rider BB gun as a gift from my parents. (Remember Ralphie in the classic movie ***A Christmas Story?***) I set out to become proficient as a BB gun marksman. After I tired of hitting cans and bottles I recall shooting at a sparrow in a tree near the Slade Hotel. I hit him, and he fell to the ground. I felt horrible, but I learned that even a BB gun could kill. My only creature shooting after that was either for pests (gophers) or for sport (pheasants, ducks).

We had a pool hall owned and operated by Al Hebbelman, who became a friend through our mutual love of baseball. He was a St. Louis Cardinal fan, and I was a Brooklyn Dodger fan. We had an ongoing rivalry teasing each other about our respective team's losses.

The pool hall served beer and also non-alcoholic beverages for its patrons who played cards and pool while drinking. While dad would occasionally partake in a game of pinochle during slow times at the store, I would occasionally play pool with my friends. There was a small nominal charge for pool. You may recall Harold Hill in ***The Music Man*** singing "Ya Got Trouble." Some of the lyrics are as follows:

By the presence of a pool table in your community.
Ya got trouble, my friend, right here,
I say, trouble right here in River City.

Well, I don't think that the pool tables in Adrian caused any trouble and neither did our comic book reading contribute to the decline of America.

Ain′t Misbehavin′

In the summertime while we were in grade school the city would put on a "Recreation School" for its youth to keep them busy and out of trouble. It was held in the public school and would consist of some indoor sports such as boxing as well as art and craft projects. I have retained some of my craft projects as well as a slightly bruised ego from getting clobbered by my friend Dave Nealy in boxing. He was, after all, a year older!

Brunt of Abuse

Each summer a carnival came to town during our annual festival. Main Street was closed for a block where the rides were set up. When I was about eight or nine, Virgil's friend "Booger" Eschelman, took me for a ride on the

tilt-a-whirl. I got so sick that to this day I cannot stand circular motion. Watching the hands of a clock go around makes me nauseated.



Booger, also called "Snowball," took me on a motorcycle ride one evening. I had short pants on and my leg got burned on the exhaust pipe. Booger also convinced me go to the store and ask my dad if he sold "sky hooks" or "striped paint." With all the abuse, I still liked him.

Blazin' Buzzy

"Buzzy" Scheidt, a boy my age who lived two blocks from us had pyromaniac tendencies at a very early age. Once he was caught setting a haystack on fire and was probably responsible for many other minor fires as a result of his obsession. Aside from that weakness he was a pretty nice kid and I played with him occasionally. One day he brought me to a culvert where he hid his stash of cigarettes. I assume that cigarette smoking is an absolute must for pyromaniacs. Mind you, we were only about five years old! He talked me into trying one. I did - and that was the last cigarette that I ever had in my mouth. He actually did me a favor by introducing me to cigarettes at such an early age!

Great Balls of Fire

On another occasion, Buzzy and I saw a controlled fire being started by Al Nytes at Al's mother's house right across Main Avenue from our home. Al was attempting to burn the high grasses and weeds from a depression in an adjacent lot. I think it was an abandoned basement from a never built home. Buzzy, naturally, wanted to watch so we stood at the edge of the site while Al worked on controlling the blaze. Suddenly I felt myself being pushed into the fire. Buzzy had this crazed look on his face as I ran back screaming with my pant leg on fire. Al grabbed me and beat the fire out. Buzzy ran away. Al carried me across the street to my home where mom administered baking soda to the blisters on my leg. I healed rather quickly but my friendship with Buzzy was over. I never played with him again and the next year his family moved to Colorado. There were many more things (forests, etc.) to burn there.

They Went That-a-way

One of the more interesting games we played was what I would call "all day hide and seek or ditch." Each of the two teams would consist of two or more boys. The hiders would get a 10-minute head start and then the chase was on. The "chasers" did not have to physically catch the "hiders." They merely had to spot them and the game was over. There were no disputes or arguments when a team was caught. The honor system kept the game from becoming disagreeable. There were no places within the village limits that were out of bounds. The seekers could question anyone they met as to whether the hiders had been seen. The other restriction was that there would be a timeout at noon "when the siren blew." That was the signal to go home for lunch – generally upheld by all moms in Adrian. Most games did not last for more than a couple of hours, as the hiders would eventually get "ratted out."

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Another thing we did regularly, at some risk, was to go into one of the town's three lumberyards, somehow avoiding the feared employee that would, if we were caught, report the trespass to our parents. We would find a good hideaway among the stacks of lumber and play cards or just talk for hours.

Rodent Release

We would sometimes walk one mile out of town to the St. Adrian Cemetery with a bucket and some string. Here we would make a noose and carefully lay it around a gopher hole, then pour water down the hole until the wet and bedraggled gopher made its way to the surface. We would, most often, be able to snare the gopher and put him in one of our buckets. After a few hours, we would release our catch so that we could do it all over again another day.

Occasionally our mom's would fix us a sack lunch and we would head for some remote area, perhaps as distant as a half-mile from town where we would enjoy our choice of a creek side or meadow for a fine dining experience.

Anything Goes

We made a number of impromptu decisions about what to do for the day – or for the moment. For example, if we were near the church at one of several times during the day when the custodian would ring the church bell, we would stop in and he would let us ring the bell. The bell rope, which extended from the top of the very high steeple (the highest point in town) to the church entrance level was hard to pull for youngsters, but we managed. Once we got it started, the rebound of the rope would actually lift us off the floor – a great thrill. Since the church was always open, I wonder why no one ever pulled a prank by ringing the bell during off hours. Perhaps they did, but I don't recall that ever happening during my youth. The fact that it didn't happen is ample testimony to the general integrity of the youth of that time and place or, more likely, the knowledge that any perpetrator would surely get caught.

Life Was Good!

We were fortunate to live in town where we had access to most conveniences and, what were then considered, relatively modern living conditions. Many of my friends lived on farms where there was no electricity – consequently no radio, refrigeration, mechanical water pumping, forced-air furnaces, electrically operated tools etc. They also had no indoor toilet facilities and water was pumped by hand or windmill from an outdoor well. Lighting was provided sparingly with kerosene lanterns. I remember my parents and their friends playing cards on a table beneath one of these lanterns hung from the ceiling. Because dad owned a hardware store and we lived in town, we usually had the most up-to-date items for our home. Yet, we didn't have most of the conveniences that today we consider necessities such as television, microwave ovens or air-conditioning.

At the time I don't remember feeling deprived because expectations were realistic and everyone had pretty much the same living conditions – except for my farm friends who, I suppose, I felt sorry for. Actually, not everyone that lived in town had all of the conveniences. I can remember, for instance, watching the iceman deliver huge blocks of ice to his route customers. I was told that the ice was cut from lakes during the winter and stored in sheds with sawdust covering for insulation. I did see sawdust on the blocks when they were delivered. I heard that some people used the ice to cool drinks. Yuck!

We Survived!

Surprisingly most of the things that kids are warned about today to prevent sickness or diseases were never considered when I was growing up. We were exposed to leaded paint, asbestos, pesticides and to all kinds of unsanitary and dangerous things and were rarely, if ever, severely affected. I remember playing with mercury in the back room of dad's store. I know, I know – many will think that explains a lot about me! Maybe we became immune. We drank water from a hose – not a bottle – and we rode in the open backs of pickup trucks, didn't have seat belts or air bags and nobody locked their doors in either their homes or cars. In fact, people left their keys in cars wherever they parked. I'm not suggesting that those earlier ways were better, but we were never paranoid about the conditions we lived with when there were no alternatives and people were trustworthy.

Tin Cans and a Wire

The communications technology was quite simple – no cell phones, no texting, no television until my late teens and then only black and white broadcasts with limited hours and programs.

The telephone system used centralized operators. The company offices and switchboards were located across the street from the backdoor of dad's hardware store. One of the operators was Loretta Hennekes, the spinster sister to my godmother Clara, who was also my dad's longtime bookkeeper/clerk.

I would often go to the telephone offices to watch the operators switch calls. They simply watched for a call coming in when a light would identify the caller. She would respond to the call by saying "Operator." The caller

would then give a local number – our home number was 121 and the hardware store's was 51. The operator would then take a cord coming from the caller's phone and plug it into the outlet for the person being called. The connection was complete when the receiving person would pick up the phone after responding to a ring sent by the operator.

Rural lines were expensive to serve customers individually so a system of "party lines" was installed. One line would serve several farm homes. Each home was given a specific number of rings that identified them as the one being called. Of course there were some yentas that would lift their receiver to find out what their neighbors were up to.

The phones themselves generally consisted of a wall-mounted box with a protruding bell-shaped receiver to speak into. The earpiece hung at the side of the phone and, it too, was bell shaped. When you wished to make a call you would lift the earpiece to your left ear and turn a crank on the right side of the telephone box. This would send a signal to the operator who, in turn, would identify herself and you would then give her the number you wanted to call.



The operators, of course, knew practically everyone in town (who didn't?) and so if you were looking for someone you merely asked her where they were. She would know from tracking calls in her memory exactly where the person was – most of the time. She would happily share the information with you. Imagine that happening today with the politically correct privacy obsession? Adrian did not get dial phones until the spring of 1957 shortly before I graduated from high school.

Under Surveillance

On the topic of small town knowledge of people and their whereabouts it is interesting to recall the dynamics of interactions between adults and children. When I was growing up in Adrian we were kept in line by two important factors that today play a much smaller role in the rearing of most children.

Those in my generation were taught at an early age to develop high moral standards and a good reputation. Of course the importance of honesty and integrity were taught in church and school but also by our parents. We knew what was right and wrong and generally made good choices. All children, of course, want to stretch the boundaries and we were not exceptions. When we did stray however, we were constrained by factor number two. We were not only watched carefully by our parents, but by the whole town! Parents were not afraid to let other parents know if they saw their children acting outside the standards of behavior expected by the community. And, instead of getting defensive or angry with the reporter, they would express their thanks. Likewise, if a child complained that a teacher had "unfairly" punished them for some indiscretion, the child would, most often, receive additional punishment from the parent. Occasionally these reports of children's poor behavior would perhaps be in error or exaggerated. We all survived these inequities and learned that sometimes "life is not fair." This was a great lesson to take into adulthood.

Extravagance!

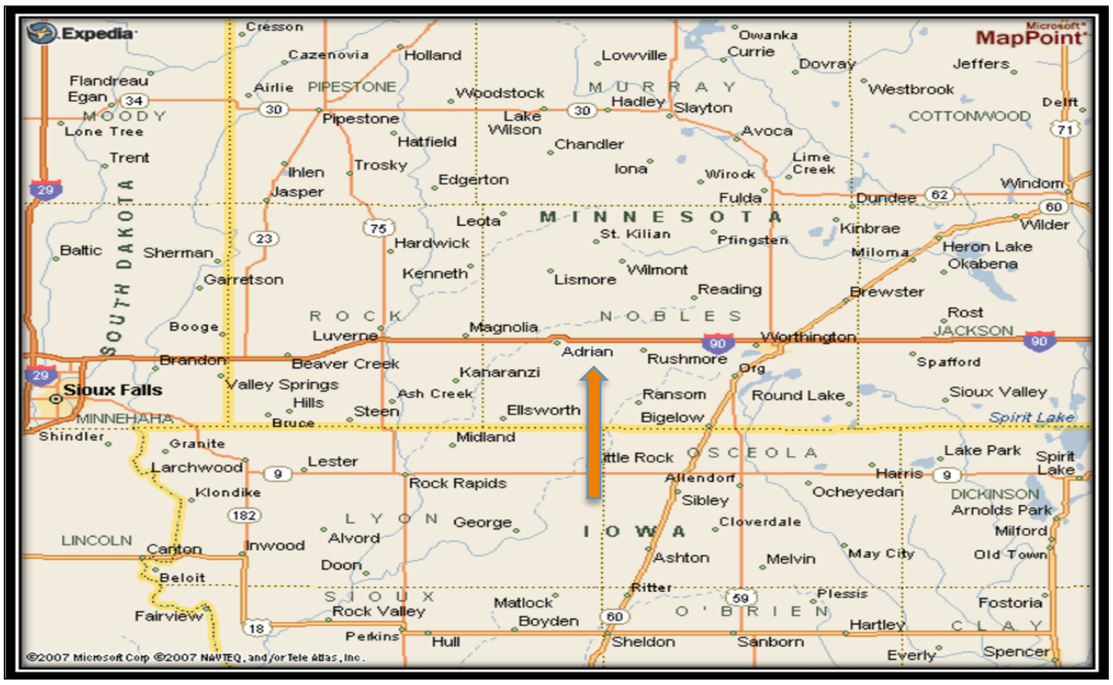
As I grew older modern technology made life easier and more fun. We kept our perishable food in a freezer at home and bought a TV. Small electrical appliances became commonplace, there were better and more extensive selections in the grocery store, cars were better and safer, small window air conditioners became available and, one of my all-time favorite developments brought *homogenized* milk to our table. No more lumps of cream were found in the milk bottles. Downside – mom had to buy cream separately at the grocery store or from the deliveryman, otherwise life was good.

No Baggy Pants

I would be remiss if I did not discuss the issue of dress and grooming. When we were quite young and enthralled with movie star cowboys (see chapter on ***Entertainment***) we would imitate our heroes by dressing accordingly. The big rage for a while was ownership of a pair of jeans, which were six inches too long in the legs. We would roll them up into a huge cuff. They looked *sooo* cool. Those of us that begged our parents enough also got a pair of cowboy boots. I recall wearing these boots constantly and accessorizing them with some spurs, which I ordered from a promotion I heard on one of the daily radio shows I listened to. The spurs had rowels that glowed in the dark!

Aside from a few of these early childhood "musts" our dress throughout grade and high school was very conservative. We did not have school uniforms but there was no fashion competition - even among the girls. Boys wore jeans or, more likely, khaki pants and a shirt with a buttoned-down collar. White buck shoes were common for boys. These were laced shoes made of white suede, and were a hallmark of the 1950s. Girls wore saddle shoes. Both boys and girls may have worn “penny” loafers. Girls wore below-the-knee skirts and jumpers.

Of course all clothing had to be modest. There were no tattoos, piercings, or colored or outrageous hairdos. Most of the boys, including me, had a short haircut. They were called "crew cuts" or "flattops." I had a flattop on-and-off throughout my college years. Liliane convinced me to let my hair grow out while I was in Europe following our engagement in 1964. It has been pretty much the same ever since except, of course, for the color.



Southwest Minnesota And Surrounding Areas

“The nice part about living in a small town is that when you don't know what you're doing, someone else does”

Anonymous

“A small town is a place where there’s no place to go where you shouldn’t.”

Burt Bacharach, 1928-

“In those days, at least in my small town, parents didn't seem to worry so much about what their kids were doing as long as they made it home in time for dinner.”

K. Martin Beckner

Chores and Jobs

Putting it Together

I was very fortunate to have grown up in a hardware store family. As early as I can remember I was given small tasks at "the store." Even a small child could easily learn to put nuts on bolts. They came separately but were sold screwed together – and dad sold lots of nuts and bolts. It's interesting that such menial chores were done by the very young and the very old. Uncle Nick, dad's oldest brother who hung out at the store but was not an employee, helped with the unpacking of shipments, which came in at least on a weekly basis. Many of the items needed to be assembled such as wagons, wheelbarrows, livestock feeders and bicycles. All the items had to be priced, tagged, and put in their proper display area, shelves or bins.

As I got older I was also assigned floor sweeping and window washing duties. As I got still older, I learned to cut glass. Customers brought in their entire window sash for pane replacement. We had an electrical heating device, which was used to soften the old putty before the broken panes were removed. The broken glass was replaced by cut-to-fit panes, which were then re-puttied. I rather enjoyed that job but was never as good at it as Virgil who could even cut circular glass pieces. I learned to measure and cut rope, cut and thread pipes, do solder repairs, cut, bend and crimp tin, and many other increasingly difficult and challenging jobs. A highpoint in the progression of my hardware store duties came when I was allowed to make direct customer sales.

Down on the Farm

Before I was born dad had a farm machinery business in addition to hardware. He was the International-Harvester dealer while his across-the-street competitor, Lewis Hardware, sold John Deere. During the depression dad found that selling farm machinery was not profitable and very risky, so he dropped this part of his business. He promised all of his previous customers that he would continue to service the machinery they had purchased from him. Dad sold a number of different International-Harvester/McCormick-Deering products but the most prominent in my memory was the binder. After the grain has reached maturity in the late summer the grain binder was used to cut and sheave the grain. Horses or a tractor pulled the grain binder forward; the driving wheel was rotated, which powered the sickle and reel of the grain binder.

As the reel rotated, it bent the grain stalks inward towards the sickle, and the sickle cut the grain stalks off a few inches above the ground. A cloth canvas then conveyed the grain to a gear driven knotter, which tied several stalks together into a small bundle. After the grain bundle was tied, it slid onto the bundle carrier, and was dropped onto the field. Following close behind, field workers picked up the tied grain bundles and placed several of them together to form a small teepee, which was called a "shock." The grain bundles were placed in shocks so that the unripened grain would have a chance to dry and shed water if they were rained on.



Tractor-Pulled Binder

When the grain was sufficiently dry, men would fork the shocks into a large horse or tractor pulled wagons where they would be taken to a central location to be threshed, separating the grain from the straw. Since they were very expensive, threshing machines were communally rented. My Uncle Nick, I believe, was part owner of a threshing machine. Usually, as many as twenty men took part in the threshing process. Most of my uncles were farmers so I participated in the harvest at a fairly early age when I was allowed to drive a wagon with either horses or a tractor.

When dad went out to fix binders I would often go along and help by following the binder in our pickup. I was probably 12 and could barely reach the clutch and brake pedals when I first drove in the fields. This freed dad up to ride with the binder and make the necessary adjustments, usually to the sheaf-tying apparatus. As you can

imagine, this labor saving device had very complicated mechanisms and I marveled at how dad could make the necessary repairs and adjustments.

I loved going on these farm calls with dad. Perhaps watching the intricacy and complexity of the binder mechanism along with other equally fascinating devices, appliances and apparatus in the hardware store was the genesis of my interest in mechanical engineering.

Uncle Nick was a very close friend of our family. He was the only bachelor among dad's siblings so he often shared meals with us. In the early years of mom and dad's marriage, well before I was born, Uncle Nick lived with them. He had a small insurance business as an agent for Little Rock Mutual, which dealt primarily with farmsteads and livestock. I remember that the insurance he sold covered, among other things, the unnatural death of farm animals. He often took me along to farms to make inspections and, I suppose, settle claims for animals killed by lightning etc. He had his office in a mezzanine in the back of the main merchandize area of the hardware store just above the store office. He spent most of his time in a patio chair on the main floor near the mezzanine stairs. He helped with some of the more menial chores perhaps in lieu of rent. As stated earlier, the two of us would, for example, assemble tricycles, bikes and wagons when they came in on one of the weekly or more frequent shipments from our wholesalers. We erred occasionally by putting the wagon tongue on upside down or forgetting a part that then necessitated disassembling before reassembling. We would rib each other for screwing-up some basic task. If you teased Uncle Nick he would poke you in the tummy with his cane.

Gofer

One of my "Uncle Nick chores" was to buy him a "White Owl" or "Harvester" cigar (brand favorites changed) from a restaurant across the street in the next block north of the store. Uncle Nick never made things easy as long as he wasn't undertaking the chore. He would never have me buy two cigars at a time, for example. He also wanted to check frequently with the Social Security office about his benefits – why? - I don't know. He had me ride along with him to Marshall, the nearest S.S.A. office, which was over an hour's drive – actually longer because of the cautious speed he maintained. On any of these excursions where I was requested to accompany him, either to Marshall, to his farm acreage to measure fields (an every-year task although I don't think the dimensions changed), illegal pheasant hunting, or on insurance business, one could never open a window in his black, pre-air conditioning, Chevrolet pickup truck. It could be ninety degrees and the "draft" from an open window would surely take his life. He had a number of these idiosyncrasies, however he was very loveable. He died at age 80 on the day before President Kennedy was elected. A lifelong democrat, Uncle Nick would have been so proud.

Round and Round

Another job mentioned earlier which I learned when I was strong enough was to cut and thread pipe. We sold lots of galvanized and black pipe, which was stored in large racks in the store basement. Initially the pipe was held in a vise while the cutter and threader would be rotated around the pipe by hand – a really tough job. We finally procured a machine, which held the pipe while we attached the cutter or threader. Then our new electrically powered machine would rotate the pipe while the stationary cutting or threading devices completed their job with much less effort from the operator.

Our appliances, such as refrigerators came in large, thin, plywood crates. The joints were made of more substantial wood. When the appliances were unpacked we would cut the crates up into smaller pieces to use as fuel in the store boiler. The normal fuel was coal, which I, and others, would shovel into a stoker bin, which augured it into the boiler. In really cold weather this had to be done several times a day.

A Very Large Ear Ring

One day I was cutting up the appliance crates and while tossing one side of a refrigerator carton into a pile, one of the corners snagged on the basement ceiling. As it twisted and fell one of the carton's protruding nails stabbed through my ear lobe and I was standing there petrified as most of the weight of the carton side was being held by

my ear lobe! I quickly removed the carton and ran upstairs bleeding like crazy. Clara, my godmother and dad's longtime bookkeeper, helped me stem the bleeding and I went back to work.

Propane Pain

When I was able to drive a pickup truck on my own, my principal store responsibility became the delivery of propane gas. The gas came in 200-pound steel cylinders that were loaded upright onto the pickup from a storage platform located in a parking area 30 yards from the rear entrance to the store. Since there was no natural gas available on farms or even in town, most people including our family, used propane for cooking and water heating (most furnaces were operated with fuel-oil). Wrestling those heavy cylinders around, especially in winter, was a rigorous, but not fun, exercise. The hand trucks we used were useless in heavy snow so we would attach a rope to the tank valve and tow them to the homes. We often got telephone calls at home asking us to deliver gas at night or on weekends. Most people had a standby tank, so we became familiar with their use patterns and could routinely deliver a replacement after one had emptied. We also sold smaller 20-pound cylinders but most customers picked them up at the store.

Low in Seniority

There were some jobs that were not very fun (see chapter on ***Humor***). My brother took particular joy in assigning me to those that nobody wanted. Sewer backups that required immersing body parts into disgusting quagmires were among the worst. I also did not like to install rain gutters on homes. It required leaning out over the roofline and nailing spikes through ferrules (small metal tubes) and into the eave to secure the gutters. Delivering appliances was a big job as they, for the most part, were really well built and thus very heavy. Access to homes was often restricted by stairs, narrow hallways and sharp turns and as with the gas cylinders, delivery in the winter was much more difficult.

I also had some home chores. When I was old enough I mowed our large lawn with a self-propelled, reel-type lawn mower. I also mowed my Aunt Molly's lawn for a while. I helped somewhat with the planting and harvesting of our rather large garden.

Schutz Hardware was an all-purpose store. We not only sold all types of hardware and appliances but also installed plumbing, heating and wiring. We employed a licensed electrician, which allowed the rest of us to work under his tutelage in homes and commercial buildings.

Plumbing new or existing construction was much more difficult and time consuming than it is today. Copper pipe was used for water supply and waste lines. It required "sweating" of joints by heating them with a blowtorch, applying flux and then solder for sealing. If the copper pipes, tees and elbows had not been properly cleaned with steel wool the joint would not hold. The process then required reheating and boiling off the accumulated water before starting the entire process over.

From Journeyman to Master

I learned all of these trades from Dad, Virgil and other employees when I was old enough and adept enough to handle them. I had grown to admire the skills I had observed while working with store employees so when I became proficient at them I had a real feeling of accomplishment. As a result of learning these trades I have not, until fairly recently, ever had a plumber, electrician, or heating contractor in our home except for installation of major appliances, etc. I'm pleased to say that while I was performing some of these jobs in our Portland Avenue home, I had an interested partner in our son John, who picked up these skills and is now better at them than I.

All the Beer I Could Drink

In my first years of college I came home for the summers and worked at the store. While school was in session, I had two part-time jobs. I tended bar at a near campus beer joint on East Hennepin Avenue called "The Goalpost." The owner, Don, was quite flexible and allowed me to work whenever I could break away from my studies and classes. I worked about 20 hours a week.

Don had an event every-other-year in the fall that drew hundreds of patrons and football buffs to the bar. He was a University of Minnesota graduate and one of his best friends was a University of Michigan alumnus. His friend always came to Minneapolis for the Michigan/Minnesota football game. On those occasions Don had the police cordon off East Hennepin Avenue for one block in front of The Goalpost. At around noon on game day, Don and his friend would start a race pushing a peanut with their noses for the entire block. I don't recall what the award for winning was but I'm quite sure the loser suffered some kind of indignity and humiliation.

Finally – Some Real Engineering

When I was a junior in college, a small medical device start-up company approached me about working as an intern in their Bloomington research facility. The offer was part of a work-study program in the Institute of Technology. The company had developed a plethysmograph, a device that measured small changes in the volume of blood flow. I worked on the prototypes and some adjustment and calibration devices, which was made easier by my hardware store experiences. I worked for them until I graduated. Later, I found that the company failed for lack of adequate financing. It was, however, a good experience for me to observe a developing entrepreneurship while learning some new skills. The job also provided a welcome income supplement to offset my school expenses.

I have fond memories of all the chores and jobs of my youth. Of course, I would rather swim, play sports, shoot pool, read comics or just plain goof off. I did do those things but my parents made it clear early on that I would contribute to the family well-being and learn the work ethic that helped make them successful. I'm thankful that they taught me the importance of work, which has an inherent ability to promote self-confidence, respect, and achievement while strengthening ones character.

"Don't be afraid to give your best to what seemingly are small jobs. Every time you conquer one it makes you that much stronger. If you do the little jobs well, the big ones will tend to take care of themselves."

Dale Carnegie, 1888-1955

"Success is a ladder you cannot climb with your hands in your pockets."

American Proverb

"***I am a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work the more I have of it."***

Thomas Jefferson, 1713-1826

"The secret to happiness is doing what you love and the secret to success is loving what you do."

Anonomous

Holidays



December 6th is Nikolaustag (St. Nicholas Day). When I was young relatives gathered in the evening at someone's home to await the arrival of St. Nicholas and his assistant. By the time he arrived, with much fanfare and noise, the adults, having imbibed in spirits, were relaxed while the children were fearful – yet excited. St. Nicholas would inquire about their behavior and then ask the children to perform, recite a poem, sing, or say a prayer. When successful (or not), he would give them candy or other treats. Then, in German tradition, St. Nicholas and his helper, a sinister-looking alter ego, *Knecht Ruprecht,* would turn to the adults and usually pick on one of them unmercifully. One of these evenings my father was the brunt of this abuse. He could not satisfy St. Nick with his response to numerous queries and was about to be abducted by him because of his alleged shortcomings. My cousin Henry and I wrapped ourselves around dad's legs to keep St. Nick and *Knecht Ruprecht* from taking him. The two finally left in a huff, much to our relief!

In Germany during the night Sankt Nikolaus goes from house to house carrying a book in which all the children's deeds are written. If they have been good, he fills their plate, shoe or boot with delicious fruits, nuts and candies. If not, they may find potatoes, coal, or twigs.

The tradition in German families was brought to America with slight modifications through the years. On the eve of St. Nicholas day we placed a shoe outside our bedroom door where St. Nick would insert a small gift for the shoe's owner during the night. I always received something of value while my father, to my delight, would get a piece of coal or some other worthless bauble. We carried this tradition into our home after our marriage.

St. Nikolaus is not to be confused with the *Weihnachtsmann,* or Santa Claus, who comes to children's homes only on Christmas or Christmas Eve.

We always exchanged Christmas gifts with family members after dinner on Christmas Eve. We sat around the tree and watched as everyone oohed and aahed about their gifts. The much-anticipated evening was, as in most families, a very memorable time to celebrate this very holy day among the people most loved. After opening gifts, I was sent to bed with thoughts of the next day dancing in my head. I would be able to play with my new toys and, hopefully, with other gifts that Santa would bring in the night. Mom, Dad, Virgil and Bev would go to midnight mass while I slept.



I remember the circumstances of first finding out the truth about Santa. After opening our gifts, we would set the dining room table with mom's finest china for our Christmas day meal. We would then put out some goodies for Santa. He would always leave us nuts and candy on our plates after helping himself with our gifts of food. One night I was awakened from noises of candy and nuts hitting the plates on the dining room table. I heard mom say, "Be quiet, Jackie will wake up." This was my first major hint that Santa might not be for real. What to do? I decided to fake belief for several more years. Bev would suggest that I finally admitted my discovery when I was a sophomore in high school. 🙂

Two Christmas rituals in our family are remembered and notable. We always had oyster stew for dinner on Christmas Eve. My dad and Virgil would eat the oysters and then pretend that these slimy bivalve mollusks were still alive and jumping around in their stomachs. As a little boy, I was not impressed. To this day the thought of eating oysters is repulsive to me.

A friend of Virgil's, "Gizmo" Thompson, would come over to our house after midnight mass in his single days to drink my dad's exceptional Tom and Jerry's. He loved these holiday drinks. After Gizmo was married, he wanted to continue the ritual at the home of his in-laws, so the first Christmas Eve following his marriage he phoned before midnight Mass and asked for my dad. We were all listening to dad's side of the conversation. It

became obvious that Gizmo was asking him for the Tom and Jerry recipe. Dad went on to explain about the process of separating the yolks from the whites of a dozen eggs when he was interrupted. After a few questions to Gizmo dad began to laugh uproariously. We later found out that Gizmo had stopped him when he mentioned a dozen eggs. That seemed like a lot. Dad asked him how many Tom and Jerry's he planned to make. That's when dad started to laugh. Gizmo told him he only wanted to make one!

My parents usually went out with other couples to celebrate the New Year. I can't recall what they typically did but it was probably one of two options – they went to a dance or they played cards at someone's home.

When I was old enough to stay up and celebrate the arrival of the New Year I usually did it by playing "Clue" with my friend Dave Nealy. We would play for several hours while listening to show tunes and then at midnight click our soda glasses and say "Happy New Year!" This ritual continued throughout our high school years. We really were nerds – but we had fun!

Run Jack Run



Children in Adrian celebrated May Day when I was a boy. May Baskets were made by the young girls. The small baskets were elaborately decorated and filled with treats. The donor would leave their basket near the entrance door of a boy's home and then ring the doorbell. The recipient of the basket would then try to catch the fleeing benefactor. If they caught them, a kiss would be exchanged. I remember hiding close to the door so that the girls would not have much of a head start although they were usually quite slow footed – on purpose of course!

Pumpkins And Pranks

Halloween was celebrated with the usual door-to-door trick and treating. The young costumed children went out just after sundown on their own or with friends. Parents stayed at home to provide treats for their visitors. I remember being envious one Halloween evening when I came home from trick and treating and Bev was just getting ready to go out with her friends. As teenagers they were not interested in trick and treating. They set out to create mischief with either rivals or townspeople they did not particularly like. When I arrived home Bev and mom were in the basement laundry room cutting up some of mom's homemade soap. The soap was, I believe, made from animal fats and lye. Mom used it for washing clothes but Bev and her friends used it to smear or write on windows. I was so resentful that their evening of fun was just beginning and I had to go to bed. The town always looked a little different the next morning with tipped outhouses, smeared windows and other signs of mischief. The most legendary of tricks was played on my Uncle Henry and is chronicled in the chapter on ***Humor***.

Cracker Jack



The Fourth of July was celebrated with ballgames, picnics and family get- the usual town activities such as togethers. We would also, occasionally attend a parade in Leota, a small town northwest of Adrian. Fireworks were officially illegal but they could be purchased just across the border in South Dakota. There were no attempts by police to enforce the fireworks laws.

Dad really enjoyed this holiday because he loved fireworks. He always made a trip to Sioux Falls for a big purchase. While we had our principal show on the Fourth, dad couldn't resist using firecrackers throughout the year. I'll repeat a favorite firecracker antic that I write about in the chapter on ***Humor***.

The hardware store had numerous holes in its wood floor from abandoned plumbing or heating pipes. One of those holes was directly over an area in the basement, which was used for cutting and threading galvanized pipes. Often, when dad knew someone was working in that area, he would drop lit firecrackers down the hole. Quite a few bruised knuckles and banged heads resulted from this antic. Of course dad would deny any knowledge of the incident.

I rather enjoyed firecrackers myself. My friends and I would make tin-can rockets out of two slightly different sized cans. The cans would be nested with the smaller inner can with its enclosed end on top. The larger outer can with its cover on the bottom would have a hole punched near the lid. The firecracker would set inside this can with the fuse protruding through the hole. The fuse was lit and when the firecracker exploded, the inner can would sail many feet into the air. Great fun!

Birthdays were treated with recognition and a cake but were generally no big deal, especially for the adults. I remember only one big party. It was my sixth birthday, and mom invited many of my friends. We watched a crew dig the basement for John Jonas' new house in the next block. That was pretty exciting entertainment ---. Actually, it was a good party. We played games and mom made a nice meal and a cake with lots of frosting. I got a corner piece!

Saint Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Father's Day, were celebrated with very little fanfare. The three summer holidays of Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and Labor Day along with Thanksgiving and holydays were much more prominently fêted.

"A happy New Year! Grant that I
May bring no tear to any eye
When this New Year in time shall end
Let it be said I've played the friend,
Have lived and loved and labored here,
And made of it a happy year."

Edgar Guest, 1881-1959

"Thanksgiving dinners take eighteen hours to prepare. They are consumed in twelve minutes. Half-times take twelve minutes. This is not a coincidence."

Erma Bombeck, 1927-1996

Fathers Day Tribute –*"The older I get, the smarter my father seems to get."*

Tim Russert, 1950-2008

Mothers Day Tribute – "A man's work is from sunup to sundown, but a mother's work is never done."

Anonymous

"Youth is when you're allowed to stay up late on New Year's Eve. Middle age is when you're forced to."

Bill Vaughn, 1915-1977

Education

Carefully Taught

I was fortunate attend a grade school and high school where the teachers really cared about the outcome of their students and had the support of parents to make sure that all had an opportunity for success. My teachers at St. Adrian were Sisters of St. Francis, the most prevalent order of teaching nuns in the Winona Diocese. They were also well known for their nursing school and hospital, St. Mary's in Rochester, which is also the home of their motherhouse at Assisi Heights. At the time they wore full habits and wimples unlike the more modern dress worn by most orders since Vatican II. They were strict disciplinarians, which helped maintain the order necessary to achieve the school's academic goals. For the most part, they were also very good teachers.

The school itself, built in the early 1900's, was multi-story and served all 12 grades. When I was in the first grade (there was no kindergarten) the classroom was in the basement level and had high – just above ground – windows. As you moved up in grades, you kept moving higher in the building until the eighth grade when we were on the top floor along with the small gym/auditorium. The exception, as you might have noticed, was with the high school. Most, if not all, high school classrooms were on the second level.



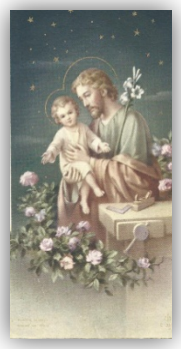
As I recall, we would receive our report cards at least quarterly. We would have to take them home to be reviewed and signed by our parents. I don't ever recall being scolded about my grades even though they could have been better. I was never very good at "deportment."

Adrian also had a public school of similar size. We all had friends from the public school, but the schools themselves did not interact in sports or other activities.

Two kinda nerdy things that I did in grade school come to mind. In an early grade I had a teacher, Sister Macrina, whom I really liked. We were disciplined for any classroom antics by being forced to stay after school for a half-hour. Occasionally, I would misbehave (the aforementioned bad "deportment") on purpose so I could spend some time with Sister. I think she liked me too since we just spent the half hour talking about fun things.

The school had a subscription to **National Geographic**. The school kept all of its issues in a bookcase at the back of the eighth grade classroom. I would spend hours after school sitting on the floor perusing every issue. It's obvious that my love of travel and interest in other cultures came at an early age.

Religion always played an important role in our classroom instruction. We did have s specific separate lessons such as Catechism, but most of the nuns would also interject religious themes or anecdotes into the curriculum of such subjects as biology if it seemed relevant. Instead of gold stars we would be given holy cards or, if you did something really exceptional, a scapular. A devotional scapular typically consists of two small (usually rectangular) pieces of felt, a few inches in size, which bear religious images or text glued to the felt backing. My brother, Virgil, has carried a scapular in his wallet since he was a boy. The picture on the right is a small copy of a holy card I received from my music teacher-nun when I was confirmed on October 9th, 1951.



We always had a Christmas pageant, which was put on by the grade school. I don't recall many details of specific pageants, but I did play some crèche character roles and, of course, we sang Christmas carols galore. All parents attended these spectacles to see their children perform.

I walked to and from school for all of the 12 years I attended St. Adrian. In the morning I would walk down the sidewalk on Main Avenue to our eight o-clock pre-school mass at the church. There we were separated by grades, with our teacher-nun behind our class to administer discipline if needed. Otherwise all of my two-block trips to and from school took a route across the lawn and past the barn of “Mama” and “Papa” Wallrich, our next-door neighbors to the north.

Throughout most of grade school I would walk home for lunch. Most kids would bring a sack-lunch but since school was so close, I took advantage of the better lunch I would receive from mom. When I was really young, I would sit on mom's knee after lunch and she would recite nursery rhymes. I can easily remember *"Little Jack Horner," "One-Two Buckle My Shoe," "Jack Sprat," "Hickory Dickory Dock,” “Jack and Jill,” “Jack Be Nimble” and "Four and Twenty Blackbirds."* I have no idea where mom learned all those nursery rhymes. It certainly wasn't as a small child as she didn't speak English and her parents would not have known English nursery rhymes. Notice that many of those that I remember had “Jack” in the title. Coincidence?

In my later years in grade school, St. Adrian introduced hot lunch, which was served in the community room of the church basement. Local ladies made the mostly-delicious meals, which we rushed through so that we would have more time for play before school started again.

Say It With Music

We also had an annual piano recital. I took piano lessons for several years from nun-teachers and a couple of years from the wife of a local minister. I was never really enthused about playing, but I respected my parents for insisting that I take lessons. The only song that I remember playing at one of our annual recitals is "American Patrol." It was a duet that I played with Ron Hensen, a boy from the class ahead of mine. When I was a junior, the school formed a band. I jumped at the chance to join. For some unknown reason I chose to play a trombone. Again, the nuns along with other local teachers gave lessons while some students were self-taught. I can’t assess how musically talented the nuns were, but I'm amazed that they were able to organize complete concert and marching bands in relatively short order. Our first Director was Jay Elgathun who commuted from Sioux Falls. The marching band played for several regional annual parades such as the Luverne Band Festival and Worthington’s Turkey Day Parade. My enthusiasm for band probably stemmed from my love of Big Band and March music, which I had enjoyed for quite some time (another nerd association). More on my music tastes in the chapter ***Entertainment.*** One of my few regrets is that I didn’t take piano more seriously. I love piano music and would enjoy being able to play today. Alas, I can’t even play “*Chopsticks*.”

Playing in the high school band prompted several of us to develop an interest in creating a swing band outside the purviews of school. Thirteen of us formed a band, which we called (isn't this clever) "The Thirteen’s.” We built our own music stands and started playing for dances, most of which were held above dad's store in the Knights of Columbus Hall. Since dad and his brothers, Nick and Henry, owned the hall, we didn't have to pay rent. We were allowed to play for other dances in the school auditorium.

Our little band sounded pretty good, and it caught the attention of KELO, a Sioux Falls television station. They asked us to play on a locally produced show that highlighted regional talent. It was quite a thrill to be on (black and white) television at such a young age. The band continued to play throughout our senior year in high school.

During Advent all students would meet in a common area of the school to view the lighting of the Advent wreath candles. We would sing “O Come O Come Emanuel" and then return to class.

All upper grades had a choir. We would alternate singing for masses and sometimes perform at concerts. I was one of six senior boys asked to sing at the Austin wedding of my high school basketball coach, Gene Biewen.

In With The New

In my junior year of 1955 we moved into our newly constructed high school. The old combined ELHI school remained as a grade school. We were so proud of our new facilities, which provided up-to-date laboratories, and much larger classrooms. The new gym was enormous compared to the old, but had one drawback. The floor was

concrete, overlain with tile. All of the basketball players developed shin splints from playing on this hard surface (see more on basketball in the chapter on ***Sports***).

Those who chose to participated in oratory competitions called Declamatory Contests between individuals and schools. They were really a big deal and often had as many fans in attendance as sporting events. They were held in school auditoriums where the memorized presentations were performed and judged. Subjects were chosen by the contestants and ranged from controversial to humorous. I participated in several of these contests and found them to be much more nerve-racking than performing in sports. The competition was very helpful in developing poise and confidence in public speaking.

Out With The Old

Our senior class play was called "Sing a Song of Sixteen," a three-act comedy. I played the lead role as David Robinson, Professor of Music. All of the senior class participated in some way. If they were not actors, they contributed as stage managers, scriptwriters, etc. The play was presented only once in our school auditorium on November 11, 1956. I recall that the play required a lot of memorization (obviously) and weeks of preparation. But working so closely on a project with all of your classmates was a very rewarding and unforgettable experience. I still remember some of the dialogue.



Me with Co-actors
Marge Fritz /Ruth Hendel

Spring of our senior year sped by with so many activities and preparation for our transition to new life challenges keeping us very busy. We had a senior prom with a Parisian theme, a full baseball schedule, "skip day" and graduation planning. I graduated with 25 classmates many of whom have faithfully attended reunions, which we hold every five years. We honor and pray for the several beloved classmates and spouses that we have lost in the 56 years since we left St. Adrian. We have a very responsive and mutually supportive class, all of whom genuinely like and respect each other and their spouses.

Preparing For The Real World

Following graduation I was pretty set on attending the University of Minnesota's Institute of Technology. I was a little unsure of a career path but I had an interest in math and science so Engineering seemed to be a good choice. I stated in the chapter on ***Chores and Jobs:*** “Perhaps watching the intricacy and complexity of the binder mechanism along with other equally fascinating devices, appliances and apparatus in the hardware store was the genesis of my interest in engineering.” At the time Engineers were in demand and it was a rewarding career financially. I decided that Mechanical Engineering would suit me best.

Before I could complete my college registration my brother Virgil and I had a remarkable discussion that led to a major change in plans. He had been drafted into two wars, World War II and the Korean Conflict. It seemed like the U.S. was continually getting involved in international hostilities and the likelihood of other wars was always on the horizon. Virgil reasoned that I would probably dislike the military as much as he and that there might be a way to minimize my potential involvement. At the time there was a program offered by the Army and National Guard that would allow volunteers to spend six months on active duty and then six years as active reservists. The latter would involve weekly or monthly drills and a two-week camp in the summer. You would not be called into active duty as long as you were attending college. With the five-year (250 credit) requirement for engineering school, I would probably finish my commitment near the time of graduation and I would then never be further obligated to the military. I concurred with my brother's advice and joined the National Guard in June of 1957 at age 17. As in ***Les Miserable’s*** where Jean Valjean became convict #24601, I became U.S. Army recruit #NG27374494!

I'm In The Army Now

I joined Headquarters Company, 3rd. Battalion, 135th Infantry Regiment of the National Guard, located in Luverne, Minnesota. I immediately joined them in their annual two-week camp at Camp Ripley, near Little Falls. Soon after camp mom and dad drove me to Minneapolis where I boarded a military bus to Fort Leonard Wood in central Missouri where I underwent six weeks of basic training in Company B, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Brigade. Many of my military experiences are related in the chapter on ***Humor.*** There were three positive highlights of my basic training that stand out.

Halfway through the six weeks of basic training I was, without doubt, in the best physical condition of my entire life. In addition to making me feel great, it paid off with a very welcome reward. At that time we underwent a very grueling physical training test. I finished among the five top enlistees in our Company of about 190 men. The reward was a three-day pass. We were in some field exercises on a Friday about noon trying to eat the fish floating in our mess kits during a downpour. A truck pulled up and told the five of us to report. We were taken back to our barracks to get into dry clothes and begin our weekend leave. I'll never forget the forlorn looks of my fellow trainees as we pulled away from them while they continued eating their soaked meals. I took a bus to St. Louis where I had a pre-arranged date with one of my fellow platoon member's sister. Schaeffer assured me that she was nice *and* good-looking; however he warned me not to take advantage of her. I didn't. I stayed at the Schaeffer home for two nights and really enjoyed the break from training and Fort Leonard Wood. We attended a St. Louis Cardinal game at the old Busch Stadium and saw the legendary Stan Musial play.

I earned another three-day leave for being one of the members of our company to earn the Army Expert Marksmanship Badge with the M-1 rifle. Those early years of shooting gophers paid off. I again spent the three days in St. Louis but not with the Schaeffer family.

Following basic training I was sent to Fort Carson, Colorado. It was a fortunate assignment as the camp was located in a great climate next to the very nice small city of Colorado Springs. While there I took some army correspondence classes in a few subjects required to enter engineering school. I didn't have the opportunity to take these courses in high school, as they weren't offered. I was trained as a Communications Specialist at Fort Carson. Following my active duty discharge in late 1957 I resumed National Guard training while in college. I trained with a Minneapolis National Guard unit during the year but I attended the annual two-week summer training at Camp Ripley with my unit from Luverne. Just as planned, I completed my military obligation with an honorable discharge at the same time that I graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1963.



9th Infantry Division
47th. Infantry Regiment
Fort Carson, Colorado

Viking Division
Minnesota
National Guard



I chose to include this military service summary in this chapter on ***Education*** because, I will argue, it was one of the most important learning experiences of my life. I matured more in the first few months of training than in all my high school years. I learned from some of my fellow recruits about the difficult lives that they would be returning to – a way of life that I could never accept. I came to realize how badly I wanted to get an education that would hopefully lead to a rewarding career with a secure and comfortable future.

Finally - College

I finished my six-month National Guard stint in time for winter quarter enrollment at the University of Minnesota in January of 1958. Initially I struggled a bit in some of the technical courses, which I believe, was a result of minimal options among preparatory subjects in high school. In contrast, we were required to take the equivalent of one year (50 credits) of elective "non-technical" courses such as literature, astronomy, business

law, economics, writing, etc. I did very well in those classes, probably because my high school prepared me well for these subjects or, as I've found out since; I have a considerable interest in a more eclectic and comprehensive knowledge.

During the first three years of college I returned home to Adrian in the summers. I worked in dad's store, played on softball teams, dated and generally had a good time while earning some college money. The tuition was only two to three hundred dollars per quarter at the time. You could actually pay your own way through college with a summer job along with part-time jobs during the school year.

The first two years of college I lived with my sister Bev and her family. Initially they rented a duplex on Maple Lane in St. Anthony Village and then in April of 1959 they bought a home on 99th Street in east Bloomington. I enjoyed Bev's great food and other amenities such as laundry service that she graciously provided. It also gave me an opportunity to enjoy watching my nieces and nephews grow up in their early years. Eventually, however, the long ride to the "U" and my desire to be closer to the campus experience caused me to seek alternatives.

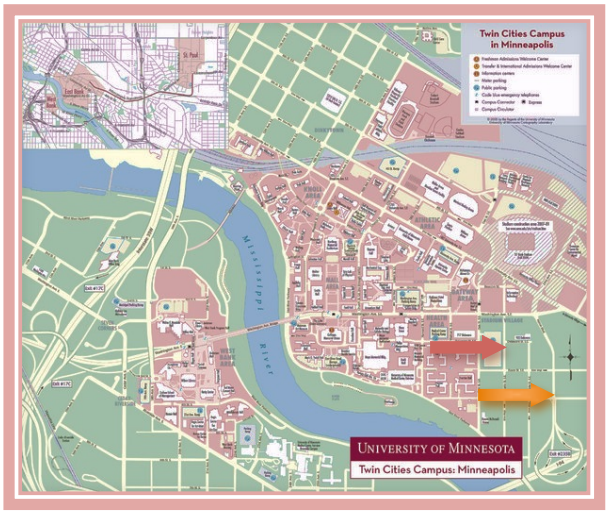
My childhood friend and high school classmate, Bill Boecker, my cousin, Henry Schutz, and a boarding housemate of theirs, Clarence (Andy) Anderson were looking for a private home to rent. The four of us found a home just off campus on Ontario Street. We moved into the home in 1961 and stayed for about a year when it was sold to be razed along with adjacent homes to make way for a large parking ramp near Oak Street and Washington Avenue. We were forced to find another residence. We then moved into a home that also was scheduled for razing in a couple of years to allow for expansion of the entrance road to I-94. We found the home to be a perfect and inexpensive place to live. The owners, who had moved to Golden Valley, sold us some of the furnishings and did not care how we treated the home as they had already reached a sale arrangement with the State of Minnesota. The agreement allowed them to continue to collect rent until the time of demolition.

The four of us got along very well. We sometimes shared meals, played competitive card and cribbage games, hosted parties and socialized together. Andy and I participated in several intramural sports leagues and attended many Gopher football, basketball and hockey games together.

The last two years of college I attended summer school. The Institute of Technology required completion of 250 credits for an engineering degree. Since I got a late start because of my time in military service, summer school allowed me to catch up and obtain my degree in the normal five years. I worked part-time during these summers as a bartender at the Goal Line on East Hennepin Avenue.

Engineering School was difficult but I loved the college life. I did so-so in the technical courses and aced the requisite non-technical courses. I'm not sure the latter was because I found them much easier or because I really liked them more or both. I do feel that the non-tech requirement resulted in a more rounded and comprehensive education that became very helpful in my future employment, social relationships and personal pleasures.

Campus Housing 1960-1963



1st House

2nd House

I did make time for partying, sports, and other social activities that are an integral and, in my opinion, an indispensable part of the college experience. In order to accommodate these activities I often studied late into the night. I kept awake by taking NoDoz and listening to the radio. I remember, in particular, a music station that I often listened to into the wee hours. Leigh Kammon was a radio personality at WLOL in the early 1960s. His show came on at midnight with his theme song ***Someone To Watch Over Me.*** The music he played was soothing and conducive to study.

All By Myself

Eventually, Andy (June 1962) and Bill (July 1962) got married and Henry left the "U." For the first and only time in my life I began living alone. I rented an apartment in south Minneapolis at 2541 Blaisdell Avenue. It proved to be a good choice as it was close to my future employment in downtown Minneapolis. It was a small, eight-unit apartment building, with communal bathrooms. Fortunately, I was the only man in the building and the men's bathroom was directly across the hall from my apartment door. The apartment itself consisted of a combination living/bedroom with a pullout couch for a bed, and a tiny kitchenette. It was only $40 per month with off-street parking and near to a friendly neighborhood bar called "The Clock." It was perfect for my needs! I lived there for two years until just before our marriage when I moved into our newly purchased home at 5421 Portland Avenue in south Minneapolis.

I've previously stated that when I graduated after five years in the College of Engineering I felt somewhat unfulfilled. I had been introduced to the vast world of academia and had found out how little I knew of other areas of study. I loved college and could have become a perpetual student if I had the financial resources to support such a whimsical fantasy. The next best thing was to pursue more knowledge through reading, travel and further independent study.

Later, while working for NSP I had an opportunity to see the other side of academia when I was asked to teach an evening Energy Management class in the MBA program at St. Thomas College, now the University of St. Thomas (see chapter on ***Career).*** St. Thomas' MBA program had become quite prominent because they employed accomplished local executives with diverse corporate backgrounds as faculty in order to balance and combine theory with practice. Some of the industry seminars that I had previously conducted introduced me to teaching. St. Thomas provided me with further opportunity to satisfy this longstanding urge. I taught for two years, finding the experience to be very satisfying and it came with a bonus – I was paid rather generously!



My College Bonus

The best thing that I derived from my college experience was meeting Liliane. This fortunate stroke of serendipity ultimately brought me a most lovely and loving lifetime companion. With God's blessing our marriage produced a family that I am very proud of and an amazingly contented life that I graciously accept but do not deserve.

"Desire of knowledge, like the thirst of riches, increases ever with the acquisition of it."

Laurence Sterne, 1713-1768

"Learn everything you can, anytime you can, from anyone you can; there will always come a time when you will be grateful you did."

Sarah Caldwell, 1924-2006

"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."

Benjamin Franklin, 1706-1790

"Let us never be betrayed into saying we have finished our education; because that would mean we had stopped growing."

Julia H. Gulliver, 1856-1940

Courtship

The Meeting

The first time I saw Liliane we were at a beer party (we called them keggers) with friends in the wooded area just north of the Minnesota River near the old Bloomington Ferry Bridge (now the crossing is Highway 169). All of us were students at the University of Minnesota. My cousin Henry Schutz and a high school classmate, Bill Boecker, invited me to the party. They lived in an all-male rooming house in Dinkytown near Marshall-University High School. Liliane lived next door in an all-female rooming house called the "Smith House." The proximity of the two houses allowed interaction of the residents (they could converse between opposing bedroom windows). Friendships between residents of the two houses evolved. One of those friendships developed between Liliane and Clarence (Andy) Anderson who I had previously met through Henry and Bill. He brought her to the riverside party that evening – but not as a date.

Andy introduced me to Liliane and her striking beauty and gracious demeanor struck me immediately. I tried to intermingle with her as much as possible that evening. I was instantly infatuated with her! Little did I know?

Always On My Mind

After I started living on campus with Bill, Henry and Andy we continued to keep contact with the residents of the Smith House and I would occasionally see Liliane as she and Andy maintained their friendship. Unusually, they both agreed that they were not dating - just platonic friends. However if you knew Andy as I do, that proposition from his point of view would not be convincing. I didn't mind however, since their relationship allowed me to see her on occasion even though I wasn't interested in having a steady girlfriend at the time. I kept track of her hoping she would still be available when I was ready to pursue a serious relationship.

Competition

Liliane was also maintaining a long-range relationship with a high-school sweetheart, Joe. He had gone into military service, and was stationed in Europe, but she wrote him regularly.

I had a rather active dating life, as I met a number of girls on campus as well as through other non-college networks. I also occasionally dated girls I knew from my high school years, especially when I went home to Adrian for weekend or summer visits. I developed many friendships of both genders at the campus Newman Club, the Catholic center for various religious, social and sporting activities. None of the girls I dated had lasting appeal since I was determined to concentrate on my education and wouldn't allow the distraction of getting involved in a serious relationship. Liliane, however, never totally left my mind.

Getting to Know You

As I became more comfortable with the prospect of soon completing college I loosened my restrictions on serious dating and I began seeing Liliane regularly. When we first started dating our relationship was merely that of an amicable friendship, but as my thought process became more pragmatic, I concluded that if I eventually fell in love with Liliane I would definitely pursue a deeper relationship. This pragmatic analysis, evolved from my engineering training and I started to systematically evaluate all of the pros and cons of bringing our relationship to a higher level. The result was that I found many pros and very few, if any, cons.

I learned of Liliane's family background as displaced persons in Germany, their immigration and the struggle to build a life in America. She knew hardships and difficulties that I could not relate to. I found that she was a warm, gentle and caring person with good morals. And OOOH, what a gorgeous package these attributes came in! I admired her for insisting that I would not be allowed to unwrap the package.

We started dating regularly and really enjoyed each other. We found that we had a lot of common interests (e.g. musical theatre, travel) and some not so common (e.g. sports, beer).

If Ever I Would Leave You

I sought to establish a closer relationship with Liliane when we hit a bump in the road (literally). This event could also have been included in the ***Oops*** chapter, as you will see.

In May of 1962 Liliane and I were dating and decided to attend a Friday evening Twins game at the old Met Stadium in Bloomington. We drove in my beautiful brand new 1962 Chevrolet Impala. I had just picked it up two weeks earlier in Adrian and it had less than 500 miles on the odometer.

In about the 6th inning the skies opened up with a drenching rain. We ran for the car and, along with everyone else, slowly made our way out of the parking lot. There were no freeways to take us directly back to the University area where we both lived. We drove very slowly as the rain was torrential and at times flooded the roadways. We took 31st Avenue most of the way after winding around Lake Nokomis. Just north of Lake Street there is a railroad overpass, which necessitates a dip in the roadway. As we approached the overpass we saw cars stalled in deep water that had built up in the depression. I applied the brakes but they totally failed. Apparently, our drive in the sometimes mid-wheel-depth water had taken its toll on the brakes. Helplessly, we slowly slid into what was now a small lake to join numerous other cars that could not make it through. Oops!

I panicked! My new car now had water up to the outside door handles and it was leaking in. I crawled out the window into the icy water and told Liliane I was going to Lake Street to find a tow-truck to get us out. I had one of those (brand new Impala/Liliane? – Liliane/brand new Impala?) moments. She has never forgotten which one I chose. Oops! (But remember – only 500 miles!)

Of course there were no tow trucks available. I walked back to the nearly submerged car to find Liliane missing. We were next to a Western Union factory and many of the nighttime employees had come to a large loading area to watch the continuing saga of the growing jungle of half submerged cars. I saw Liliane standing in the garage doorway with a blanket wrapped around her.

While I was gone, one of the other drivers had approached our car and offered to carry Liliane to safety. After she accepted and was in his arms, she realized he was slightly inebriated seconds before he tripped on an underwater curb, dropping Liliane into the water in the process. Oops!

I called my roommate Andy who picked us up and took us to our respective campus homes. I don't recall receiving a goodnight kiss from Liliane. I've never understood why she didn't appreciate the difficult choices I had to make on that fateful night.

The next day, I got a Chevrolet dealer to tow my car into their garage. The car was still partially underwater, so they attached a hook to the rear bumper to pull it out. I had left the car in park so they proceeded to tear off the rear bumper. Oops! The insurance company chose not to replace the car. They replaced all of the interior upholstery, carpeting etc. The car was good as new, and it became my lifetime most-favorite car. I never had any further trouble with the car relating to this most forgetful event. It was a far different story with Liliane. For some reason (you can guess why) we did not see each other for almost a year after the "incident."

Home Alone

In June of 1963 I had graduated from the "U" and began my job at Northern States Power (NSP). As mentioned earlier I had moved into a bachelor apartment in south Minneapolis at 2541 Blaisdell Avenue after our campus house foursome disbanded. It was convenient since it was only 10 minutes from NSP's general office where I now worked. Rental was only $40 per month with off-street parking and a nice neighborhood bar. I loved it!

Forgiven - But Not Forgotten

One Sunday evening in the summer of 1963 I received a call from Liliane. I was very excited to hear from her as I was convinced that I had permanently blown any chance for reconciliation. She told me that she had become a stewardess for Northwest Airlines and was renting a room from a Mrs. Doyle in Richfield. I filled her in on my life since we had last seen each other and then I suggested that we meet soon. We did meet – that very night!

We proceeded to date regularly after that. Liliane would often stay at her parent's home in Forest Lake when she had several days off between flights. If I wanted to see her, I was required to be a very traditional beau and pick her up for dates even when she was in Forest Lake. No meeting halfway. Okay… so I had to drive to Forest Lake on the old and notoriously dangerous Highway 8. It had three lanes, so there were many head-on collisions occasioned from attempts to simultaneously pass from both directions. I owed her.

On my first trip to Forest Lake I met Liliane's parents. They had a small but well kept home on Broadway, one of the main thoroughfares in Forest Lake. I tried, of course, to be on my best behavior, as I wanted them to have a good first impression of me. Apparently they did, according to Liliane.

When I arrived, I found Liliane with a large bandage on one of her hands. Earlier she had gone into the basement, which had some rather treacherous stairs. She tripped and, in trying to catch herself, put her hand through a pane on the door at the bottom of the stairs. I teased her later – much later, that she must have been very nervous or excited about my visit and that distraction was the cause of the accident.

Libido Control

Meeting her parents for the first time was very memorable so it is not a surprise that I actually remember the movie we saw at the White Bear Theater that evening. It was "The Cardinal" directed by Otto Preminger. After the movie we drove down to the lake and necked for a while. By this time Liliane had very clearly let me know the limits of our physical relationship. They were not to go beyond an open-mouthed kiss. I respected her for taking such a strong position and since she was the first girl that I had seriously considered as a potential marriage mate, I meekly complied. But she was so beautiful!

Smoke Gets In Your Eyes

As we continued dating I met other members of Liliane's family, and she met my sister and her family. Following a dinner one evening at Liliane's brother Guido's home we had a defining moment in our relationship. When we got into the car to drive home Liliane decided to light a cigarette, a habit she occasionally partook in. At that time, well before health warnings and other negative aspects of smoking were widely recognized, I detested the habit and Liliane was aware of my feelings. I took a calculated risk, snatched the cigarette, broke it in two, and threw it out the window. I then waited for her reaction. Surprisingly, she remained calm and accepted my, perhaps overzealous, action. She now knew how serious I was about the subject, respected my feelings, and never again smoked in my presence. Our courtship continued. She is now fanatically opposed to any form of smoking.

A Royal Girlfriend

In the winter of 1964, some of my friends at NSP asked if they could nominate Liliane for Queen of the Minneapolis Engineers Club. The Club was very large at the time and held luncheons every Friday at the Curtis Hotel in downtown Minneapolis. During one of those luncheons on November 22nd 1963 we received word that President Kennedy had been assassinated.

My friends and I finally convinced Liliane to accept the nomination. She was interviewed at length by committee members from the Club and by Barbara Flanagan, a well-known columnist for the ***Minneapolis Star***, but there was no swimsuit competition. If they had, it would have decidedly tipped the contest in Liliane's favor. Just the same, she won the title and represented the Minneapolis Engineers Club for the following year. She was honored as Queen during one of our Friday luncheons.

Fish Gotta Swim And Birds Gotta Fly

In the summer of 1964 Liliane told me that she planned to use one of her airline passes to visit her grandmother and two sets of aunts and uncles in Germany. She planned to make a two-week trip that September. As you might suspect from my growing passion for travel described in other chapters, I became envious. I was also concerned that she might want to visit her old boyfriend, Joe, who was stationed in Germany. Actually, seeing him *was* on her agenda.

In order to safeguard my growing affection for Liliane and to satisfy my now entrenched passion for travel, I decided to explore the possibility of accompanying her on the trip. With no objection from Liliane, my dream kept getting bigger and bigger. I decided to approach my employer about taking an unpaid leave of absence for nearly three months. I had been working for NSP for only about one year so I was skeptical about the success of such a request but felt compelled to try.

My plan was to see much of Europe on my own after Liliane returned home. Part of my motivation for the trip revolved around my growing fondness for Liliane. I was seriously considering a marriage proposal to her and if we were wed, I might never have such an opportunity for travel again. Little did I know!

A Defining Moment

A few weeks later my boss and I were attending a business conference in Madison, Wisconsin. One evening when I felt sufficient courage from perhaps a few too many drinks and, hoping my boss would be conciliatory for the same reason, I posed the question about a leave of absence. Surprisingly, he not only agreed to support my plan but also was very attuned to my reasoning. Whew! I didn't know it at the time but this night became a defining moment in my life.

As an aside, when I returned from Europe there was a Personnel Department directive in my in-basket, forbidding the type of leave of absence that I had just taken. Fortunately, neither my boss nor I were reprimanded since there had been no such formal policy before I called attention to the issue with my trip.

New York New York

One of Liliane's stewardess friends, Carol Tardio, was from Brooklyn and suggested that I stop over in New York on my way to Copenhagen, my first destination in Europe. Carol's boyfriend, Al, offered, and I accepted, to stay with him and take a day to visit the World's Fair being held in Queen's Flushing Meadows next to the recently opened Shea Stadium. The highlight of the Fair for me was the Vatican Pavilion, which housed Michelangelo's Pieta on loan from St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

I had an outstanding visit to New York as Al took me to many of the major sights, and one evening we enjoyed a gastronomical highlight – a terrific dinner in Little Italy (Al and Carol were both Italian).

In the meantime, Liliane continued to fly her schedule while making plans to meet me at her Aunt Gretel's home in Hamburg several days after my arrival in Copenhagen, Denmark, my first destination. I knew Liliane's schedule, so rather than fly directly from Copenhagen to Hamburg, my original plan, I decided to stay in Copenhagen for a few days to do some sightseeing while awaiting her flight.

Wonderful Copenhagen

I had a great time in Copenhagen. I spent some time at Tivoli, their famous amusement park, saw all the city sites and even took a ferry to Malmo, Sweden so that I could add another country to the list of those I would visit on my first, perhaps only, trip to Europe. Later, I would again take a ferry just to say I had been in another Continent, Africa. The time in Copenhagen passed slowly, as I was very anxious for Liliane's arrival.

I arrived at the airport, bought a bouquet of flowers, and asked a gate attendant to page Liliane as the passengers embarked from the plane. When she approached the attendant, I sprang from hiding and presented her with the flowers. She, of course, was pleasantly surprised. A couple of hours later we were on a flight to Hamburg where we were welcomed by Liliane's Tante Gretel and Onkle Alfons.



The next morning I took a train to Wolfsburg on the East/West German border. It is the home of Volkswagen. Prior to leaving home, I had ordered a bright red Volkswagen Beetle through a local dealer at a cost of $1,200. I spent the night in Wolfsburg and the next day picked up the car at the factory. I drove back to Hamburg where we spent a couple of days before leaving on a two-week excursion ending in Vienna.

Willkommen In Deutschland

Our first stop was in the town of Vechta, near Oldenburg. My sister-in-law Mary's grandmother and several of her aunts and uncles lived in Vechta. We promised to visit them. We found Mary's grandmother's home where she was sitting outside when we arrived. We were immediately ushered inside for a glass of schnapps. Thank God that Liliane spoke German. What a warm welcome.

Liliane stayed with Tante Mimi and I stayed with Onkle Josef. We spent the next couple of days traveling from relative to relative while being feted with wonderful food and drink. What an ideal way for me to be introduced to authentic German culture *in Germany*. We promised to visit Mary's cousin Gisella and her husband Werner, at their home near Cologne when we arrived there. Later, we did spend a night with them at a beautiful farm home where they were employed. On a subsequent trip we visited them again in the town of Stommeln where they then owned a supermarket and other properties. On that trip, Werner took us to visit the family hometowns of my Schutz ancestors where we actually met some of my dad's second cousins.

Hallo Junge Geliebte (Hello Young Lovers)

We drove through the Netherlands, Luxembourg and again Germany before descending into Switzerland and even tiny Lichtenstein (another country to cross off my list). Another foray into Germany through Bavaria brought us to Deisenhofen, a suburb of Munich, and home to Liliane's Großmutter (Oma), Tante Irmi, Onkle Fritz and their twin daughters Gabriella and Monica. They gave us a very warm welcome. We spent several days with them getting acquainted while taking daytrips to Munich and the Bavarian Alps with Onkle Fritz driving us in his Mercedes. A highlight of our visit to Munich was drinking beer in the world famous Hofbräuhaus.



Two asides that may be of interest to readers are the questions as to whether Liliane visited her old boyfriend – her original plan, and what the sleeping arrangements were for the two of us in our European travel.

Reverse Psychology?

I wanted to be sure that there would be no uncertainties about Liliane's relationship with me at some later time because she had not achieved closure with her previous boyfriend, Joe. I offered, nay I begged her, to take the car and visit him, as his army base was not far from our travels. She gave it some thought but then, with certain clarity, told me that she had no interest in seeing Joe and would have no regrets. I was relieved, to say the least.

Wake Me In The Morning

As to our sleeping arrangements, we insisted on separate bedrooms while staying with Liliane's relatives. Both her aunts were very liberal regarding sexual mores and couldn't understand why we would not sleep together. When we were on our own we became more practical as it became a matter of controlling expenses. We did share a bed but did not "sleep together" in the usual, biblical or colloquial sense. As stated earlier, Liliane was adamant early on in our relationship that she would retain the ultimate intimacy for marriage. I promised that I would never pressure her because I respected her and recognized her desire for pre-marital chastity as another of her many admirable attributes. We did fulfill this commitment, which I believe strengthened our relationship and blessed our marriage.

We left Munich and traveled through Switzerland and western Austria before arriving in Vienna, arguably the world's most romantic city, located on the beautiful Danube River. Liliane was scheduled to leave for home from Vienna to meet her employment obligations while I would continue on my many-country excursion on my own.

Some Enchanted Evening

After several beautiful days in Vienna, I planned a departure eve dinner at the Wiener Ratskeller, a beautiful medieval restaurant located in the basement of the Rathaus, or City Hall. We had a fabulous meal in an incredibly romantic setting that featured strolling violinists – so appropriate for Vienna. Following the meal, I told Liliane that I wanted to take advantage of our last night together by visiting the Stadtpark (City Park) to view it at night when it would look its finest under the light of a very timely full moon. She was somewhat reluctant as this autumn evening was turning cooler, but I persuaded her to make the last night of our European adventure together even more memorable with a short visit to this beautiful park.



We were the only ones in Stadtpark where we found a bench facing a small lake with beautiful white swans swimming in the shallows. The moon, as promised, illuminated not only the lake and the swans, but also a statue of Johann Strauss, Vienna's most famous composer/musician.





One Moment In Time

When all was perfect, I got on my knee before Liliane and asked her to marry me. I presented her with a ring I had secreted for all this time and distance. She didn't hesitate to say "yes!" and I became the happiest guy in the world – at least the happiest guy in Vienna!

Goodbye My Love

The next day we had a painful farewell. We promised to write each other as I gave her some addresses that I knew I would be visiting along my somewhat seat-of-the-pants route for the next several weeks. She told me later that she tried to reach me from the airport by telephone at our hotel, but I had already left. She had been prepared to quit her job and join me on the rest of the trip!

The following part of this chapter deviates somewhat from the chapter title and could have been included in the chapter on Travel. Including it here however, provides some chronological continuity in that it did take place during our courtship.

European Escapade

My first stop was Klagenfurt in southern Austria. From there I drove to Trieste, Venice, Bologna, Florence and Rome in Italy. Driving along the Mediterranean coast I visited Nice and Cannes on the French Riviera before

entering Spain and stopping at the seaside village of Calella on the Costa Brava just north of Barcelona. I stayed several days at a newly opened tourist hotel, which cost $2 per day including all meals during this off-season period! It was a great place to stay as I could take a commuter train to Barcelona each day to do sightseeing. I saw a bullfight one Sunday afternoon.

From Barcelona, I headed west where I picked up a lone English-speaking backpacker who was hitchhiking near Zaragoza. It was good to have some company as I really missed having Liliane as a companion in the car. I gave him a ride to Madrid. After my passenger departed, I discovered a large scratch on the inside of the passenger side door. Apparently, the backpack he held on his lap had a piece of metal that kept rubbing on the door while we rode. Oh well, his company was pleasant and the car would probably get a lot more nicks and dents in the future.

Everything Came Out Alright

After a few days of sightseeing in Madrid, I left my car at Barajas Airport. I took an early flight to Seville and then an all-day bus ride to Algeciras, a city directly across the bay from Gibraltar. The bus ride was quite primitive with no air-conditioning or bathrooms and very uncomfortable seats. In addition, passengers had to share the ride with animals and fowl. It was a great experience to see the "real" Spain! However my enthusiasm for the trip was diminished considerably by a major case of diarrhea, which fortunately, I completely alleviated while at the Seville airport.

The Dark Continent

The day after arriving in Algeciras, I took a ferry to Tangier, Morocco to satisfy my desire to visit another continent. My arrival in this exotic port was exhilarating but, as I found out, also somewhat terrifying.

Somebody Likes Me?

I found a cheap hotel and then set out to see some of the sights of Tangier such as the Kasbah (market), beaches and various other city scenes. As I was walking through the crowded streets, I sensed that someone was following me. I kept seeing the same man wherever I walked. I decided to take some evasive action to determine if he was actually following me or if his presence was simply coincidental. I went in and out of shops, crossed streets, doubled back and he was always behind me but he avoided looking directly at me when I looked back. Finally I turned a corner and waited in a doorway. When he followed I confronted him by asking him why he was following me. He purported to not speak English, but it was clear that he was frightened when I grabbed him and shoved him against a wall. I motioned for him to leave and I never saw him again.

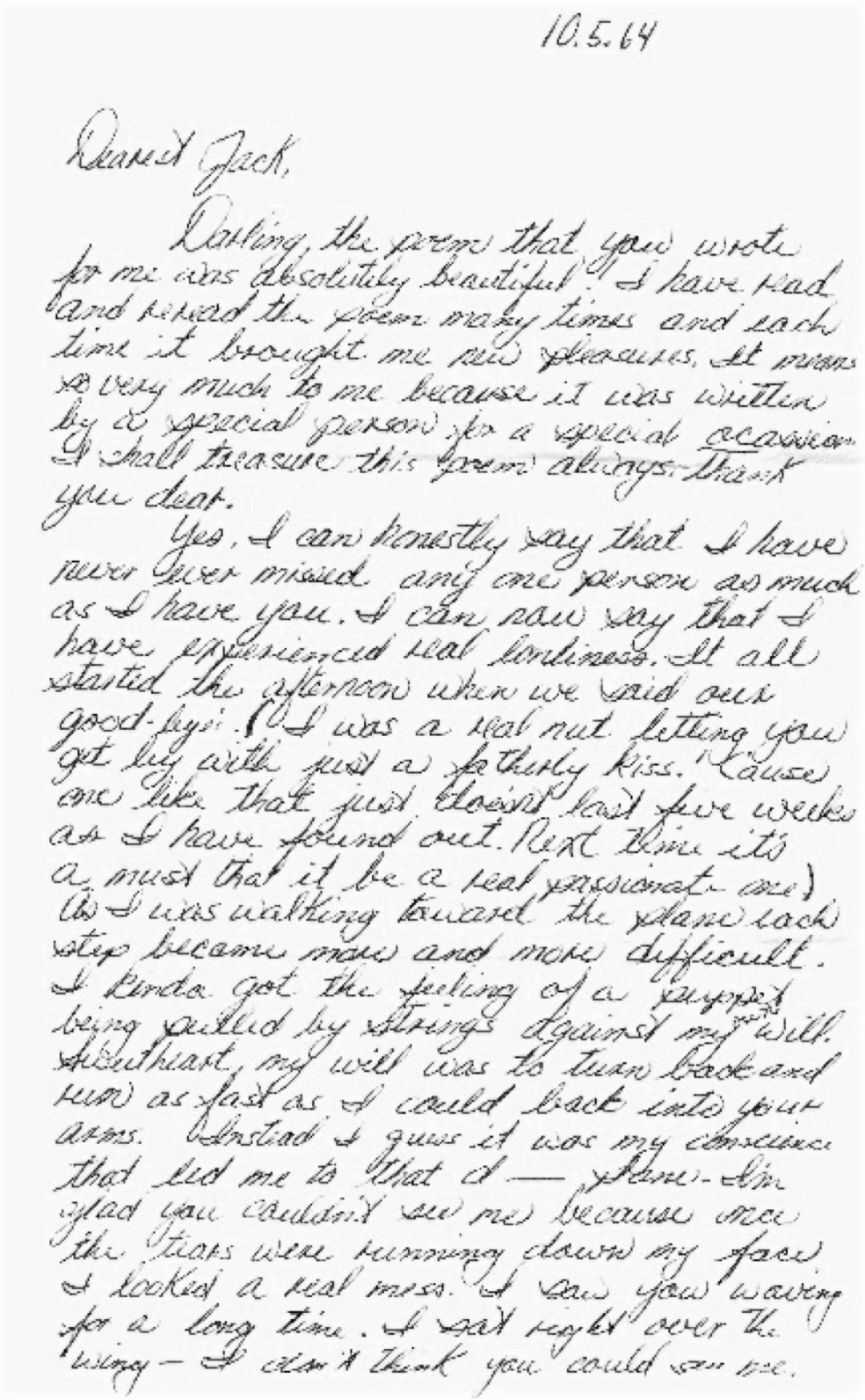
Later, I visited a bar, which was occupied by several U.S. sailors along with local clientele. Tangier, at the time, was one of the Navy's main ports in the Mediterranean where they refueled, took on supplies and gave shore leave to their crew. It felt good to speak to fellow countrymen and we shared some drinks while we queried each other about where we had been and where we were going. I told them of my confrontation earlier and their response made me shudder. The sailors were not allowed off their ship in Tangier unless they traveled in groups of three or more. Tangier, they told me, was one of the most dangerous ports that they visited. There were, it seems, many thieves in Tangier who made their living preying on foreigners.

When I got back to my hotel, I checked airline schedules to Madrid where I had left my car. I already had my ticket, but hoped that I could leave the next day instead of the day after. No such luck. My scheduled flight on Air Moroc was my only option. I spent most of my time the next day in my hotel room, going out only for meals.

Air Rescue

I was relieved to get back to Europe where I never felt threatened. I picked up my car at Barajas and headed for the Basque areas of Spain. For the next several days I traveled through northern Spain, finally exiting at San Sebastian on the Atlantic coast. From there I drove into France to Bordeaux, then through the Loire Valley, Le Mans and on to Paris. In Paris I visited the offices of E.H. Harms, the German company that I had contracted with to ship my car back to the United States. I was particularly anxious to get there because I anticipated

receiving a letter from Liliane. It was one of the addresses I had given her. I was not disappointed. There was a beautiful letter awaiting me, and I read it over and over. As happy as I was to hear from Liliane, I'm not ashamed to say it somewhat depressed me to know that it would still be weeks before I saw her again. The old "absence makes the heart grow fonder" thing kicked in big time.



10.5.64

Dearest Jack,

Darling, the poem that you wrote for me was absolutely beautiful! I have read and reread the poem many times and each time it brought me new pleasures. It means so very much to me because it was written by a special person for a special occasion. I shall treasure this poem always. Thank you dear.

Yes, I can honestly say that I have never ever missed any one person as much as I have you. I can now say that I have experienced real loneliness. It all started the afternoon when we said our good-bys. (I was a real nut letting you get by with just a fatherly kiss. 'Cause one like that just doesn't last five weeks as I have found out. Next time it's a must that it be a real passionate one.) As I was walking toward the plane each step became more and more difficult. I kinda got the feeling of a puppet being pulled by strings against my will. Sweetheart, my will was to turn back and run as fast as I could back into your arms. Instead I guess it was my conscience that led me to that d—— plane. I'm glad you couldn't see me because once the tears were running down my face I looked a real mess. I saw you waving for a long time. I sat right over the wing — I don't think you could see me.

This is the first page of a seven-page letter sent to me by Liliane on October 5th 1964. I received it in Paris at the local offices of the German company I contracted to ship my VW from Le Havre to Chicago.



A 2008 photo from one of our many trips to Paris.
This time, unlike my first visit 44 years earlier, it was with Liliane at my side.

After sightseeing for two days in Paris, I drove to Le Havre to leave my car at the shipping company docks. I was now on my own without a car. I took a ferry to Dover, England from Calais and then a train to London where I stayed for several days, seeing most of the city's highlights including the Tower of London, Westminster, Parliament, and the British Museum.

Continental Farewell

I then took a train to Edinburgh, Scotland where I spent a day seeing the sights before returning to London, my final destination. I flew back from Standsted airport where I spent my last few pounds on a collection of books on WWII that I still have.

I took $1,000 with me to Europe, and after nearly three months I had not spent it all! I lost over 20 pounds from a combination of forgetting to eat (I didn't want to take the time) and occasional bouts of diarrhea, which was, at the time, pretty prevalent among tourists. I seem to be particularly vulnerable to this malady. I used to joke in later years that all I had to do was look at a map of Mexico and I would get sick!

Journey to God's Country

Through my letters, I had asked Liliane if we could spend the weekend with my family in Adrian when I returned. She had met my parents, but I wanted to have a more relaxed get-together now that we were engaged. Bev and her family drove down to Adrian with Liliane, and upon my arrival in the Twin Cities from London I flew directly to Sioux Falls where I was picked up at the airport. It was a heady weekend to see my fiancé and family while re-counting my adventures. Liliane made fun of Adrian's size while I praised it as a paradise.

Start The Planning

The following week was very hectic. I can't recall if Liliane was working but I was. We went to Forest Lake to visit her parents as soon as we could. I was warmly welcomed and throughout our marriage I have always felt an affectionate and genial acceptance by her family.

We decided to get married the following June on the 19th. Where we were to be married became somewhat of an issue because of religion. Liliane was raised as a Lutheran and I as a Roman Catholic. We both agreed that sharing the same religion would be most advantageous in raising a family and also pragmatic by avoiding duplication in worship. She agreed to convert to Catholicism, but wanted me to broach the proposition with her parents whom she trusted and relied on for guidance.

Sitting in her parent's living room one evening, I told them of our dilemma. I'll never forget their response; however I don't recall which of them said what. As they looked at me they said that they thought that married couples *should* be of the same faith and supported Liliane's desire to become a Catholic. However they also admonished that, "If one of your children someday comes to you with the same request, we hope you will accept it as we have." They were wise.

I asked some of my Catholic friends if they knew a priest who would be particularly adept at instructing Liliane in the tenets of the Catholic faith and in guiding her through the process of conversion. One of them knew of a priest at the Basilica of St. Mary, Father Richard Thurner, who was highly endorsed. We made an appointment with Father Turner, and Liliane had weekly instructions thereafter until Easter Sunday in the spring of 1965. On that day Liliane became a Catholic. Members of my family and Liliane's parents attended the ceremony at the Basilica.

While we were making arrangements for the wedding we were also looking for a home to buy in South Minneapolis. We found one that we thought was a bargain in a nice neighborhood on Portland Avenue across from Pearl Park. Mr. and Mrs. Art Johnson owned it. They were retiring and had purchased a more suitable new home for empty nesters near Lake Minnetonka.

A Regretful Disruption

We bought the home for $22,500 and were very excited to move into such a nice home in a great neighborhood immediately upon our marriage. However, we hit a snag with the purchase. When I arrived at work one day, a fellow employee who knew Art Johnson through a civic group had heard that he had died from a heart attack while shoveling snow at our new home.

Within days after Art Johnson's funeral I received a telephone call from Mrs. Johnson's attorney who stated that she would like to back out of the sale. I was astounded at that prospect as we had shopped for homes for many months and never found one within our price range that was nearly as appealing. I told him I would talk it over with my fiancé. It didn't take us long to conclude that we would not relent on our purchase although we certainly felt compassion for Mrs. Johnson. We presumed that she didn't want to move into their new home and a new neighborhood by herself. I called her attorney and told him that while we empathized with Mrs. Johnson, we could not give up our first dream home. The attorney went ballistic. He shouted at me, threatened me and said that, legally, we didn't have a leg to stand on. Even I, with little legal knowledge, thought that his threat was hollow and had no merit. We did contact an attorney whom Liliane knew and a few simple questions about the status of the sale led him to concur with our interpretation of the law and our decision.

Sue Me

On a subsequent call from the attorney, again threatening legal action, I told him "Look, we really like Mrs. Johnson and if she had come to us expressing her plight and her wish to keep the home, we most likely would have yielded, but you, with your heavy-handed, arrogant and deceitful tactics have completely turned us against any kind of retreat from our position." He then became quiet, admitted that he had mishandled the matter, and felt an obligation to personally make it right for his client. He offered us, I think, $1,500 to back down. I told him that it was too late, that we were now committed to our decision, and I hoped that he had learned something

from this experience. Maybe he did. We saw Mrs. Johnson on several occasions after that including one time when she was meticulously cleaning the house before our move-in. She was very nice to us and didn't seem to have any animosity whatsoever. I moved into the house several weeks before our wedding.

Our courtship was nearing an end. We now concentrated on the day that we would join each other in holy matrimony. We were anxious to begin this new and exciting journey in our lives.

"To love another person is to see the face of God."

Victor Hugo, 1892-1885

"In courtship a man pursues a woman until she catches him."

Proverb

"For every beauty there is an eye somewhere to see it. For every truth there is an ear somewhere to hear it. For every love there is a heart somewhere to receive it."

Ivan Panin, 1855-1942

"During courtship, guarding each other's purity and refraining from intimacy are the acts of lovemaking."

Joshua Harris, 1974-

The Merger (Marriage)

Some people say that rain on a wedding day is a herald of good fortune. Most likely, the poor father of some hysterical, drenched bride made that up in a moment of inspired desperation. But you'll see why I'm a believer…

Our wedding day on June 19, 1965 was warm with the threat of thundershowers. Liliane spent the previous night at her brother Guido's home where she dressed the next morning. Liliane's dad and I were up early and, among many preparations, we took my car to the parking lot of our local grocery store to make sure wedding revelers would not modify it.

The wedding was at noon at the Basilica of St. Mary near Loring Park in downtown Minneapolis. During the mass the sky opened with a heavy rain. The dull crackling of the rain was punctuated by thunder and lightning. As the heavens applauded and wept, our little wedding party felt the drama of the day in the beautiful, cavernous glory of the Basilica.



The Basilica of St. Mary



Liliane and I both were overcome by emotion and had to use my hankie repeatedly to wipe tears of joy during the service, which was performed by Father Thurner. After mass, Liliane took a bouquet of roses to the statue of the Blessed Virgin located in a side aisle of the apse. The sun shone brightly as we exited the church.

Our wedding party consisted of my brother, Virgil, Liliane's brother, Guido, my childhood best friend, Dave Nealy, and my college housemate, Andy

Anderson. Ushers were my cousin, Henry Schutz, and high school friend, Bill Boecker. The latter two were also college housemates of Andy and me. Liliane's attendants were my sister, Bev, her sister-in-law, Jan Kauls, her cousin, Mara Kauls, and a family friend, Elfi Von Mende.

Immediately after the ceremony the wedding party and our parents enjoyed a luncheon in a private room at the Rainbow Cafe, a well-known establishment on Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue. We then drove to the Rose Garden at Lake Harriet where we took the majority of our wedding photographs. One of them has Liliane pointing to the identifying sign of a rose called Lily Marlene; the name of a WWII era song famously sung by Marlene Dietrich. It is a German love song, which became popular during World War II with soldiers and civilians from both sides. Liliane Marlene (Lili-AHN-nah mar-LAIN-nah), my new bride, was named after this song.

Honeymoon Cootie Clash

Our evening reception was held at the VFW hall on Lyndale Avenue just north of Lake Street. Our guests and we enjoyed drinks, a nice meal and dancing with music provided by a small band called “The Tropics.” We finally were able to relax a little and talk to friends and relatives. We left shortly before the festivities were completely over. I can't remember who retrieved my car from the grocery store parking lot but it was pre-packed with our luggage, which we used on our three-day mini-honeymoon in the north woods.

We didn't drive far on our first night as we stayed in the honeymoon suite at the Northstar Inn in downtown Minneapolis. They had a special arrangement for honeymooners called "Pampered in Pink.” I will omit details of our first night except for the fact that we were exhausted, slept well and that I was finally able to “unwrap the gorgeous package.”

The next morning, after a beautiful breakfast at the hotel, we left for a newly opened resort called “Quadna Mountain Lodge” near Hill City, a small town close to Grand Rapids. A fellow NSP employee who was a friend of the architect had recommended this Lodge.

We arrived at the lodge and checked into our spacious and hardly-used room. The lodge seemed to be quite busy with a lot of revelry taking place in the bar and throughout. That seemed rather odd for a Sunday afternoon until we found out that an annual convention of the Military Order of the Cooties was taking place at our, supposedly quiet, lodge. The Cooties are an auxiliary of the VFW and one of their principle objectives is for its members to have and provide fun for themselves and others. They did not disappoint with their crazy uniforms, noisemakers, whooping and hollering.



Cooties Giving Their Sign

We decided to take advantage of the advertised pool, which, we found, had water the color of skim milk. I don't know what that was about but it was a minor disappointment compared to what came next.

The maids had left our unscreened windows open and the room was filled with mosquitoes. We swatted them until we were tired, went to dinner and returned to a relatively sleepless night as the mosquito invasion continued. We were grateful that we were staying only one night at this just-opened resort. They clearly, and literally, had not yet gotten all the bugs out!

Garmisch U.S.A.

We left the next morning as soon as possible to drive to our next destination, hoping it would not be a disappointment also. It wasn't. We arrived at a resort called Garmisch, named after the picturesque Bavarian town. It is located on beautiful Lake Namakagon, near Cable, Wisconsin. It has a main lodge and a



number of cottages of various sizes. The theme is Old World Alpine. (Our room was inside the top-left balcony)

We stayed in the main lodge for two nights. We had a beautiful second story room with a lake view and fireplace. Our stay at Garmisch truly made our short mini-honeymoon trip very memorable. We returned to Garmisch in later years by ourselves and on another occasion with our children.

We returned to our new home and our jobs in Minneapolis. Northwest Airlines required their stewardesses to resign once they were married. It's hard to believe that within our generation such a thing was possible, but they also had other strict rules such as limits on weight and height and they did not hire male flight attendants. Liliane kept our marriage a secret for two months when she abruptly announced her marriage, thus triggering a departure from her airline career.

The Real Deal

Earlier I described our short post-marriage trip as a mini-honeymoon. Our real honeymoon was a free trip to Hawaii that Northwest Airlines offered to all stewardesses and their husbands upon their mandatory retirement. Northwest required that the trip be taken immediately after the marriage – in our case late June. We didn't want to go to Hawaii in June – thus the delay in Liliane's notice.

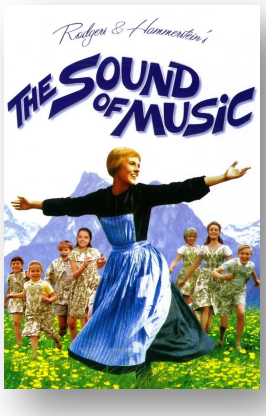
We left for Hawaii in September. The flight was wonderful as we sat in first class and were treated like royalty by the stewardesses who knew Liliane as a fellow employee. The drinks flowed freely and by the time we arrived in Honolulu we were both feeling quite relaxed. It was already dark when we arrived and we didn't have a hotel reservation as we were told that accommodations would be no problem that time of year. Liliane didn't want to shop for a hotel. While waiting for a cab, she pointed up at the airport traffic control tower and slurred, "How 'bout that one?"



We stayed at the newly opened high-rise luxury Hotel Ilikai in Waikiki. We recently came across a post card that Liliane wrote her parents, in German, about our stay. In the card she mentions that the normal rate for a room at the Ilikai was $24 but because of her airline connection we got it for half-price – $12 per night!

We stayed in Hawaii for two weeks, traveling to the Big Island of Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai, in addition to Oahu.

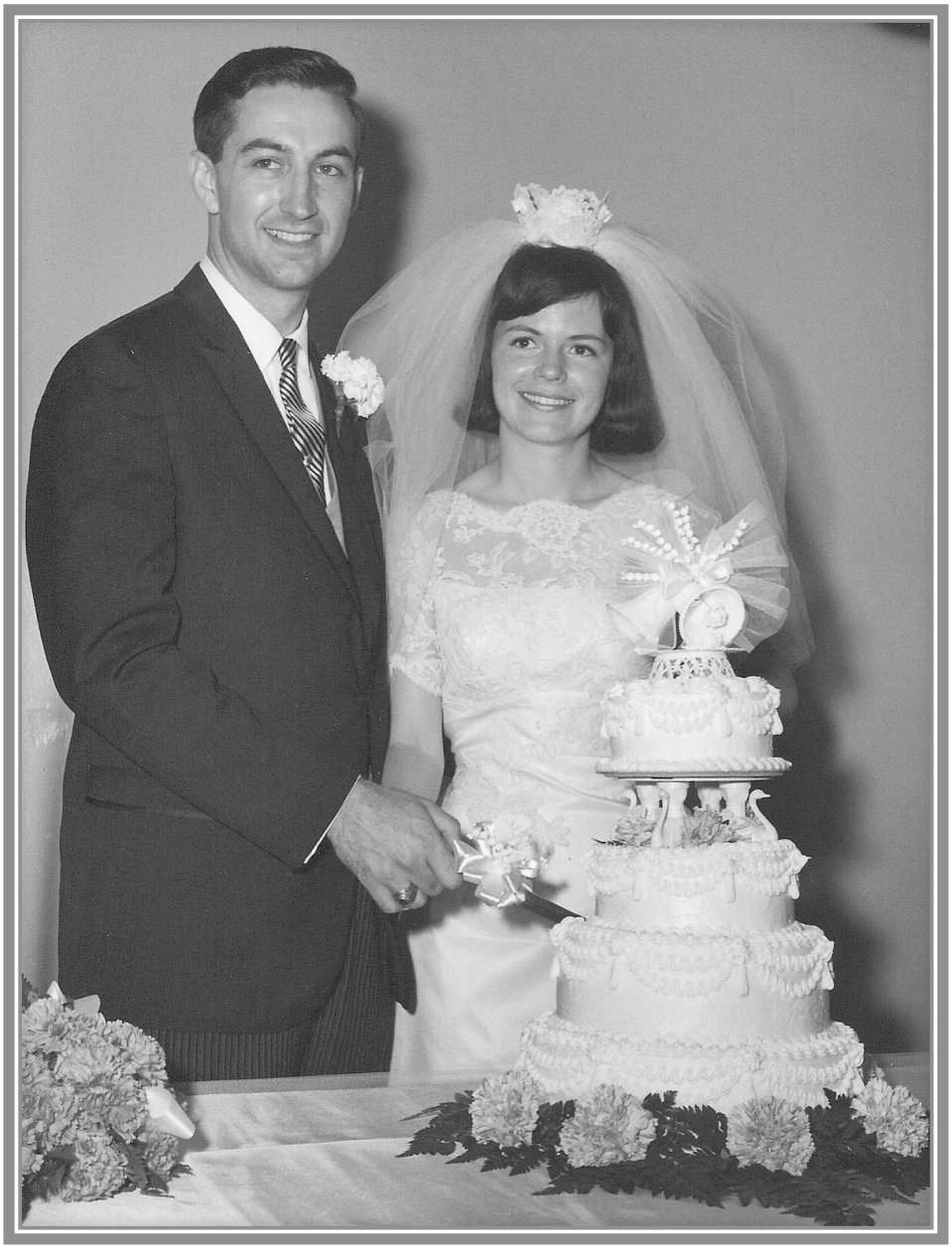
A couple of memorable events that occurred on our visit were associated with movies. The first was a visit to the filming location for many scenes from the movie ***South Pacific***, a screenplay from the James Michener book ***Tales of the South Pacific***. The beach scenes were shot in Kauai and, since we loved the musical, it was fun to visit the area where it was filmed.



The second event was to see the opening of the movie ***The Sound of Music***. We will always remember, and now find it hard to believe, that it was premiered in that year - 1965. Not related to our trip, but another movie that we saw earlier that same year, which became our all-time favorite, was ***Dr. Zhivago*** with Omar Sharif. ***"Lara's Theme"*** from that movie became "our song" and the heroine of the movie, played by Julie Christy is Larissa (Lara), which is the name of our second-oldest granddaughter. Tatiana, our youngest granddaughter, was named for another character in the movie.



This ends the account of our marriage day and our honeymooning adventures. This chronicle will now resume with tales of our life together from that memorable time to the present.



Our Wedding Day – 19 June 1965

"Today is a special day where all my hopes and dreams come true. Today is the day that I am to marry you."

Anonymous

"Love is not about how many days, months, or years you've been together. Love is about how much you love each other every day."

Anonymous

Planes, Trains And Automobiles

In the spring of 1966 we were expecting our first child. I was asked to attend an annual convention of ASHRAE (The American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Engineers) in Louisville, Kentucky. The baby was due in mid to late April so I was somewhat concerned about being away from home so close to this much-anticipated event. The convention ran from Tuesday through Friday and my return flight was scheduled for Friday afternoon.

I was staying at a motel with room access directly to the outside. When I awoke on that Friday morning I noticed a pile of snow on the carpet which had blown in under the not so well insulated door. I thought, “Oh well, this shouldn't be a problem.” I could see that we only had had a 3-5 inch snowfall.

When I went to the office to check out, the clerk asked me if I was sure I wanted to do that. When I asked why he said that the airport would be closed all day, and I might not want to give up my room. I couldn't believe it! Back home in Minneapolis, this amount of snow wouldn't even cause a school closing. I thought it wise to keep the room, at least through noon, when I would be charged for another day.

I immediately got on the phone and explored alternatives. I found that a train from Louisville to Chicago via Indianapolis would be departing at mid-afternoon. There was an airline flight from Indianapolis to Minneapolis about an hour after the train was to arrive in Indianapolis. I called my friend, Dave Nealy, who lived in Indianapolis to tell him of my predicament. He assured me that he could pick me up at the rail station and get me to the airport in time for the flight home. I gave him the details, called Liliane and gave her the new schedule, as she would pick me up at the (now later) time.

I checked out of the motel and took a taxi to the train station. The train left a little late as they had to add more cars because of the many additional passengers who also found this as an alternative to flying.

When we departed, an announcement apologized for the delay and said that they would make up the time. We arrived in Indianapolis a couple of hours later and many of the passengers joined me in securing our baggage as the train started to slow for the depot. The conductor told us that this stop would be brief and it was not the main station.

The train started up again and we saw what appeared to be the downtown area of Indianapolis fade behind us. Then we were totally out of the city with farms and fields as far as we could see. There was a huge outcry as passengers realized they had missed the Indianapolis stop. One passenger in our car pulled the emergency cord and the train came to an abrupt stop.

Several conductors came into our car from both sides including the one that told us not to get off at the only stop we had in Indianapolis. When one of them asked why the brake had been activated everyone started shouting at them with their explanations. When the head conductor said that there was only one stop in Indianapolis, dozens of fingers pointed at the mistaken conductor with an outcry of "But he said!" and the anger increased even further.

The head conductor gave a lame apology but said we had only two options – either get out right there where the train was stopped or continue on to Chicago, the next stop. Of course, everyone chose the latter and the train started up again. The anger only increased when the conductors had the gall to ask us for additional train fare to pay for the leg from Indianapolis to Chicago. Nobody paid and the crew became increasingly cooperative as they realized that they might be facing some liability issues and perhaps, a full-blown passenger riot.

The train personnel were somehow able to procure airline schedules out of O'Hare for those of us wanting to continue our journeys when we arrived in Chicago. I determined that the last flight from Chicago to Minneapolis would be leaving about one hour after our arrival.

My biggest concern was with Liliane. I had given her my new schedule from Indianapolis. She would already have left for the airport to pick me up. Remember, this was in the days prior to cell phones which, being electronically challenged, I probably wouldn't have had anyway.

My second concern was with my friend Dave who was probably searching for me at the Indianapolis train station. I found out later that he correctly assumed my plans were changed and that I was unable to make contact with him. He went home to await my eventual call explaining why I was a no-show.

When we arrived in downtown Chicago around 8 p.m., I quickly grabbed a cab and instructed the driver to get me to O'Hare Airport as fast as possible. Remembering many similar scenes in movies, I told him there would be an extra tip if he got me there by 8:40. It was raining, but he really stepped on it. His eyes, and mine, were as big as saucers.

When we arrived I gave the driver a very generous tip because he made my deadline. I ran into the terminal and arrived, breathless, at the Northwest counter. There I was told I might not make the flight but I bought the ticket and someone ushered me to the right gate. They were just closing the doors when I arrived but they let me board. When finally seated, I was soaked with perspiration and totally exhausted but thoroughly relieved.

Since I was the last passenger to board, I assumed that they would take off immediately but nothing happened. Finally we got the dreaded "We have mechanical problems" announcement. I couldn't believe it. So close – and now, once again, we would have to endure additional anxiety – especially my still-not-informed and pregnant wife.

The plane stayed at the gate for about a half hour before the problem had apparently been fixed and we pulled back to begin our taxiing on the tarmac. We took off successfully much to everyone’s relief.

About a half hour later we were starting our descent, which surprised me since the flight to Minneapolis, I was sure, would be longer. We saw the airport ahead when the captain announced that we were landing at Billy Mitchell Field in Milwaukee because our "mechanical problems" had returned! When we arrived I persuaded a stewardess to allow me to deplane so that I could call my pregnant wife and assure her that I was okay. The pregnant thing helped.

The plane was fixed and we were off again. We arrived in Minneapolis about midnight, and I took a cab home. Liliane had had enough for one day. Within days we experienced the miracle of birth for not one, but two, beautiful baby girls. All was forgotten about how this stressful day might have sent their mother into premature labor and I would have missed one of the three happiest events of my life. It goes without saying that my marriage to Liliane was the first of these blissful events.

The Birth Story

The second of those happy events occurred on 21 April 1966. The following is called "the birth story" when retold by me each year at Mara and Maria's birthday party, much to their chagrin.

Liliane was deemed to be full-term and Doctor Mensheha, a long-time friend of Liliane's family, asked when we would like to have the baby’s delivery, which he would induce. He said any day the next week except Wednesday, his day off, would work. We chose Thursday.

The eve of their birth we ate at a small family restaurant called "Nelsons" near 66th and Nicollet. After a somewhat restless night we had a leisurely breakfast at home and then set out for Eitel Hospital, which abutted Loring Park. There were still small piles of snow on our lawn but crocuses were blooming in our flowerbeds.

When we arrived at Eitel, Liliane was given a small room as we waited for Dr. Mensheha. When he arrived he started the inducement process and then told me to go to work, as I was not a necessary cog in this process. He told me to be back before six. I did go to work but I was not very productive.

When I returned we were told the birth would take place around eight that evening. When Doctor Mensheha began dressing and prepping for the birth he asked me if I wanted to be present. At that time husbands were not allowed in the delivery room. Because we were his friends and he was highly respected member of the hospital staff an exception was made. I was placed on a stool on the "action end" of the procedure where a nurse constantly checked on my condition. When our baby who was pre-chosen to be named "Maria" if a girl was born, we were extremely ecstatic…until Dr. Mensheha announced, “I think we're going to have a surprise!" Liliane and I looked at each other with an expression that said, "What the hell does that mean?" He said that we were going to have twins. We had no previous indication and Liliane seemed to be of normal size – maybe even smaller than most pregnant women at full term. To this day we are not sure if Dr. Mensheha knew and was withholding the information to keep us from worrying or if Liliane's checkups didn't reveal the possibility of twins.

The second baby girl was born 6 1/2 minutes later and both appeared to be healthy at weights between 4 1/4 and 4/1/2 pounds. I’ve never had such an exhilarating and happy, yet exhausting experience. And I was only the father!

When Liliane was returned to her room we began making phone calls to our friends and relatives – all but one. Dr. Mensheha insisted on making the call to Liliane's parents. He asked Liliane's mom to sit down before telling her the news.

Our friends, Bill and Sandi Boecker (whose oldest son would later marry one of the twins) did not believe us and called the hospital for confirmation.

Of course, all our friends and relatives were excited about the births but we could not immediately answer one of their questions. What is the name of the second twin?

As I stated earlier, our chosen name for a girl was “Maria.” We decided to name the second-born Maria so that her sister would not feel that her name was a second choice, although it was. We chose “Mara,” the name of Liliane's cousin, for the firstborn. Mara became Mara Marlene (Liliane's middle name) and Maria became Maria Elena, named after the well-known song.

Mara was slightly anemic at birth while Maria's skin color was quite robust – even reddish. They determined that the umbilical cords had somehow been tangled and that caused Mara to be deprived of sufficient blood. Both girls remained in hospital incubators for several days after Liliane was discharged. The doctors decided that Mara should remain in hospital for about a week after Maria came home. We finally had our new family together about two weeks after the girls’ birth. We got busy buying and painting another crib while finding duplicates of many other items needed by newborns.



Mara & Maria
Or Vice Versa

On the day the twins were born my friend and co-worker, Lloyd Vesely, announced that he had two shoots (get it?) appear on his office cactus. Another play on the girl's twin status came in grade school when some of their friends called them ParaSchutz (get it?).

Then There Were Three

The third of my most happy events occurred in August of 1967 when John was born. We were incredibly busy with the twins when we found out about the pregnancy. We, of course, wanted more children, but perhaps with a

longer wait between their births – but God had other plans for us, which resulted in the very welcome birth of my namesake.

Liliane went into her seventh month without sharing her pregnancy with anyone except her parents. Although she was a slender 115 pounds, she didn't look pregnant when wearing some of the loose-fitting ladies apparel popular at the time. She finally revealed the secret when our friend Gloria said to her, "I'm not are you?" One of the reasons that Liliane didn't want to disclose her pregnancy was that her brother Guido and his wife Ann were expecting their first child at about the same time. Liliane thought that they should be able to enjoy the excitement of a first birth without a competing event in their lives.

Again, as with the twins, we had a planned birth day with Dr. Mensheha. After inducement, John was born on August 10th 1967, with me again in the delivery room. Dr. Mensheha made a joke after John was born by saying, "Well here's the first one!" Of course we were delighted that it was a boy. We already had our beautiful twin girls and now, 16 months later we had a boy we could call John Joseph IV. Thirty-four years later the name would be extended to another generation with the birth of his son, John Joseph V.

John had a full head of very black hair. Liliane's roommate in the maternity ward was a woman of East-Indian descent. When John was brought to Liliane she thought the nurses might have made a mistake.

We brought John home to join his sisters in what was a very hectic household for some years. They were all in diapers for quite awhile. When we took them for a stroll in my cousin's borrowed three-seater stroller people would often mistake Mara, Maria and John for triplets.



Ach du lieber! – Drei kinder in sechzehn Monaten!





Huff and Puff

When the kids were still quite young we bought a pair of bicycles. We also bought a child seat for each bike, which was mounted over the rear tires. On my bike I also had a child seat, which was mounted on the horizontal frame just forward of my seat. These seats held the three kids. Liliane had a basket mounted ahead of her

handlebars, which held our pet dog Pepe. We went for many bike rides to Lake Nokomis and along Minnehaha Creek. This worked somewhat successfully until the kids got too big for the seats. But by then they were able to ride their own bikes. That was a relief; the whole family-on-two-bikes routine was a stretch and very tiring for the peddlers.

Da Bears

In the early 1970s, when Mara and Maria were about seven, we watched a movie on TV that was appealing and heartwarming for the entire family. "Brian's Song" was based on the real-life relationship between Chicago Bear teammates Brian Piccolo and Gale Sayers and the bond established when Piccolo discovers that he is dying. The movie was a real tearjerker. Mara wrote a letter to Brian Piccolo's widow, Joy, telling her how moved she was by the movie and offering her sympathy. Mrs. Piccolo responded with a very nice letter and a large glossy photograph of Brian.

Kleines Haus

When the girls were quite young, I decided to build them each a dollhouse. I saw a photo of a Bavarian-style design in a magazine and set out to replicate it as a miniature house.

I probably spent 200 hours in the construction, as the houses were quite elaborate. I cut up real shingles into miniatures for the roof, had real glass in the windows, and I electrified it for the tiny indoor lights I installed. The houses had Tyrolean style balconies, half-framed exteriors with faux stucco and operating doors. I built the houses simultaneously so that I could perform identical and repetitive steps during construction. When completed Mara and Maria kept the houses in their bedroom and played with them for some time before growing out of the every-little-girls-dream plaything. I was so intent on building the doll houses exactly to scale and so realistic that Mara and Maria now allege that they grew out of the houses before I completed them.

Boy Toys?

Another project that I developed with John was a model railroad layout similar to one that I had as a boy. The layout, of course, was for John but I have to admit, I really enjoyed the project and may have had more interest than he. Train layouts, by their nature, take up a lot of room, which we did not have in abundance. We cut the layout board to the exact specifications of our basement recreation room ceiling space between the wall and a paneled duct space. We then attached a series of pulleys and small ropes that allowed us to raise the layout from waist level to within 6 inches of the ceiling. Again, **"we"** played with the train set for several years until John lost interest and Liliane convinced me that I was too old for toys.

Home Improvement Projects

I had several major home improvement projects while we lived in the home at 5421 Portland Avenue. The largest, by far, was the transformation of a former attached single-car garage into a family room. The garage space had been used as an unheated storage room. It had a built-in fireplace and a tiled concrete floor. Initially, I was only going to build a mudroom adjacent to the garage in an area that was a screened-in porch. We dearly needed a closet for coats near the rear entrance, as the only other closet (small) was located at the front entrance, and was rarely used. As I thought of the project my ideas became more grandiose. A fellow N.S.P. employee and friend, Lloyd Vesely, convinced me that, although carpentry was one skill I had not performed extensively, I could do this project.

I started the undertaking in the spring of 1976 and had the room entirely enclosed and weatherproofed by the following winter. The biggest challenge was to remove the large garage door and replace it with a bowed, five-paned window, which was held in place by a cantilever arrangement, which I designed to also act as a sill area for seating on the inside. Another problem was the need to provide heat to the area. Our furnace was not large enough nor was there a practical way to run ductwork to the area. Since I worked with electric heating equipment in my job at N.S.P. I was able to purchase electric radiating panels that were virtually invisible in the A-frame ceiling. I did have to upgrade my electric service from 60 amps to 200 amps to accommodate the additional load. Installing very good insulation in the walls, ceiling and floor minimized heating requirements.

The decor was Spanish as we installed dark stained 4x4 beams on the white walls and ceiling. A Spanish style screen we bought in New Orleans separated the family room from our new entrance/coat closet. I also built a kitchen style cabinet on one side near the fireplace. It included a Jenn-Aire grill, which we used frequently. This room totally transformed our home. We used it every day for reading, television watching and even as a dining area on occasion. The electric panels made it our most comfortable room in the winter months.

The following summer we poured concrete for an expanded patio outside the family room. I built permanent benches around the perimeter, and we planted shrubs on the yard side of the benches. The patio gave us much more room for outdoor furniture and a natural gas grill.

We had three bedrooms. Mara and Maria had the entire attic area bedroom, which included a sitting area. John had a main level bedroom across from our master bedroom with a bathroom in between. When we had overnight guests they slept on a pullout couch in our basement rec room. I decided to build another bedroom at one end of our basement laundry room. I procured some old used but beautiful stained wooden swing-out windows, which I used to cover the window-well outside window and another larger one in a new wall facing the laundry room. I designed a faux bookshelf out of an old TV console, which covered the electrical service panel and meter. The room walls were sheet-rocked with lay-in panels used for the ceiling. There was already an under-the-stairway closet that opened into the new room. I completely remodeled the downstairs bathroom, which was on the opposite side of the laundry room. After painting and carpeting we had a very comfortable guest area.

A couple more projects brought us built-in benches for a dining nook in our kitchen. We decorated the kitchen in a Spanish motif with glazed tile roofing over the seating areas and Mediterranean tile on the counters. A dishwasher, which we never had, was added along with a new floor and stained cabinets. We had a completely remodeled kitchen.

5421 Portland Avenue, Minneapolis



Front Entrance – Living Room on right.
Our B.R. – left of entrance. John's B.R. behind.



Rear Entrance – Family Room on right.
Kitchen on left. Upstairs B.R. - Mara & Maria

Mensa Moment

While I was working in Washington D.C. in 1983, I befriended a person who one day asked me a rather odd question although someone in Minneapolis had also posed it to me several years earlier. We were having a rather deep conversation about what, I don't recall, when he asked me if I had ever thought about applying for membership in Mensa, the society for highly intelligent people. I, of course, was flattered but deflected the question as I had in the similar previous encounter. As a Mensan himself, he further pressed me to take the qualifying exam, as he stressed - there was nothing to lose. He asked "aren't you curious?" Actually, I was curious, so I made some inquiries about procedures.

The first step was to take a by-mail preliminary screening test to see if you came close to qualifying. Applicants qualify for membership in Mensa if they score higher than 98% of the general population on a Society administered intelligence test. I passed the "weeding out" step and arranged to have the "big" exam on one of my trips home to Minnesota. The Minnesota Chapter of Mensa administers the exam to a few applicants several times a year. My exam took place in a school in Maplewood. It took about four hours and the exam left me exhausted and skeptical of my performance.

About a month later, I came home from work to find my whole family greeting me with the news that a letter had arrived welcoming me into Mensa! My I.Q., they had determined from the examination, was 148. Liliane baked me a celebratory cake.

I attended some meetings of the local Chapter of Mensa and found it interesting that the members came from an almost identical cross-section in terms of employment, education etc. as the general populace. The only real satisfaction of membership is learning the level of your intelligence just like you might want to know how much you weigh, how tall you are, or your family roots, a particular interest of mine. It is humbling, however, when someone (Liliane) frequently tells me, "You may be a Mensan but you have no common sense!"

Automobiles

When I first got my driver's license on my second try, (the DMV would never pass teenage boys on their first exam) I would occasionally drive Virgil's 1947 two-door Chevrolet coupe or our Chevrolet pickup. When I left for college, mom and dad bought me a 1956 Pontiac, which I drove for several years. My first new car was, in my opinion, the most beautiful of all the cars I've owned. It was a cream-colored 1962 Chevrolet Impala two-door with red stripes running horizontally at mid-door level. It had a red interior. This was the infamous car that was flooded after it was driven only 500 miles. Read about it in the chapter on ***Courtship***. I kept and loved this car for many more years after its rehab from water damage.

In 1964, I purchased a bright new red Volkswagen Beetle for $1,200. I picked the car up in Wolfsburg, Germany, home of the Volkswagen factory, on our engagement trip. I had planned to sell the car after it's shipment to the U.S., but our engagement altered that plan. Liliane had a 1952 Ford that she bought for $200 and parts were regularly falling off. We decided that we would keep the car for her use. One beautiful autumn day in November of 1964, I received a call from a shipping company in Chicago telling me that our car had arrived and to avoid storage costs, it should be picked up as soon as possible. Liliane wasn't flying on the upcoming weekend so we flew to Chicago on a Friday after calling our friends Dave and Toni Nealy in Indianapolis. The Gophers were playing their final game of the season against the Badgers in Madison, and we suggested that we might meet them there for the game and after-game partying. They agreed to take a train to Madison and we, of course, would drive our newly acquired Volkswagen from Chicago.

After our noontime arrival at O'Hare we took a series of local trains to the docks of East Chicago where we found our very dusty Volkswagen. After signing the required releases we headed for a carwash and then to a friend's home in suburban Chicago. We had called them and told them of our plans and they invited us to stay the night at their home. It was a gorgeous day with the temperatures in the 70s and we were dressed in summer clothing. Big mistake! The next day we awoke to nearly 18 inches of snow. Fortunately the snow had stopped and the roads had been cleared. We left early for our trip to Madison where we met Dave and Toni at the motel we had reserved for the evening. . Since we were not yet married, Dave graciously agreed to share a room with me while Liliane and Toni shared another.

We arrived at the game way underdressed and the ladies – you won't believe this – were wearing high heels! We ran into my cousin, Ron Johanning, who was appropriately dressed so he and his friends shared some clothing with us. Particularly appreciated was a pair of overshoes he gave to Liliane. Fashion be damned! To make matters worse, the Gophers lost 14-7 as a result of a very controversial late call by the officials.

We drove our Volkswagen home, and Liliane used it to drive to work – in low gear, I think. She never did get the hang of the stick shift. After one of her flights she couldn't find the car in the employee parking lot. We called the police and after some investigation it was determined that the car had probably been stolen. I put in an insurance claim and within weeks I received a check for about the amount I had paid for the car. Several weeks later, I received a call from a garage in South Minneapolis asking when I was going to pick up my car. For some reason we have never understood, the car was towed and held for several weeks before someone determined ownership and gave me a call. The insurance company ended up owning the car. Fortunately, we still had Liliane's Ford clunker, which she continued to drive.

As our children arrived in the next couple of years we decided the most practical vehicle would be a station wagon. We purchased a late 60s white Pontiac station wagon which we used as our family car for several years.

In 1970 we purchased another European car for our use on a summertime trip with some friends. We picked up the red Opel Kadette from the factory in Rushelsheim, near Frankfurt. After our European excursion we had the car shipped back and, again, we picked it up in Chicago.

In the mid 70s I got my first company car, a 1976 Chevrolet Nova. In 1979 the company car was a Chevrolet Malibu and in 1983 a Buick Century.

In the mid 80s I struck a deal with my friend Dave Nealy. He was an employee of a General Motors subsidiary in Indianapolis and could get a new General Motors car of his choosing each year at cost. I agreed to buy the car at a very generous price after he had driven it one year. The cars were part of a program where the employees had to document all maintenance, which was paid for by General Motors. After a couple of years, Dave let me participate in picking the car I would own after his one year of use. These are the cars that I bought from Dave for five years.

- Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme - 1985
- Oldsmobile Cutlass Ciera - 1986
- Buick LeSabre - 1987
- Pontiac Grand Am - 1988
- Buick Park Avenue - 1989

When Dave retired we were on our own and the next car we bought was a used 1995 Buick Le Sabre sedan and later traded it in for a 2001 Buick Park Avenue.

My final company-owned car was a 1994 Buick Regal Limited Sedan, which I bought when I retired. It is currently in our garage with only 58,000 miles on the odometer and still in mint condition. Its companion is a 2004 Volvo S80, which we bought from John.

The only new cars we have ever owned was the 1964 Chevrolet Impala and the company cars I bought after using each of them for four years. So far we have been fortunate and blessed that the only accidents we have had were minor and no one was ever seriously hurt.

Memories

Here, in no particular order, are some of the more memorable events that took place during our years at 5421 Portland Avenue. More appear in other chapters specific to the type of event.

On John's first birthday we took the family to a Burger King in Richfield where John was given a paper crown to wear home. When we arrived home we decided to record the event by taking some pictures in our front yard. When Liliane lifted John into a standing position for a photo he broke into a big smile and took his first steps!

John had a very creative imagination, which helped him to and cleverly achieved his goals. At an early age he started imitating singers he saw on TV with his own concerts. One time he brought his ukulele along when we

visited his hospitalized mom and sang a rendition of ***Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head*** for her. He used a broom to imitate a microphone in his "concerts." Mara and Maria were his Doo Wop girls. They put on a great show.

When John was quite young but old enough to skateboard he would enlist our little Peekapoo, Pepe, to tow him up and down our alley. Pepe only weighed 12 pounds so it was quite a challenge. Some thought this was cruel but Pepe seemed to enjoy pleasing one of his masters while accepting the challenge and getting a workout.

John built a "fort" in the upper storage area of our garage, which was his own special place to hang out. He created a very comfortable environment with carpet remnants, blankets and other scrap materials. One day he fell asleep only to be awakened by something scratching inside his pant leg. He panicked as he beat at the mouse, which had apparently wanted to find his own hideaway.

One of John's first "girlfriends" was a neighborhood girl by the name of Julie. One day he asked her to accompany us on a shopping trip to Target. While we were shopping, John thought he would woo Julie with a treat in the Target cafe. He bought a slice of cheesecake, which was his favorite dessert. After he had committed to the purchase, he found the price to be overwhelming ($2-3). It was too late to back out and give Julie the impression that she wasn't worth it so they shared the cheesecake, which now didn't taste nearly as good to John. He lamented for days about the "rip-off" at Target.

Haney's was a corner drugstore about three blocks from our home. The kids frequented it for small purchases of candy, etc. John came home one day with a small pencil sharpener that was a miniature model of a TV. We asked him where he got it and he said "the drug store." After a few minutes he broke down and told us that he didn't pay for it. He already realized the wrong he had committed, but we gave him the usual parental admonition as to how sinful stealing was. His dastardly deed would not go unpunished. He accompanied his mom to the drug store where he admitted his transgression to the owner and gave back the pencil sharpener. The owner told him he was no longer welcome in his store. He was actually grateful for John's admission along with our required apology, but he also needed to support our position concerning the gravity of shoplifting.

On another occasion when John was considerably older the mom of one of his best friends brought him home. We immediately noticed that he was acting rather sullen and disoriented. After some questioning by us he experienced an increasing feeling of nausea before finally breaking down into tears. He confessed that he and his friend had tried some marijuana cigarettes. We were disappointed of course, but also somewhat relieved. Rather than trying to hide what he had done, he showed character by admitting to what he knew was a very serious mistake. That, along with his obvious discomfort with the experience was a positive outcome in our minds. According to John that incident kept him from any further experimentation with drugs.

One exception to the former claim if one considers cigarettes "drugs." During a family Thanksgiving celebration at Oma and Opa's home in Forest Lake, John and his cousin, Alex, were out and about in the neighborhood when they suddenly came into the house in a panic. John had choked on a quarter and had swallowed it, they said. He was very uncomfortable and there was concern that it may still be lodged in a dangerous location so we took him to the hospital emergency room. There they took x-rays that indicated that the quarter had safely passed to his stomach. The doctor got John to admit that he and Alex had been smoking, and they had heard that sucking on a quarter would mask the telltale smell from others. They were performing the sucking ritual when they mutually found the exercise extremely humorous and started laughing. The laughing caused John to inhale the quarter. The doctor shook his head without a glimmer of a smile, which I'm sure, was just below the surface. He told John to watch for the quarter within the next couple of days. It was never recovered – nor was John's dignity.

When John was in the early years of high school he and a friend were at our house where Oma and Opa were caring for them while we were on a trip. They were sitting at our kitchen table drinking "Mountain Doe" from cans. The insulating covers on the cans had advertising that aped the popular soft drink but were, in fact, hiding

cans of beer. Somehow Oma became suspicious and caught the boys in their masquerade. Oma reported the incident to us and appropriate sanctions and punishments were administered.

While in high school, all three of the kids practiced extreme hygiene. I have joked that when John discovered girls he went from one shower every three weeks to three showers a day.

With only two bathrooms in our home and with work and school schedules coinciding, it was difficult to get everyone through their morning routines in time.

When Mara or Maria was using the basement bathroom for what John considered an excessively long time he would (to this day I don't know how he did this) call our own phone and tell them that they had a call. When they came out he would jump in the bathroom and lock the door. Many, many bruises resulted from these antics.

John was not terribly ambitious. At one point he begged me to allow him to mow the lawn. I resisted until I felt he was capable to do it as a regular chore. As expected, after the novelty wore off he no longer wanted that responsibility. Too late! He was now our official lawn mower. He figured that once a week was far too often so he came up with a plan that would lengthen the time between mowing. He lowered the blades to the point that our lawn looked like a desert after a mowing. Almost ruined, the lawn did make a comeback after some TLC and the mower height was adjusted to its previous level.

One autumn Saturday evening Liliane and I were invited to the wedding of one of my employees. The wedding was at a Lutheran church several blocks from our home and the reception was at the Thunderbird hotel near the Met Center in Bloomington. Since our kids were teenagers, we no longer required sitters, but that night we told them that they were to have no visitors nor could they leave the house while we were gone.

On a hunch because of some super powers parents must possess, we decided to stop back home before proceeding to the reception. When we pulled into our driveway, I saw John looking out of the kitchen window with a panicked look on his face. I told Liliane to go in the back door while I scooted around the house to the front entrance. There I saw the door opening with coats and other clothing being hurled out before two of the kid’s friends made their appearance. They grabbed their belongings and ran off while I just stood there watching this comedy skit unfold.

We found out later that when John told the girls that we were home they initially didn’t believe him, thus allowing me time to catch them in the act. We decided to simply leave for the reception without scolding or threatening them. After thinking it over, we decided that their anxiety over what punishment might be forthcoming would be sufficient. It was.

All of our children attended our parish school, Resurrection, located only about four blocks from our home. They were able to walk to school. They were taught by nuns and lay persons who were all very good teachers and disciplinarians.

John was a smart kid but had difficulty with concentration and was constantly distracted by his fantasies. We received a very long letter from one of his nun-teachers extolling John's merits. He was well liked, and she acknowledged that he had a superior intellect but was having difficulty channeling his talents because of his inattentiveness. He managed to get good grades but always seemed to fall short of his potential until he suddenly blossomed in his early college years. We are grateful for his teachers in grade and high school for maintaining his interest and teaching him the fundamentals necessary to achieve his goals in life. When he finally realized the value of education and related it to one's happiness and wellbeing, he more than met the challenge.

It's hard to believe, but even in the early 1980s kids would really live it up at their eighth grade prom. John had a fun-loving classmate, Paul, who always came up with grandiose ideas for all occasions. Paul convinced some of his classmates, including John, to rent a limo for the prom. They got the most out of their expenditure by

driving around the parish neighborhood showing off their classy car. The highlight was providing some of their teachers (nuns) a ride in the limo. Probably never been done before or after!



Our Family On My 40th Birthday

When he was in high school one of John's favorite performers, Bruce Springsteen, was having a concert at the old Met Center in Bloomington. He was attending the event with some friends and asked his mom to go with him. She was flattered but hesitant. I encouraged her to go and I volunteered to drive them to and from the event. Liliane is not a big fan of Springsteen, but joining her son at that concert was one of the most precious highlights of her life.

Mara, Maria and John all got cleaning jobs while in high school at a small south Minneapolis motel on Lyndale Avenue. They were all pretty disgusted with the job as the patrons often left unbelievable discards and messes from their stay.

Mara and Maria both joined John as employees at an Embers restaurant on Penn Avenue just south of the Cross-town highway. John had worked there for a short time as a busboy. This association with Embers would, to a large degree, help shape their futures by teaching them the value and rewards of work, interrelationships with customers, fellow employees and employers. They would also meet lifelong friends through these part-time jobs.

John quickly became aware that Mara and Maria were earning considerably higher incomes primarily because of the tips they received as waitresses. He inquired about becoming a "waitron" but was repeatedly rebuffed by management. Undeterred, he eventually was granted a meeting with one of the chain restaurant's owners at their headquarters on Lake Street. Although this was before sex discrimination had become lawfully prohibited, (John's mom had been involuntarily retired from Northwest Airlines when she became married to me) the owner was either concerned about possible negative publicity developments resulting from his rejection of John’s request or was impressed with John's initiative and ambition, and he relented. John became the first male waiter in Embers’ history.

All three of the kids continued working for Embers during their college years. They all look fondly upon their long association with Embers. They have retained lifelong friendships with several fellow Embers employees. Liliane and I still frequent our local Embers in Fridley.



We wanted the kids to attend a Catholic high school although the tuitions were considerably higher than those in grade school. John joined several of his friends from Resurrection at St. Thomas Academy in Mendota Heights while Mara and Maria graduated from Derham Hall high school in St. Paul. Both schools had very good reputations as college prep schools. Over 98 percent of their graduates go on to college. John and his friends car-pooled to school while Mara and Maria were able to ride with a teacher from Derham Hall, who lived in our neighborhood.



When John was a junior at St. Thomas Academy, he asked us if he could party with his basketball teammates and their prom dates at an Eden Prairie motel where they had rented a large suite. We agreed as long as he would be home by the curfew we had set. Shortly before we expected him home he called saying he couldn't drive because "my headlights won't turn on." After a few exchanges expressing our disbelief we relented in the off chance that he wasn't pulling our leg. He arrived safely the next morning with his now-functional headlights. We have always had our doubts (Mara and Maria - double-doubt) about the headlights. Recently, however, John told us that he did not make it up. It was fortuitous, he agrees, as he was able to party the whole night, but the incident actually happened as he said. In my experience, I trust that the event happened as reported. I, like most children, felt compelled at some appropriate (and safe) time to admit such indiscretions to one's parents. John had his chance to reverse his claim. He knows that we're now too old to administer a spanking.

Mara and Maria came home one evening from a formal dance at Derham Hall with sad faces. It seems that their dates had rented a limousine for the evening and that Maria had accidentally chipped her tooth on the door. After further questioning we found that while Maria was drinking from a champagne bottle someone had jostled her. The bottle hit her tooth causing the chip. No punishment was necessary – she had already received it with the cosmetic damage and the questioning.

I mentioned that John was clever; I might add manipulative. Here is an example of how he operated: John wanted to wear 100% cotton clothing that required ironing. Since this choice was John's, Liliane felt he should take on this responsibility so she proposed that he do his own ironing. She would carefully demonstrate the steps and then tell John that he was now on his own. Each time Liliane would show him the fundamentals he would feign a lack of aptitude for the job and ask her to show him "one more time."

John took a huge interest in basketball, perhaps because it was my favorite participation sport. When I felt John was old enough, I installed a basketball backboard and hoop on our garage. We had an ample parking space, which afforded us the equivalent of a half-court playing area. We began shooting baskets and when John became more proficient we played competitively. We played hundreds of games of "horse" and "pig." John also played with some of his friends and later we played one-on-one frequently. I'll save him the embarrassment of presenting the outcome of these competitions. I wouldn't want Jack and Lucas to know. 🙂

A New Home

Once our children left home, Liliane and I decided it was time to move. When we bought our home at 5421 Portland Avenue in 1965 we were under a flight pattern from MSP but the traffic and sound levels of the aircraft were minimal. Over the years the airplanes became louder and flights more frequent. At times we would have to cease conversations until the noise ebbed. In addition, Liliane's parents were getting older and becoming more dependent. We were able to see them more often as we no longer had the responsibilities of child rearing. The trip to Forest Lake however, was not easy to make on a moment's notice, so we decided to move to the northern suburbs. This decision was also supported by our desire to be closer to Midland Hills, our country club, located in Roseville. I was nearing retirement, which meant that we could then spend more time with Liliane's parents and on the golf course. We had lived in the Portland Avenue home for 26 years and have now lived in our new home at 1825 Innsbruck Parkway for 22 years. It is in an area of Columbia Heights known as "Innsbruck" a

development built in the mid 1960s. Our home is directly across Innsbruck Parkway from Highland Lake, which is located in Kordiak Park. The park has beautiful picnic, play and viewing areas. We often walk around the lake for exercise and enjoy watching the wildlife and changing seasons.

1825 Innsbruck Parkway



Living room on left. Family room in center. Garage on right. Bedrooms upstairs.



Rear patio/deck areas. Family room on left. Kitchen on right. Bedrooms upstairs.

Sit Back, Watch And Enjoy

I fully expected that raising children would be the most difficult endeavor of our lives. There are no sick days and no vacation days. You are constantly working to cultivate a brand-new person. You are shaping how they grow and learn while helping them become independent and responsible adults. Watching your daughters and sons growing up, learning on their own, making their own decisions and living their own lives is one of the greatest payoffs I can imagine.

That reward has been realized. Our children have now established their own family units so I will merely summarize the major highlights of their lives since graduation from high school.

Mara attended Winona State University for one year and then transferred to St. Cloud State University where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science, Psychology and Social Work. She is married to Christopher Dehning and they live with her son A.J. in Mankato. Chris is a marketing and training professional and works for United Prairie Bank while Mara works for the Mankato School district.

Maria also graduated from St. Cloud State University with a degree in Education. She is married to Bill Boecker Jr. who is the son of my elementary and high school classmate, friend and college roommate, Bill Boecker Sr. Bill and Maria have four children: Ashley, Larissa, Billy, and Tatiana. They live in a country home near the north bank of the Minnesota River between Chaska and Belle Plaine. Bill has a home painting business and Maria works nearly full-time as a substitute teacher

John received a Business degree from the University of Minnesota, and an MBA from the University of St. Thomas. He is married to Beth (Russ). They have two children: John Joseph V (Jack) and Lucas John. They live in Eden Prairie. John works in Bloomington for Wells Fargo Bank and Beth works part-time as a substitute teacher in the Edina School system and at their children's school, Our Lady of Grace, in Edina.

The spouses of our three children are all college graduates. Their alma maters are respectively – Chris (Minnesota State University - Mankato), Bill (The University of Minnesota) and Beth (Creighton University).

Our seven grandchildren range in age from 9 to 23 and are all currently involved in their education from grade school through college. We couldn't be more proud of our children and grandchildren. They are our legacy. As Oma, Liliane's Mom would say "We're fortune."



Maria, Jack,
Liliane,
John, Mara



Billy, Larissa, Maria, Bill,
Tatiana, Ashley,
Liliane, Jack
A.J., Mara,
John, Jack, Lucas, Beth

"A baby is God's opinion that the world should go on."

Carl Sandburg, 1878-1967

"Our family is a circle of strength and love. With every birth and union the circle grows. Every joy shared adds more love. Every crisis faced together makes the circle stronger."

Anonymous

"Life is an opportunity, benefit from it. Life is beauty, admire it. Life is a dream, realize it. Life is a challenge, meet it. Life is a duty, complete it. Life is a game, play it. Life is a promise, fulfill it. Life is sorrow, overcome it. Life is a song, sing it. Life is a struggle, accept it. Life is a tragedy, confront it. Life is an adventure, dare it. Life is luck, make it. Life is too precious, do not destroy it. Life is life, fight for it."

Mother Teresa, 1910-1997

Career

Liliane found it difficult to decide, after two years of college, what profession she should pursue. Rather than make a decision not supported by solid conviction, she decided to become a stewardess with Northwest Airlines. After several months of training she began her new career with Minneapolis as her home base.

NORTHWEST ORIENT



MISS KAULS

Come Fly With Me

Liliane flew for about three years before our marriage cut short this career to replace it with one much more fulfilling and rewarding -- that of homemaker and mother. At that time airlines required that stewardesses (there were no male flight attendants) retire when they got married. We agreed that, once we had children, she would stay-at-home to raise them so this regulation merely cut short her airline employment by less than one year. That time was well spent in establishing our household in south Minneapolis. When all our children arrived so close together (16 months), Liliane had more than a full-time job. We never considered an alternative to making this most important career a full-time endeavor and we were fortunate to have that choice.

Graduation Day

I graduated with a five-year degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Minnesota in June of 1963. At that time recruiters from industry came to campus to interview engineering seniors so that they might be fully employed immediately following graduation. Job opportunities for engineers were plentiful so there was a lot of competition among prospective employers.

I narrowed my employment options to two appealing offers that I seriously considered. One was from Standard Oil and the other from Northern States Power Company (NSP). Both were attractive and relatively equivalent offers except for location. The Standard Oil employment would have been in Indiana while Northern States Power's (NSP's) service area was in Minnesota and several surrounding states. As I had come to love the Twin Cities, I chose to remain near home and family by selecting the latter offer. I also was favorably impressed with the recruiter from NSP, the recently deceased Nick Hawley, who accommodated my every concern and eventually was instrumental in helping me acquire exactly the position that I wanted at the company.

Where I Wanna Be

I ended up working for NSP for 33 years (38 if you count my post-retirement consulting years with Xcel). I will not detail every position and move but try to highlight those considered most prominent in what I consider - a very rewarding career.

I started work at NSP in July of 1963. Initially, I wasn't assigned to any particular department although it was assumed that, as a Mechanical Engineer, I would eventually end up in the Power

NSP

Production Department working in one of the company's generating plants.

NSP had an orientation program for new engineering hires that had them spend time in very diverse departments such as Power Production, Rates, Marketing, Transmission, and Advertising etc. The orientation program, as I recall, was at least two months long.

As I visited the various departments I became particularly interested in one. It used the acronym ESHAC, short for Electric Space Heating and Air Conditioning. The company was just starting to promote electric heating with its high potential for increasing off-peak load growth. This department provided the technical expertise to various internal marketing groups and assisted them in advising customers with equipment options and operating cost comparisons with competing forms of energy.

New engineering employees were carefully scrutinized as they went about their orientation schedule. If a department had a job opening and there was a mutual interest with an individual employee, an offer of employment was submitted.

Whenever I had an opportunity, I would drop in on ESHAC to visit with the manager and his employees while subtly hinting that I would like to join their department. I found the department's mission fascinating, challenging and a vanguard endeavor. Further, their employees frequently traveled about the NSP service area assisting, training and advising division personnel. As reported in other chapters, I had already caught the travel bug, so this component made the job even more attractive. I also wasn't too keen on working in a power plant at some remote location when I could work in NSP's General Office located in downtown Minneapolis -- only 10 minutes from my apartment.

Money Money Money

Apparently, my enthusiasm, a comfortable relationship with the department manager and his employees along with a timely opening paid off. I was offered and accepted a position in ESHAC! My initial salary was $565 per month. What would I do with all that money?

I loved my new job! With good mentoring I soon became very proficient at calculating operating cost estimates utilizing blueprints of residential and commercial buildings. I would often accompany sales representatives to their customer presentations. At these presentations I was often asked questions regarding the methodology used in making the operating cost estimates. My responses often led indirectly to me being the deal closer. My newfound ability to independently complete a project from start to finish did not go unnoticed. Instead of feeling threatened, the division employees I worked with touted my marketing abilities and soon the manager of the Commercial Sales Department offered me a job -- and a promotion. Since I would now be working only on large commercial buildings it was necessary that I consult directly with architects, building owners, and consulting engineers. I had to learn new terminologies, methodologies and equipment alternatives as well as those of competitive fuels. It was my newly discovered marketing ability, however, that I found most rewarding. I loved to "close the deal" and the company rewarded me for my expertise. I received numerous out-of-sequence raises and promotions.

I became a member of several technical organizations relating to my job such as the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). I also applied for and passed the exam for my Professional Engineers License. I was elected to the Board of Governors for the Minnesota Chapter of ASHRAE.

TGIF

One of the social organizations, which I joined, was the Engineers Club of Minneapolis. They met every Friday for a lunch at the Leamington Hotel with a large contingent of engineers from NSP. Each week they would feature a different speaker for our entertainment and enlightenment. Every winter they selected an Engineers Club of Minneapolis Queen who represented the Club at yearly events such as the Minneapolis Aquatennial and St. Paul Winter Carnival.

While Liliane and I were dating several of my colleagues urged me to submit her candidacy. She reluctantly agreed following a lot of urging by my NSP friends. It was not just a beauty contest as the contestants had to undergo questioning by judges selected from the membership along with several outside panelists. She was named Queen of the Engineers Club of Minneapolis in 1964.

On November 22, 1963 our luncheon was interrupted by an announcement that President Kennedy had been slain in Dallas. Naturally, this put a damper on, and an end to, our lunch. It is said that everyone remembers where he or she was when events of such magnitude take place. I'll never forget where I was that day.

Where Has All The Oil Gone?

In the mid 1970s, international tensions rose as oil shortages forced nations to take a closer look at energy use from a global perspective. OPEC was formed so that a few oil-rich nations could control the supply and thus regulate the world prices of this essential commodity. The United States started to look for ways to reduce dependence on foreign supplies. "Conservation" became the mantra for the long-term reduction of energy usage. Suddenly, all forms of energy conservation became a priority, not just those measures directly affecting oil usage. A new Federal Department, Energy, was approved by Congress to deal with the problem. The entire country was mobilized to start treating energy as a finite resource with conservation as a key element in achieving our long-term independence. The obsession with energy independence in the 70s is similar to today's spotlight on greenhouse gasses and global warming. Ironically, utilities are again the centerpiece of proposed legislation dealing with the issue.

Bye Bye Reddy Kilowatt

In the 1970s utilities, as very large users and suppliers, became a focal point in the effort of planned energy reduction. NSP was among the first to form a department to deal with the issue. I was tapped to become the first General Manager of the Conservation and Load Management Department at NSP. The "load management" responsibility dealt with efforts to specifically focus on energy reduction during peak usage times, thus reducing the need to build more power production facilities.

Despite the national impetus, it was difficult convincing NSP veterans of the need, or wisdom, of encouraging the use of less energy. After all we had, for our entire history, encouraged greater use by convincing customers that electricity could provide them with more conveniences and a better life while Reddy Kilowatt, NSP's cartoon mascot, convinced them that electricity was "penny cheap" so they would use more!



I frequently had to defend my new department's task with some company employees who thought that a utility's prosperity was tied to continuous growth. I pointing out that NSP's profits were higher in many previous years when energy sales were much smaller. Further, as a regulated industry, we were guaranteed a reasonable rate of return by law. Ironically, those rates of return became more favorable as we demonstrated success with the programs we developed to decrease energy usage. The reduced rate of load growth negated, or at least slowed, the necessity to construct expensive power plants and the regulators rewarded us accordingly.

Mr. Schutz Goes To Washington

The energy management programs that we developed were so successful that I was often asked to speak before national conferences of utility and government officials and to write articles for national trade journals. I was apparently noticed by some of those government officials because NSP's CEO, Don McCarthy, called me into his office one day to ask if I would be interested in becoming a loaned executive to the U.S. Department of Energy for six months. One of their officials had called Don to ask for my service. The purpose would be for me to assist the Department of Energy in developing regulatory or voluntary programs, which would guide utilities in managing and influencing reduction in energy usage.

The year was 1979 and an election year – a heady time to be in Washington D.C. Liliane and I discussed the proposal, which was enhanced by NSP's willingness to pay all expenses, including those of my family, who

could join me in Washington during June, July and August until school started. We agreed that it was a wonderful opportunity so I enthusiastically accepted the offer.

On our car trip to Washington D.C. we had a planned stop in Medina, Ohio. I wanted to visit the N.F.L. Hall of Fame in Canton the following day so this stop would allow us time to visit the museum early the next day and still make our planned destination in Pennsylvania. We got up very early and headed for Canton, a small city near Akron, the Tire Capital of the World. Traveling east we approached a rural intersection when the early morning sun blinded me as it was directly in my eyes. I didn't see the red semaphore and a car going south through the intersection hit us broadside. I couldn't open the driver's side door as it was crushed pretty badly.

Gee, Officer Krupke

We waited for the police to arrive and while I didn't admit wrongdoing, it was probably my fault, as I didn't see the light. No one was hurt but the driver and passengers in the other car must have made a persuasive argument about liability as the police officers ticketed me. I had to make a court appearance in Akron that very afternoon. As I recall, I persuaded the court to move up my appearance as we were on a tight schedule to get to my work assignment in Washington.

Obviously, my plan to visit the N.F.L. Hall of Fame had to be abandoned in favor of getting back on schedule. After paying my fine we drove on to Johnstown, Pennsylvania where we spent the night.

Home On The Potomac

The next day we arrived in suburban Falls Church, Virginia where we had rented a three-bedroom apartment. The apartment building had a huge outdoor pool so the kids had a place to meet new friends. Our pet dog, Pepe, was along and we were located on an upper floor of the building. That meant we had a long way to take him for relief. Liliane's mom flew to Washington to visit us late in the summer, and she took Pepe back with her for the few weeks remaining before Liliane and the kids returned.

The day after we arrived I took the Metro to work at the Forrestal Building, the headquarters of the Department of Energy in southwest Washington. That was my routine for the next six months. They gave me a nice office, and I began meeting with Department officials.

Our first non-working days in Washington were spent furnishing our apartment. We were very near to Tyson's Corners, a huge shopping complex where we could find practically everything we needed. We rented most of our furniture and bought other household items such as dishes, linens etc.

Hell's Angels?

On our first Saturday in Washington we left the kids at the apartment while Liliane and I set out to make a television purchase. While driving down a street in nearby Fairfax we were suddenly surrounded by several motorcyclists who appeared to be gang members. They attempted to get us to stop and were finally successful when they maneuvered in front of our car and slowed to a stop. I told Liliane to lock her door as both back seat doors were already locked. One really nasty looking guy came to my window and threatened us with a knife. Through a crack in the window I asked why they were attacking us. He said that we had slowed them down earlier when we were looking for an address. He spit on our window and while wielding the knife tried to get my door open. Thankfully, our accident had rendered the door inoperable. He was about to crack my window with the handle of his knife when I instinctively pulled the car into the street around the motorcycles and sped off. They motorcyclists started to follow us but we were now in a more dense shopping area and well ahead of them. When they were momentarily out of sight I abruptly turned into an alley. After I saw them pass speedily by the alley we slowly drove in the opposite direction. We immediately headed home and, I presume, had a stiff drink. We never reported the incident to the police but we found an interesting article in the Washington Post about a week later. A motorcycle gang of eight had been found dead from gunshot wounds in Richmond, Virginia. I'm not ashamed to say that I was not sorry if they were our potential assailants. As it turned out, our Ohio accident may have saved us from our attackers when they couldn't get the door open. We had the car repaired the following week.

While the family was in Washington for the next three months, we spent as much time as possible taking advantage of this wonderful opportunity. We visited all the major and many of the minor attractions and monuments in Washington. We also made several weekend side-trips to nearby attractions such as Virginia Beach, Gettysburg, Williamsburg, Jamestown, Antietam, Baltimore/Annapolis etc. The kids missed their friends in Minnesota but realized that this was an opportunity of a lifetime -- and they made some new friends. They still speak fondly of the experience.



My NSP department continued to function smoothly in my absence with a temporary manager; however I did fly home occasionally when deemed necessary by my superiors.

When the family returned home, I served out the remainder of my commitment helping develop conservation policies that could be promoted widely among U.S. utilities. With the D.O.E.'s permission I attended weekly lobbyist meetings at the Edison Electric Institute, the shareholder-owned utility industries' association. I continued to speak at energy conferences throughout the country before returning home after completing my assignment late in 1979. We then had a new President-elect: Ronald Reagan.

My selection as a Loaned Executive at the Department of Energy in Washington D.C. allowed me to experience one of the great cities of the world and observe the inner workings of government. It was a most rewarding venture that took place at an exciting time. Today, for obvious reasons, I wouldn't like it as much.

When I returned to Minneapolis I continued to manage my department while simultaneously satisfying a couple of other aspirations, both related to my work.

Teacher Teacher

In 1982 I was asked to teach an evening Energy Management class in the Masters of Business Administration (MBA) program at St. Thomas College (now the University of St. Thomas). Their MBA program had become quite prominent in the Twin Cities by using industry specialists to teach classes rather than academic professionals. On occasion I sensed that I might have missed my calling as a teacher so I jumped at the chance to satisfy this urge. I wrote a syllabus for the class I entitled the "Economic, Legal and Public Aspects of Energy Management." The semester-long, 1½ hour evening class was held twice a week. I taught the class for three years, finding the experience to be very exhilarating – and as a bonus I was paid rather generously! Additionally, I took advantage of the college's athletic facilities to play racquetball at least once a week, even after I had stopped teaching! This three-year stint allowed me to share the expertise I had acquired at NSP with up-and-coming employees from local industries. I found it very gratifying to later observe many of my former students achieve high management positions with their respective companies.

Talker Talker

NSP had a Speakers Bureau, which arranged for selected NSP employees to make presentations before civic, industrial and other groups. Because of the continuing national and worldwide interest in energy supply and demand I easily became the most used speaker in the bureau. My teaching experience provided me with plenty of material for developing several customized presentations. I had also learned how to make a relaxed and

confident delivery. My presentations related primarily to the long-term energy prospects of the United States, which was of huge interest at the time – and still is. I always enjoyed the Q and A periods following my speech. Being able to successfully respond to any relevant, and sometimes arcane, question was very satisfying. In addition to the Speakers Bureau presentations I was often asked to appear as a guest on local radio and TV shows to discuss or debate energy issues. The downside of these activities was that while most of my presentations were made during luncheons, some took place during evening dinners, which took me away from family time.

I've Got Fever

My experience in Washington D.C. gave me a slight case of what is commonly termed "Potomac Fever." I really enjoyed my work as a Loaned Executive and the experience left me with the feeling that perhaps I could help advance NSP's interests through an active involvement in the political process. I had established a well-respected Department at NSP, and I began to sense that it was time to move on to other challenges. That opportunity came soon when the company recognized the need for more contact and utility industry advocacy with the Federal Agencies.

We already had representation in Washington to lobby the Congress. Tom Connelly was our Congressional and Agency Liaison in Washington. This was a huge responsibility, which he felt, was not being adequately addressed by one person. Once he got permission to hire, he approached me about the Agency Liaison position. The timing seemed perfect except for one thing. Our kids were in high school and I didn't want to miss these crucial years in their lives. Tom assured me that I could perform the job by spending every-other-week in Washington and not miss any weekends at home. I accepted his offer.

I worked in Washington D.C. for nearly 10 years. The arrangement of spending only every other week in Washington and longer periods at home during the frequent and extensive recesses by the Congress worked well, although it burdened Liliane to handle most of the domestic responsibilities by herself. We talked daily on the telephone and I came home for all the important family occasions. NSP was very understanding and generous in providing me with as much latitude and flexibility in my job as possible.

Homeward Bound

When Tom Connelly retired, NSP decided to establish a full-time office in Washington. Tom had been a commuting employee as he kept his home in Minneapolis. I was not willing to make a permanent move away from the Twin Cities so late in my career so I asked to not be considered for the job. The position I held was also to become a full-time, Washington-based job so I returned home and accepted a position with the Environmental and Regulatory Activities Department. It seemed like a natural fit given my experience in dealing with Federal regulators on environmental and licensing issues.

An Enduring Career Home

My occupation as an engineer with NSP was fulfilling, satisfying and rewarding. I spent my entire career with one company -- a very rare occurrence then -- but even more so now.

I traveled extensively on work assignments. Being frequently absent from my family along with my solid performance record permitted my superiors to be very lenient and flexible in administering my work schedule. I had the good fortune of having jobs that were results oriented, thus I was able to perform them, within limits, at my own pace. This tacit understanding by my superiors generally allowed me to set my own hours. In turn this flexibility allowed me to attend to family functions and other out-of-office errands during normal working hours. Not having to "punch a clock" was a huge benefit and so was the ability to avoid rush hours as I spent my entire career with offices in our downtown Minneapolis General Office building.

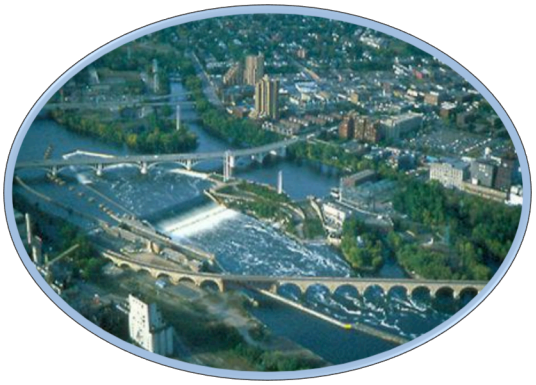
I worked in a number of departments during my career. I liked all of them. The diversity of responsibilities maintained by each department I worked in allowed me to learn many different skills and provided me with a comprehensive overview of the workings of a major utility company. Concurrently, I made many friends among company employees and others from outside companies and government agencies. My intracompany travel

provided a platform for seeing much of our service area and for developing other lasting friendships outside of the Twin Cities. I often took Liliane along on regional business trips, which we extended into personal mini-vacations. She also often accompanied me when I attended seminars, conferences and meetings throughout the United States.

Every four years I was provided a new company car, which could also be used for personal travel and a company-paid underground, heated parking space at our downtown Minneapolis headquarters. I was able to purchase each car after those four years, so we always had two cars less than eight years old.

Ole Man River

The last assignment I had at NSP was the licensing of our hydroelectric power plant at the Falls of Anthony on the Mississippi River. Licensing is a very complicated and drawn-out process that requires input from numerous private companies, environmental organizations and local, state and federal government agencies. It requires following very stringent procedures including the development of a massive application and lengthy negotiations that trade project improvements for licensing approvals. The key for NSP was to balance our need for electric power production against sometimes-outrageous demands for public amenities.



Falls of St. Anthony

NSP had a very generous retirement package for long-term employees. The "rule of ninety" allowed one to retire when years of employment and age totaled 90. I reached that milestone at age 57 and decided to retire. The relicensing project I was working on was not yet completed and would probably require another 3 to 5 years of negotiations. The company was in a dilemma as to how to complete the project. I had been in charge, knew all the players, had a recognized and proven ability to successfully negotiate a favorable outcome and finally, knew "where all the bodies were buried." With support and urging from many of my peers, management asked me to return as a consultant for the duration of the project. Retirement was seductive; however going "cold turkey" would be somewhat difficult for someone who loved their job as I did. I was also slightly uncomfortable about leaving an unfinished undertaking.

Retirement On My Terms

I never admitted that I was ecstatic about the opportunity to continue as a consultant while negotiating a contract that turned out to be all I could hope for. The salary was generous and management agreed to a provision that I was accustomed to during my entire career. Deadlines had to be met -- otherwise my working time was completely at my discretion. This allowed me to play golf when I wanted during the summer months and take extended vacation trips during the winter. I ended up working (now for Xcel Energy) for five years till age 62 while decreasing the amount of work time each year. Other than the aforementioned times off, I worked 100% the first year, 80% the second year etc. until the last year when I worked 20% of the time. What a great way to wean myself into full retirement! The project was completed on time with full licensing approval offset by some very reasonable Xcel contributions to the community including a beautiful new park at the Falls of St. Anthony.

In summary, with the exception of a short period in the late 1980s where I experienced some incompatibility with my boss, I was very content with my choice of employer and the career path I chose. I was able to successfully follow the advice given in the following quote.

"The best careers advice to give to the young is "Find out what you like doing best and get someone to pay you for doing it."

Katherine Whitehorn, 1928-

"Never mistake knowledge for wisdom. One helps you make a living; the other helps you make a life."

Sandra Carey, 1941-

Religion

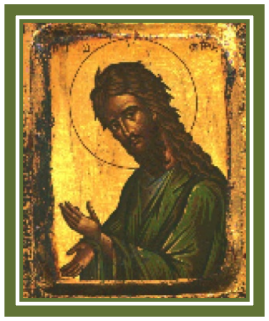
Center of Family Life

My parents were very devout Catholics. I can never remember them missing Sunday Mass except for illness. When I was growing up the church was the center for religious, cultural, and social events in Adrian, which was overwhelmingly a Catholic community with deep German, and to a lesser degree, Irish roots.

There is a long-standing tradition in Catholic families to name their children after a saint, and usually, to name a boy after their father. Virgil and I are not sure why he wasn't given our dad's name since he was the firstborn; nonetheless with my birth the tradition was extended another generation.

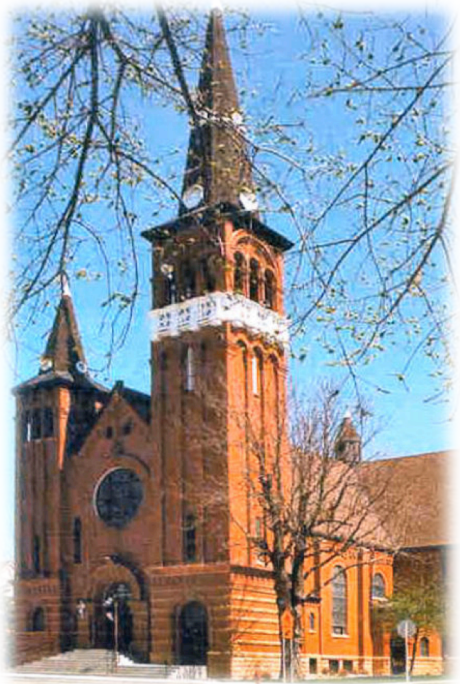
Never a Doubt

Dad and his father were both named John Joseph Schutz. When I was born, my godmother Clara Hennekes, I'm told, strongly influenced the choice of the name I have proudly assumed. Not only was I given the name because of tradition but because I was born on the feast day of St. John the Baptist, June 24th. Liliane and I were fortunate to have a son which we also named John Joseph and his son, our grandson, carries the name to a fifth generation. The only deviation, which is used to somewhat minimize confusion, is that every-other generation takes the nickname of Jack. I was "Jackie" until about my second year of high school. I then asked all my friends to please call me Jack and surprise – they did! All my aunts, however, continued to call me Jackie until their deaths.



Saint John the Baptist

Many Catholic boys growing up in Adrian had nicknames; however they had to use their given (saint's) name in school. I was always John to the nuns. I was reminded of that a number of years ago when Liliane and I were wandering about southeastern Minnesota on what we called “a lost weekend” when we stopped unannounced at the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin rectory in Harmony. We had heard that the assistant pastor at St. Adrian when I was in high school, Father Gits, was the pastor. I was prepared to reintroduce myself since we had not seen each other for about twenty-five years when he opened the door and said, "Hi John." I couldn't believe that he would recognize me as I would not have known him if I had met him on the street, even in priest’s clothing. So the name John still has a place in my life with old acquaintances and the need to use that name on licenses, medical and military records as well as various other official transactions.



St. Adrian Catholic Church



A Permanent Pew

Dad told of his upbringing in the church. When he was six years old the St. Adrian church burned to the ground on Christmas Eve. The current church was quickly constructed and dad was in its initial class of first communicants in 1901. After mom and dad were married they paid a pew fee to assure a permanent place to worship in the church. Eventually this practice was discontinued but our family always sat in the same pew and only an unknowing stranger would violate the courtesy afforded families with long-standing ties to a particular pew.

Religious Highlights

During the school year, students would attend an 8 a.m. mass before the start of classes. Students would gather by grade in assigned areas with their nun-teachers sitting, standing or kneeling behind them. That reminds me that the wooden church kneelers at that time were not padded like most found in Catholic churches today.

First Holy Communion was the highlight of every child's religious upbringing. We studied our Catechism diligently and looked forward to the special day when we would receive Jesus for the first time. All the boys dressed in white shirts and slacks and the girls in white dresses with veils. Monsignor Gmeinder, our longtime pastor at St. Adrian was too ill at the time to preside and he died shortly thereafter.



The St. Adrian First Communion Class of 1947

(I am standing directly in front of the left arm of Father Schaefer, our assistant pastor.)

Confirmation was another religious rite that required special preparation. The Bishop of the Winona Diocese would preside and the confirmation class was in awe of his position and somewhat fearful of his queries into our knowledge of the faith. Part of the ceremony consisted of the Bishop standing before the class and asking individuals questions about various aspects of Catholic doctrine or teachings as learned in our catechisms. Fortunately, he would never embarrass an individual and if someone faltered he would help him or her through to the right answer. Often the question was simply why an individual selected a particular saint for their chosen confirmation name.

Becoming an altar server was a very revered accomplishment. At about age 8 or 9 boys were given the opportunity to begin preparation for this hallowed position of serving Mass. The study and practice was not easy. At that time we had to learn the prayers of the Mass in Latin. The actual duties during Mass were quite extensive and one had to be very alert to any special needs of the priest aside from the routine requirements. It was a very special occasion when we were able to put on our cassocks for the first time. Serving for visiting priests or the Bishop was an extraordinary privilege. We would usually be assigned Masses for a week at a time. Since I lived only a block from the church, I often served for daily Mass during the summer months.

Lenten Practices

Every night during Lent our family would pray the rosary after we had finished dinner. The prayers would take place while kneeling before chairs or couches in the living room. Every Friday during Lent we would attend the Stations of the Cross at church. We also pledged to give something up during Lent as a means of self-denial. It had to be something meaningful and painful to the penitent like abstaining from candy or movies. When we came home from the noon to three p.m. services on Good Friday we usually raked leaves as a family. Easter Sunday was a day when everyone dressed in their finest clothing for Mass. We always had a special Easter dinner and an Easter egg hunt for the kids.

Whenever we went on a trip of more than an hour, everyone in the car participated in a communal rosary. This practice seemed to have blessed us, as we never experienced a serious auto accident.

Social Events and Rites

Several annual events were never missed. The Knights of Columbus and St. Joseph's Society held picnics, usually at someone's farm. Everyone who attended partook in the great food and fun games.



Knights of Columbus

We usually attended the Corpus Christi procession each June in the tiny town of St. Kilian, which in later years, was also the retirement home of my mom's parents and their eventual burial place.



Corpus Christi (Body of Christ)

Of course, weddings and funerals were frequent in Adrian. Funerals were preceded by wakes or vigils, which at that time, were held in the home of the deceased. One of the first wakes that I remember was that of my uncle Ben Mormann, husband of my dad's oldest sister Molly. I recall visiting with him many times as he sat in his favorite chair at their farm home. He died when I was 6 years old and his wake was probably the first time that I had seen a dead person.

A Dilemma Arises

Liliane was raised as a Lutheran. Her parents were active in Faith Lutheran Church in Forest Lake.

When Liliane and I decided to marry, the question of religion was raised and discussed. We agreed that our marriage would be far less complicated if we both were of the same faith. While possible, adapting to two faiths in the same household is difficult. We decided to take the question to Liliane's parents whom we both respected for their wisdom and good judgment.

Their response was pragmatic, wise and comforting. They assessed our situation and reached the same conclusion we had about the benefits of sharing the same faith. Next they reviewed, from their observations, the devotion and attachment each of us had toward our respective religions and concluded that the Catholic Church performed a major role in my upbringing and continued to play an important part in my life at that time. For example, I attended weekly mass without fail, even as a university student. Liliane, they concurred, had very deep Christian religious beliefs but they were not as firmly committed to a particular church.

Liliane's parents concluded their evaluation of our situation with the following assessment and advice: (Paraphrases)

1) All Christians have the same belief in God and are followers of Jesus.
2) We will fully support Liliane if she chooses to become a Catholic.
3) In return for this magnanimous (my word) gesture on our part we only ask that if one or more of your children ask the same of you one day, you will evaluate their situation in a similar way and respect their opinions and judgments.

One Family in Faith

Liliane started taking instructions in the Catholic faith during the winter of 1964-1965 at the Basilica of St. Mary in downtown Minneapolis, where we were later married. She was baptized into the faith on Easter Sunday 1965. Today she is a more devout Catholic than me, and I often marvel at her strong sense of ethics and morality along with her devotion to the church and her teachings.

Mara, Maria and John all attended Resurrection, our parish school in south Minneapolis through the eighth grade. Mara and Maria graduated high school from Derham Hall Catholic High School in St. Paul, while John graduated from St. Thomas Academy in Mendota Heights. They, their spouses and children are members of Catholic parishes in Mankato (Mara and Chris), Chaska (Maria and Bill) and Edina (John and Beth).



Interior - St. Adrian Church

"To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible."

Saint Thomas Aquinas, 1225-1274

"All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen."

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803-1882

"We no longer have the luxury of spending our energy on anything that does not lead us and our families to Christ."

Sheri L. Dew, 1953

Language

Deutschland Uber Alles



Mom and dad both were raised speaking German. They didn't speak English until they began grade school. Dad spoke German with his brothers on occasion and two of them, Uncle Nick and Uncle Henry, spoke German with each other frequently, especially when they would get into a heated argument, which amusingly, was quite often.

Mom spoke "high" German and dad "low" German. Since my maternal grandmother was born in Luxembourg, my mom might have also spoken a German dialect called "Luxembourgish." The two dialects were similar enough so that mom and dad developed a sort of hybrid German that they used when they didn't want us to understand what they were saying. Dad would use certain German, or German-derivative slang words to describe certain conditions or traits. Here are a few that I can remember:

- Krattafuss -- Funny feet.
- Strubelkopf -- Messy hair.
- Pritzelfritz – A name for someone with little pain tolerance or irrational fears. The closest English equivalent would be "sissy" or in today's vernacular -- wuss or wimp. The made-up word is probably not a German derivative.
- Schnickelfritz -- A term of endearment of uncertain Germanic origin. It means something akin to "rascal" "scamp" or "little chatterbox." The word is usually used with children, but can also be used between others who are close with each other.
- Qualmentia (sp?) -- Boiled potatoes, which are smashed with a fork. Then cream or sour cream and lots of diced raw onions are added with salt and pepper to taste.

A German word that I use occasionally because there is no English equivalent is schadenfreude (shah-den-froy-deh) which means "pleasure derived by someone from another person's misfortune." I often use it with my golfing friends. It was clearly evident when we used "knips" (see chapter on ***Entertainment***) as a means of punishment for card game losers.

Dead But Not Forgotten

Other than hearing my parents speak German, my first personal encounter with another language was when I became an altar boy. Latin was still the official language of the Catholic Church. The very first words from the mass that I learned were "Ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam" which means "To God, the joy of my youth." Another common phrase was "Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper: et in saecula saeculorum. Amen." ("As it was in the beginning is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.") As a devotee of linguistics, I have always found it interesting that Latin, a dead language, is the foundation of many of the world's other languages. Some of the modern romance languages that owe their origin to Latin are French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian. English, however, is often mistaken for a romance language because of the huge number of words in English with direct and indirect Latin origins. I often can ascertain the meaning of words in many languages from similar Latin words. I really like the sound of Latin words. I still miss the Latin Mass.

I became more interested in Latin while studying biology in high school. Sister Sylvia (PhD from the University of Michigan) was a terrific teacher and was able to simplify the understanding of biological orders. In the 1700s Carl Linnaeus developed a system of organizing the diversity of life in a hierarchical classification. Latin was the important language of the time of Linnaeus and continues to be a critical language for international communication in certain sciences. The biological nomenclature includes species such *Platyhelminthes,* which are hermaphrodite flatworms that fertilize their own sex cells. In contrast we are of the genus *Homo* and the species *Sapiens,* and we have a much better and fun way of reproducing.

Latin was the language of not only science and of the church but also of the legal system. Of the many branches of science in which Latin has traditionally found its application indisputably included medicine. While until the close of the Middle Ages a medical text not written in Latin was a rare exception, modern languages began to gain ground with increasing intensity from the 16th century on. Despite the obvious retreat from medical terminology in the 20th century, Latin terms are still widely used.

Private Gibberish

Because of my love of the sound of Latin words I sometimes use a made-up Latin word or suffix to substitute for or add to an English phrase or word such as "Nunnus peccatoribus" (Catholic Sister), "Eggus Benedictus" (Eggs Benedict) or “Roadus Interruptus” (Highway detour). Weird huh?

When growing up, my mom used words that were unique to her vocabulary – perhaps they were used in her childhood home. Here are some of the words she used for certain items:

- Boomps – Underpants.
- Niffer – Handkerchief.
- Wucks – Overshoes.
- Geggers – Legs.
- Henners – Hands
- Pummy – Popcorn.
- Ginkee – Alcoholic drink.



Boomps

I still use these words on occasion and Liliane knows what they mean. Weird huh?

During much of our marriage I have used made-up sentences to express what one might consider nonsensical, spontaneous outbursts -- which is what they are. They are expressions reflecting my interest in linguistics, but my made-up language is not akin to Esperanto or Pig Latin. The words and phrases are just interesting sounds to me but they mean absolutely nothing! I use this private language as an outlet when I feel like talking to myself or just to relieve some tension. Other people might sigh, yawn, stretch, rub their hands together, or take some other action, which provides them with an emotional outlet. The quiet outbursts are never the same. They might be something like "Chigaleeatz kortalango morta putzka." or "Patchalanga zagga panski oogalaata." Can anyone pick out the verb in either sentence? Weird huh? Liliane thinks so, but to me it sounds like a very agreeable language even though the words are totally meaningless and -- never repeated except by accident.

When I have the opportunity, I like to formulate plays on words. For example, when I want to snuggle with Liliane in bed (often) I usually say, "I want to be Louisiana swamp.” I'll help you with that one. What is a Louisiana swamp? It’s a “bayou” -- a homophone for “by you.” Get it? Weird huh?

A Pet Name

In the early years of our marriage I came up with a pet name for Liliane – Broughmly or Brougham for short and pronounced “broam.” I have no idea how I came up with the name but it has no chance of being confused for another name. She (Brougham), the kids and I have become so used to it that my use of the name now goes unnoticed. Occasionally others may question me when I inadvertently use the name outside the confines of our immediate family. Brougham is not Liliane’s favorite moniker but she has accepted it since it is only used by me and is meant to be endearing. She prefers Liliane (Lil-ee-ann) or, even better, the German pronunciation of her name (Lil-ee-AHN-nah). Her middle name of Marlene is pronounced (mar-LAIN-nah) in German. She loathes Lillian, Lil or Lily. She was named after the song “Lily Marlene”, popular in both Germany and the United States before and during WWII.

A Poet?

I also do something with words that is not so weird. Five times a year; on Liliane’s birthday, St. Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day, our anniversary and Christmas I write a poem for Liliane. My interest in in poetry began

when Sister Sylvia, a very good high school English teacher, was able to superbly portray the beauty of the distinctive and rhythmic cadences. She taught us the fundamentals of poetry, which included terms that I can still recognize such as iambic pentameter, onomatopoeia, alliteration and caesura. I do enjoy writing but do not take particular delight in reading or listening to poetry. I recognize poetry, however, as a beautiful and rhythmic way to romantically express ones emotions and sentiments. Liliane thinks so too. She keeps all my poems.

A Biblical Engineer

Since I'm "letting it all out" I may as well relate some other things that are said in the privacy of our marriage. When Liliane and I have disagreements, I often try to end the discussion by saying, "I'm right because I'm an engineer and I know these things!" or "I'm right because it says so in the Bible!" Rarely, if ever, do these statements settle our differences. Liliane follows with her usual rejoinder of, "You may be a Mensan but you have no common sense!" I have one retort that she hasn't been able to crack. I can totally disarm her when she confronts me with some accusation or attempts to start an argument by simply saying, "I suppose." That p-----s her off -- but in a nice way. Another disarmer – "If I agree with you, we'll both be wrong! Weird huh?

I also occasionally mix* and incorporate* biblical quotations to support or enhance my position. For example, when I have to get up in the morning to attend to "important duties" such as playing golf, I usually announce, **"There is no rest for the pure in heart."** Liliane thinks that I am being blasphemous -- not because of my misquotation but because she thinks I'm far from "pure in heart." I can't disagree. Weird huh?

* "***There is no rest for*** the wicked." (Isaiah 48:12)

* "Blessed are ***the pure in Heart***, for they shall see God." (Mathew 5:8)

Iawaaba!

The final "word" on my peculiar and personal language is my coining of a particular word when the children were small. The word was a surrogate for "I love you" so that only we, the family, would know what we were saying. The word is "Iawaaba." It sounds rather like an American Indian word to me and I have no idea why I chose it. It was fun to have the kids in on the "secret" and the beauty was that we could use that made-up word in front of their friends during those turbulent teen years and not embarrass them! Weird huh? We still use it today between family members. To all of you that have now read the foregoing paragraphs on freaky linguistics and still acknowledge my sanity, I say to you -- "Iawaaba"!

Multilingual

Liliane's father spoke fluent German, Ukrainian, and Latvian. He also understood and spoke some Russian and French. He, of course, learned English when they came to the United States.

Liliane's mother spoke German, Latvian and English. She also knew some Russian from the few years she and her family lived in St. Petersburg.

Once Liliane's parents left Latvia they spoke German in their home, thus Liliane and her siblings all learned to speak German as their first language. Once the family immigrated to the United States, they learned to speak English by immersion. There were no special language classes for them so they simply observed, listened and began speaking with their classmates and peers. Eventually they all became proficient at English, although both parents retained a noticeable accent. Liliane had a slight accent when I first met her, but she has either lost it or I have become accustomed to hearing it. Since occasionally, someone with a very good ear for languages asks her if she speaks another language, the latter is probably true.

Since Liliane often spoke German with her parents throughout their life, her German remains excellent. Even though I was often unable to understand their conversations, I encouraged them to continue speaking in their native language. It provided me the opportunity to obtain a rudimentary understanding -- enough to "get the gist" of a conversation. The fact that Liliane is bilingual has been very helpful in our travels. Her German is so

good that she is assumed to be a citizen by native Germans. Since the Germans are such worldwide travelers, we often have been able to solve communication barriers with Liliane's knowledge of the language.

Wo Sind Wir?

On our first visit to Vienna on our engagement trip (see chapter on ***Courtship***) we were having difficulty finding our hotel. Vienna has a series of "ring" roads that make it very hard to keep one's bearings while driving. I, being a typical male, refused to stop and ask for directions until I began making a fool out of myself by continually returning to the same place. We pulled to the curb where Liliane asked a pedestrian for directions to our hotel. We then listened to a long dissertation while watching him execute a lot of very animated pointing. When he finished, Liliane thanked him and then rolled up the car window while I asked her what he had said. She said the man had a Viennese dialect and she understood very little of what he said! I was very dubious about this answer since my only familiarity with variations in a language was with the southern drawl or New England accent in the United States. Liliane explained that German dialects were quite different from having a mere accent.

Liliane was brought up in an area of Germany where Schwabisch was the dialect and many of its words were completely unlike those in High German (Hochdeutsch), which she learned in school. There are at least 50 German dialects and some of them use completely different words for the same thing. For instance, the word "erdbirne" is the Schwabisch name for potatoes (kartoffel in Hochdeutsch). The word "erdbeere" is the High German name for strawberry. When pronounced, "erdbirne" and "erbeere" can easily be misunderstood and you might not get what you want at the market. Liliane's mom experienced this confusion while grocery shopping. She was given potatoes instead of the strawberries she thought she asked for. At that time in Germany shopping for produce was done by asking an employee for a product. You were not allowed to pick it out by yourself.

I have since gained respect for the use of dialects and am now better able to understand why there are completely different Spanish pronunciations in Catalan versus the rest of Spain or even Mexico for example.

Donde Esta el Bano?

When we first started traveling we had much more difficulty in communicating because, other than English and German, we only knew a few words in other languages. We had to carry translation books and use a lot of "sign language." Linguistics is fascinating and while I have a lot of respect for other languages, I'm grateful that much of our ever-shrinking world speaks English -- often as a second language.

I do believe that Americans should be taught another language in early school years when it can be easily absorbed. We should do this not because we want to emulate other country's citizens who are generally bilingual, especially in Europe, but because it helps bridge a gap between cultures.

The Ugly American?

I have listened to people lauding the routine bilingualism of most Europeans while at the same time deriding Americans for not learning other languages. I have responded by saying, "The reason that we, vis–à–vis, Europe have not, in general, learned other languages is quite simple. If North Dakotans spoke Swedish, Wisconsinites -- German, and Iowans -- French, we Minnesotans would, for reasons of commerce, also speak those languages." Many of the countries of Europe are not much larger than our states, but their residents speak multiple languages because they need to communicate with their adjoining neighbors. As the United States was settled, immigrants brought their language and culture with them but quickly assimilated and adopted the official language of the land -- English. They could now communicate with their neighbors who also had learned to speak -- English.

"Of all the words that exist in any language, only a bare minority are pure, unadulterated, original roots. The majority are "coined" words, forms that have been in one way or another created, augmented, cut down, combined, and recombined to convey new needed meanings, The language mint is more than a mint; it is a great manufacturing center, where all sorts of productive activities go on unceasingly."

Mario Andrew Pei, 1901-1978

Sports

While I was growing up, until boys entered high school most team sports consisted of sandlot baseball and pickup football or basketball. There was an empty lot next to our house where a group of guys cut the weeds, threw down some markers for bases, brought bats, balls and gloves, picked teams and then played baseball for hours on end. Some of our parents installed basketball hoops on their garages, and as with baseball, we made up teams and played till dark. Nobody, but nobody, ever complained about being bored or not having anything to do. Most kids loved sports, but also found added benefit to playing because parents seemed to leave them alone when participating and did not interrupt them to do household or other chores.

Primitive Fun

Although it would probably not be considered a sport, lagging marbles was an activity that we all participated in. It was one of the first competitive games one learned and our version was clearly a hybrid of a multitude of marble games played around the world. Using a stick, we would simply draw a straight line in the dirt called the lag line and another parallel line called the pitch line. You would then bowl a marble from behind the pitch line to the lag line. The closest marble to the lag line would win against the opposing marbles that were further away. If we played "Keepsies" you would actually keep the marbles you defeated or if we played "Friendlies" you would get all of your marbles back at the end of the game**.** Every boy had a stash of marbles kept in a jar or can. Some of them were valued more than others.

Winter Wonderland

Winter outdoors sports or activities included ice-skating, sledding, building snow forts and having snowball fights. I was never good at ice-skating because I have notoriously weak ankles. I have always maintained that I wore out the sides of my skates before the blades needed sharpening. We had two rather steep hills that we used for sledding, one near the city park and the other on the northeast corner of town. We did not have T-bars or any other assists, so the routine was to slide down the hill in 15 seconds and then trudge and tow your sled back up the hill, which took 5 minutes. When storms closed the schools and there was no street traffic we actually sledded down the church hill in the middle of Main Avenue to the town center. Sleds were sometimes towed behind vehicles and snowball fights were common. We also built makeshift igloos.

Practice Practice

Sports became much more serious as we entered high school. Baseball and basketball were the only varsity sports available at St. Adrian. The public school also had football, a sport I yearned to play.



We played year-round basketball. During good weather we played games on neighborhood driveways with garage-mounted hoops. During the winter, in addition to the regular school basketball practices, we would play in the Knights of Columbus hall above dad's store. Virgil put up a hoop for our use. We also played in haymows in farm barns where several of my friends had installed hoops. Neither of these venues was heated, but we kept warm by the intense competition of our games.

NFL Nix

In the fall a group of guys would gather, usually on the St. Adrian school grounds, where we formed teams to play touch football. I thought that some of us had real talent for the game and regretted that we couldn't play interscholastically.

Sometimes we would play our make-up games on the sidelines during public school nighttime practices under rather dim lighting conditions. The public school football coach, Zeke Zahorski, apparently glanced at us on occasion and was impressed with some of our play. He asked our parish priest if he would consider letting a classmate, Lyle Engbarth, and me play for him at the public school. Apparently, this was allowable by the State High School League, but Father Glynn wouldn't even consider it, and I have always regretted missing this

opportunity. However, basketball was always my favorite participation sport until later when golf became my sporting obsession.

Ancient Hoopster

My freshman and sophomore coach for basketball was Wilfred (Porky) Reckers. He was a great guy but had not picked up on the rapidly changing techniques of the game. His old school methods had us shooting underhand free throws, flat-footed set shots, etc. We learned a great deal more in our driveway pick-up games by ourselves. Our practices and games were played in a very small combination gym/assembly hall located in the upper floors of the school.

A New Beginning

When I was a junior we opened a beautiful new high school with a large gym and also welcomed a recent graduate from St. Mary's College in Winona as our new basketball coach. Gene Biewen brought new life into our program. We had an average year when I was a junior, but after one year of evaluating our talents and finding the best way to utilize them, Gene brought about something that we had never dreamed of -- a 1957 state tournament team!

We defeated much larger Marshall Central 63-52 to advance to the State Catholic Tournament in the Twin Cities. I scored 15 points in the championship game and gained All-Tournament recognition as well as All-Conference honors along with teammates Lorry Bullerman and Joe Scheidt. It was the first time any team from our school participated in a state tourney.

Tiny St. Adrian received a lot of publicity as the “Cinderella” team but we lost our first game to Winona Cotter 68-62 after competing very well against the much larger school.

In another close game we defeated Sleepy Eye St. Mary's 64-63 as we were now playing in the consolation bracket.

In the consolation finals, I tore my patella muscle (same Osgood-Schlaters injury as in the 8th grade) very early in the game and could not play. We lost to Duluth Cathedral, the team picked to win the tourney, 67-38. De LaSalle of Minneapolis won their fourth straight state tournament the next day. St. Adrian won the “Sportsmanship” trophy.

My leg healed enough for me to play baseball that spring. It was the end of my interscholastic sports competition, but I continued to participate in basketball, football and softball for many years.

Summer Sabbatical

Most summers of my late grade school and early high school years I would spend a couple of weeks with mom's sister, Aunt Lucy, in Austin. She was not married and lived alone in a small apartment adjacent to her hair salon in downtown Austin. Aunt Lucy also had a very nice summer cottage on the Cedar River in north Austin where we stayed on my visits. On most days I would ride along with her to the salon and then spend the majority of the day swimming in the nearby municipal pool or going to movies. I remember seeing ***Mr. Roberts*** starring Jack Lemmon in Austin the summer I turned 15.

A Lasting Love

Aunt Lucy was a golfer and introduced me to the game when I was about 12. She bought me a set of clubs and paid for a few lessons at the Austin Country Club, which was just across the river from her cottage home. She trusted me to take her rowboat across the river where I docked at the Country Club. I then either took golf lessons or played a round with other young boys.

I did play golf occasionally in my late high school years at the nine-hole Luverne Country Club. Several of my friends played there as well. After that I put golf on hold, playing only occasionally while in college.

I started to play golf again, but only occasionally, while the kids were growing up. Ivars would often invite me to play at Midland Hills Country Club on Monday evenings when outside group events were completed.

When the kids finished high school, I decided to play golf more often as I had grown to like the game a lot. It was one of the few games that I could physically handle as I was now in my late 40s. I decided to join a golf club, and since I was familiar with and liked Midland Hills and also knew quite a few members including Ivars, it was an easy choice. We became family members in 1987. Liliane played in the Women's league, and we played together in a Friday night couples event called "Partee." I served on the Board of Midland Hills for six years and we have thoroughly enjoyed the club as a comfortable haven to spend time with friends and family.

I have genuinely enjoyed the game of golf although I have never been really good. The lowest handicap that I have carried was an 11, and I have had one hole-in-one. Since retirement I have played approximately 80 rounds each year, most often with a group of guys who really enjoy each other. Ivars, of course, is my doubles partner, and I estimate that we have played over 1500 rounds together since we joined Midland Hills Country Club.



Jack and Ivars
Midland Hills Country Club
 # 8 Tee - 2007

Ski-U-Mah

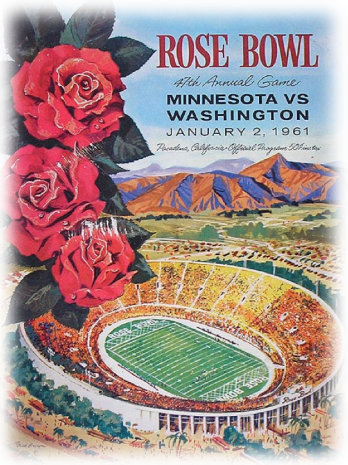
I have always loved spectator sports. I faithfully followed University of Minnesota sports during my years in college. I attended all home basketball and football games and most home hockey games. I was able to get great seats at Gopher football games by being part of the card section, which was located between the 40-yard lines.

A number of my friends and I would attend at least one away football game each year. We would drive to Iowa City, Madison, Lafayette or Evanston. We would usually drive in one or two cars or, as we did in one instance, take the train to Chicago (Northwestern). We would economize by sharing hotel rooms among several students, sometimes sleeping three to a bed.

While in college, I played intramural basketball, softball and flag football. I played primarily with teams from Newman Hall, the campus Catholic Student Organization. I enjoyed playing on some pretty good teams, which won several championships. Our after-game entertainment usually consisted of a visit to Manning's, a sports bar, located on Como Avenue near campus where we would imbibe in a few beers while recapping the game.

I was extremely lucky to have been at the "U" when, in 1960, they last won a national football title. The 1960 Gophers came to the Rose Bowl as the #1 team in the nation. Sandy Stephens, the first African-American starting quarterback at the school, led the team. The Gophers had an early 26-14 non-conference win at #12 Nebraska. They shut out both Indiana and Northwestern and also blanked Michigan at Michigan Stadium to win the Little Brown Jug. A win over non-conference Kansas State put Minnesota at #3 nationally. The next game at #1 Iowa was one of the most notable games in the Floyd of Rosedale rivalry. Minnesota won 27-10 and they were ranked #1, but then they lost to the Purdue Boilermakers the following week. A 26-14 win over the Wisconsin Badgers on national television put them back at #1 to finish the season. The Gophers were tied with Iowa in the Big Ten standings, each with a loss. The final AP poll of November 29 was one of the closest ever: Minnesota with 17.5 first-place votes, Mississippi 16, and Iowa 12.5.

Rose Bowl Bound



Five friends from the Newman Center decided to drive to Pasadena to see the Gophers play in the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day in 1961. Actually the game was played the day after New Year's Day since it occurred on a Sunday.

My childhood friend Dave Nealy agreed to drive. He and his future wife, Toni Casper along with Roberta Carlson, Dick Johns, and I made up our carful. The first stop was in Adrian, where we spent the night at the Schutz and Nealy residences. The evening before leaving for California we had a small pre-departure party in the nearly completed new home that my parents were having built.

We economized by having only two motel/hotel rooms -- one for the guys and one for the girls. We stayed in some cheesy accommodations but we were always tired so they were adequate for our needs.

We had a great time in Los Angeles where we attended the Rose Bowl Parade and the big game between the Gophers and the University of Washington. Unfortunately, Minnesota lost to Washington 17-7. It was a bittersweet ride home. Our National Champion Gophers had lost, but we had one of the most exciting and memorable experiences of our lifetime.

Sveiks! *

After college I continued to play softball and basketball in various commercial and community leagues around the Twin Cities. I played with a Latvian basketball team after our marriage. Three of Liliane's cousins, Ivars, Juris and Ziggy were on the team. I, a Latvian-in-law on the team, was known as "Jacksis Schutzis."**

Many of the local children of Latvian heritage played either basketball or volleyball for the Twin Cities Latvian sports organization "Starts." Each year the national championship games are played in various cities. Some of the non-playing family members attend as combination coach/chaperones or simply as spectators. During the time John played on the Latvian team we played in New York, Indianapolis, Kalamazoo, Chicago and Minneapolis. It was always a fun-filled weekend with many pranks, tall tales and side sightseeing excursions in addition to the athletic venue.

* Sveiks means hello or hi in Latvian. ** Nearly all Latvian names end in " S."

Tennis Anyone?

I finally quit competitive basketball when I was in my early forties. I broke my nose several times and my chronic back problems were getting worse. On one of my doctor appointments for a broken nose the doctor asked me if I might "consider playing tennis instead of basketball?" That made sense so I started to play some

tennis, which I hadn't played regularly since high school, but I was more interested in golf. As mentioned earlier, golf has now become my participation sport of choice.

Purple Pride

I continue to enjoy spectator sports. In September of 1961 the Minnesota Vikings played their first-ever game at Metropolitan Stadium in Bloomington. My brother-in-law Ron and I initially bought season tickets. Later I bought his season ticket and Liliane or John and I attended games for many years. John and I attended the last Viking game at Metropolitan Stadium in December of 1981. He spent part of the game sitting on a seat directly behind ours after exchanging seats with each of the seat holders. He eventually sawed off a section of our backrest clearly displaying our seat numbers. John now has this souvenir of our many memorable game experiences. I kept the 40-yardline tickets for some years after the Vikings moved to the Metrodome but finally relinquished them in favor of the more comfortable, if less authentic, HDTV viewing venue found at home.

Fields of Dreams

The first year of the Minnesota Vikings in 1961 was also the inaugural Minnesota Twins season at Metropolitan Stadium. I was fortunate to attend a World Series game and the Major League All Star game in 1965. In 1987 I attended one game of the World Series at the Metrodome. The Twins became World Champions when they beat the St. Louis Cardinals in seven games that year. Four years later the Twins again won the World Series in seven games against the Atlanta Braves. I attended the final game, a 1-0 shutout. In their "World Series 100th Anniversary" countdown, ESPN selected the 1991 World Series as the "Greatest of All Time", with five of its games being decided by a single run, four games decided in the final at-bat, and three games going into extra innings.

Couch Potato

I continue to follow the Twins, Vikings, Timberwolves, Gophers, and to a lesser extent, the Wild, on the local sports scene. Occasionally we attend live games, but I'm content to watch most of them on hi-definition TV.

Life Lessons

Lastly, I'll postulate a thought about sports from my perspective. I think that most of us start out playing a sport as a means of fun and recreation. But somewhere along the way we realize that sports can often be a metaphor for achieving success because of the lessons it teaches us about life. I believe that sport is the perfect environment to develop some of life's most needed skills. It teaches us about achievement, hard work, competition, overcoming obstacles, achieving goals, understanding the value of teamwork and, finally, about the need to graciously accept defeat and modestly celebrate victory.

"Your talent determines what you can do. Your motivation determines how much you are willing to do. Your attitude determines how well you do it."

Lou Holtz, 1937-

"Golf is the closest game to the game we call life. You get bad breaks from good shots; you get good breaks from bad shots – but you have to play the ball where it lies."

Bobby Jones, 1902 – 1971

"At this point in my life I like golf, hiking, camping, boating, hunting and fishing except for hiking, camping, boating, hunting and fishing."

Jack Schutz, 1939-

Pets

I Was Lost

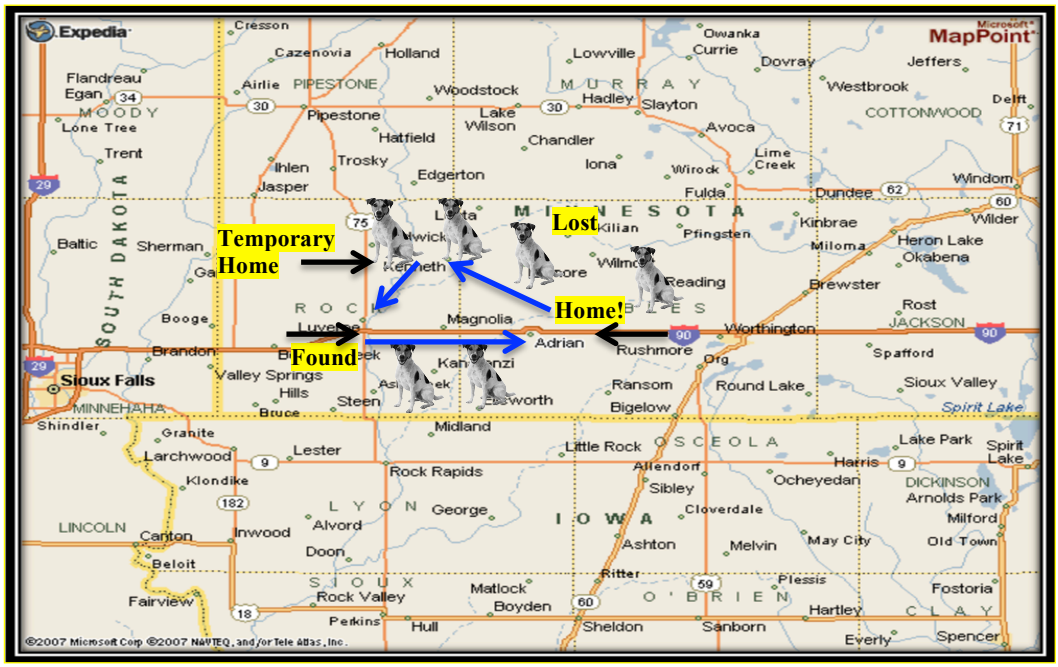
In the late 40s we had a dog named "Nippy," a rat terrier who loved my dad. He went everywhere with him, and the sight of Nippy's head sticking out of the pickup truck window was a common sight in Adrian. One day, dad was pheasant hunting somewhere northwest of Adrian with some friends. Following one of their stops he realized that they had forgotten Nippy, probably because he was in deep thought about something or otherwise occupied. He noticed Nippy's absence within a short time and he returned to the location he had last seen him but Nippy was nowhere to be found. No doubt Nippy chased the pickup for a while and then probably headed cross-country in pursuit. After weeks of searching by the entire family we gave up looking for him. All of us were distraught about his loss and dearly missed him.



Nippy and Me
April 1946

And Now I'm Found

A couple of years later, my parents took me to the Luverne swimming pool on a Sunday afternoon. When we arrived my dad was suddenly struck in the chest by a leaping dog that saw him walking toward the pool. Ironically, Nippy had been taken in by another hardware dealer whom dad knew from Kenneth (sixteen miles from Adrian). Nippy's actions, of course, convinced the Vandevelde's, his temporary masters, that he really belonged to us and we took him home. He was overjoyed upon arrival at his old home and immediately revisited his old haunts such as the place he always found water, then performed his customary and playful ever-narrowing circle run around us.



Nippy's Journey

As he grew older, Nippy's near blindness and his love of riding in dad's pickup truck became a fatal combination. One ill-fated day I finished school and headed for the hardware store to perform some chores. When I walked in the door I expected Nippy to come running from his mezzanine sleeping area to greet me. He

knew a number of people from their unique walk or voices. When he didn't come running when I entered the store I questioned my Uncle Nick who always sat in a chair near the rear office area. He somehow deflected my question about Nippy. I knew something was wrong. I sought out dad and he told me with tears in his eyes what happened. Nippy was at home when my Uncle Leonard, who had a pickup truck identical to dad's, was stopping at our house. Nippy, hearing, but probably unable to see the pickup, ran toward it and was run over. I'm not sure if he died immediately or not -- I didn't want to know. The whole family was very sad. We buried Nippy on our property and then went on with our lives while greatly missing one of our major delights.

Rodent Enchantment



I never had another official pet when I was a boy, but I did have some rather interesting interactions with animals. I would trap gophers and catch bunnies but I had the most fun with squirrels. With Virgil's help I built a fairly large cage (I would guess its dimensions to be 3 feet wide by 5 feet high and 6 feet long). It was made of chicken wire with a wooden frame. The top had a door fashioned from a refrigerator shelf, which had wire bars about a half-inch apart. The door's dimensions were approximately 3 feet wide by 1½ feet long. We built an exercise wheel, which was mounted on the inside on one of the structural braces. The wheel consisted of a discarded bicycle wheel on which we attached a 4 or 5-inch wide belt, which was normally used to transfer power in farm machinery.

For weeks I would lay out a trail of corn for the squirrels. They faithfully came each day to eat the corn. Each day I made the trail a little closer to the cage and finally stuck some corn on the sides of the cage. When they became comfortable with eating that corn I made the trail into the cage through the open door. After they had entered the cage for several successive days, I attached a long string to the door and when one entered, I pulled the door shut. The squirrel initially went berserk trying to get out but he finally calmed down. I started feeding him regularly and he learned to use the wheel for exercise.

After several weeks the squirrel seemed to be becoming quite docile as he took the corn directly from me when I brought his daily meal. It was time. I opened the door and slowly crawled in. The second I closed the door behind me the squirrel went bananas. He jumped all over me, scratching, biting and generally making me miserable. I got out as quickly as I could and decided that this was not a very good way to domesticate a wild animal. But he was so cute! I let him go.

I decided that I could not tame a squirrel that was fully grown but I didn't give up trying to acquire a squirrel as a pet. Early the next spring, I started putting out corn near our back door. A young, newly born squirrel started coming to get the corn. Soon he tolerated me being near him while he ate. Then I started laying the corn out closer to me and he still took it. Eventually, he would climb up on my shoulder to get his kernels. My parents took a picture of him eating while sitting on my shoulder. That lasted for a short time until his natural instincts lured him to a more natural foraging ritual with his cousins. I still like squirrels and so does Liliane. She frequently puts out food for them.

Man's Beast Friend*

When Mara, Maria and John were in the early years of elementary school, we decided to get a pet. Although Liliane loves all animals I've always disliked cats and so we settled on a dog. I'm not sure why we sought a Peekapoo (cross between a Pekinese and a Poodle) other than that they are a relatively small, non-shedding, good-tempered housedog. We put in an order in for a Peekapoo from a Mrs. Brown, who owned a small kennel in Shakopee.

In the meantime we kept watching the newspaper sale ads for dogs and saw that a family in Bloomington was selling some Peekapoo pups. We decided to drive out to their home one Sunday afternoon to get a better idea of what the breed was like. The lady of the house brought one of the pups to the door and I urged Liliane to hold

him for a few minutes. That was it! Even though the puppy had a rather prominent under bite, he was really cute. Liliane melted, and we brought home a Peekapoo that we named Pepe. We cancelled our order with Mrs. Brown.



Pepe



Young **Older**

For the first several weeks we kept him in a cardboard box, which he inevitably gnawed through. We, of course, set down many rules for ourselves such as not allowing him family food, not sleeping on our bed, etc. One-by-one over the next few years they all were violated – but by then we didn't mind.

He was a very faithful and fun-loving dog. He always greeted me enthusiastically when I came home from work and begged me to play a hide and seek game with him. He loved to tease Liliane by grabbing her underwear or gloves and running away knowing the playful chase was on.

I was so happy that Pepe was a lap dog. Whenever I sat down to read the newspaper or watch TV he would immediately jump onto my lap and lie there peacefully. His breed does not shed, so we never had issues with hair on our clothes or the furniture.

Pepe always wanted to be a part of what we were doing. When Liliane and I were standing facing each other in conversation, he would continue barking until one of us would lift him to our level. He then quieted as he now considered himself an equal in our discussion.

Pepe loved ice cream and knew when it was time for an evening treat. He would stand by the refrigerator and bark. He loved practically any food that we liked but we kept him from begging at the table -- most of the time. Once we baked a batch of chocolate chip cookies and placed them on our counter to cool while we left the house to run some errands. When we returned, the cookie sheet was empty – save for one cookie. Pepe apparently had jumped onto our kitchen table and then the counter for his feast. We were rather alarmed because we had heard that too much chocolate could be fatal to dogs. It never seemed to bother him. We concluded that he left the one cookie thinking, perhaps, that we wouldn't notice that the others were missing. He was a smart dog.

Pepe had his routines. Even if we had company, when our usual bedtime of 10 p.m. came around he would come to us with a bark and, I swear, give a head nod in the direction of our bedroom.

When we left home without him he would jump up on a loveseat in our family room where he could survey the garage. He would not move from that spot until we returned - - sometimes many hours later.

We initially trained Pepe to relieve himself under a bush near our back fence. When he barked by the back door we would ask, “Pepe, do you have to go fence?” Or if we *wanted* him to go we would order: "Pepe go fence!" He knew what this meant even when there wasn't an available fence.

Pepe loved to go camping or visit friends and family with us. He especially liked to visit Liliane's parents who really loved him and doted on him. When we were returning home on Interstate 35W he would always know when we were near the exit ramp at Silver Lake Road where he would arise and put his feet on the dashboard to watch as we made the exit. He was a smart dog.

He hated going to the vet or groomer. He didn't like going through a car wash with us and wasn't too fond of baths or Liliane's dental hygiene routine to remove plaque from his teeth.

Pepe, in his prime, was a good leaper and would jump up onto our decorative concrete block side fences to escape our yard and explore the neighborhood on his own. He never went beyond the reach of our voices so we let him have his fun. I eventually made a "Pepe hole" in our slatted wooden fence to expedite his excursions. He was well liked by the neighbors except perhaps one, who may have had some altercations with him. He once came home with, what appeared to be, an injured back. Another time he came home very sick and we had to take him to the vet, a visit he always feared. The vet concluded that he had swallowed some anti-freeze, which has a sweet taste attractive to dogs but it crystallizes some cells in the body if ingested. Since Pepe was approximately 12 years old at the time, the vet suggested that we consider euthanasia. Liliane's sister-in-law Jan, herself an animal lover, suggested that we take him to the renowned Veterinarian School at the University of Minnesota. There, an intern from (of all places) San Diego took Pepe on as a personal project. He was very sick.

According to the school, we probably set a record for the number of visitors to see a patient at the University's Veterinarian Hospital. Pepe slowly recovered, and he lived another eight years. Although the hospital stay was very expensive, it was well worth it. When he could no longer see, was incontinent and continually bumped into things, we knew it was time to end his life. He brought us twenty years of joy, and he loved us to the very end. We took him to the University Veterinary School where he was euthanized – dying peacefully on Liliane's lap. We have his ashes in a bedroom cabinet and still often think of him.

"The dog represents all that is best in man." **

Etienne Charlet, 1845-1931

"The trouble with a kitten is that eventually it becomes a cat!" **

Ogden Nash, 1902-1971

"Dogs come when they're called. Cats take a message and get back to you later!" **

Mary Bly, 1962-

"The one absolutely unselfish friend that a man can have in this selfish world, the one that never deserts him and the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous is his dog." **

George Graham Vest, 1879-1903

** I chose these four quotations because they accurately reflect my sentiments about these two common pets.

Hobbies

The Reign Of Planes And Trains

One of the earliest hobbies that I can remember is the study of airplanes. I don't know why but I was always fascinated with flight and as a child I dreamt of someday becoming a pilot. At first I simply read about aviation, then began sending away for photographs and books on airplanes and finally began building models. I still have a book by Janes titled, ***All The World's Aircraft***, which I bought as a boy. I would memorize the names of military and commercial aircraft from around the world and could recognize them from their silhouettes. I would spend hours making models from kits that I bought at hobby stores when we went on shopping trips to Sioux Falls. I hung them from the ceiling of my bedroom and would look up at them and dream of flying to faraway places. That fantasy came true, but I was never the pilot.

My first airplane ride came on a beautiful summer evening when I was about 10 years old. A barnstormer landed a small plane in a field about two miles south of Adrian. Word quickly spread that he was giving rides for a reasonable fee. Dad came home and asked me if I'd like a ride in an airplane. I was ecstatic at the opportunity and quickly packaged a note along with a small weight in a paper bag to take along. The plane had only two seats so I went alone with the pilot. After circling the town identifying well-known buildings, I asked him to fly low over our house where I dropped my bag with a message to mom. We could see her in the yard. The plane ride was by far the most exciting highlight of my life at the time.

While I never really got over my interest in airplanes, I next shifted to an interest in trains. I remember the greatest childhood Christmas of all being the one when I received a Lionel train set. I was probably about 8 or 9 when I opened a small package while the family was gathered for our gift opening. Dad tried to get me to open a larger package but I had already developed a sense that "big things come in small packages" and this one was small. It was a train car that carried miniature cattle. It actually had a gyrating floor that made the cattle move from the car to an adjacent platform and vice-versa. At any rate, receiving this single railroad car didn't make sense, as there was no additional infrastructure like tracks. Aha! Now I knew why dad wanted me to open the big package. It contained an entire train set! I was so excited I don't think I slept the entire night.



P-51 Mustang

Chicago and Northwestern 4-6-0



The P-51 mustang was my favorite WWII plane and the steam engine locomotive on the right was similar, if not identical, to the ones that pulled trains through Adrian. Chicago and Northwestern was the railroad line that served the town. There is much more about my experience with real trains in the chapter ***The Early Years***.

My friend and fellow railroad aficionado, Dave Nealy, also received a train set for Christmas the same year I did. For several years the two of us would spend endless hours setting up our realistic looking railroad layouts in the basements of our respective homes. We kept adding cars, buildings and other items to our 4' by 8' miniature creations. Incidentally, Dave has remained a lifelong fan of full-sized railroad trains.

Better Than Words

I also developed an interest in photography. I purchased, or was given, a photo-lab kit. I took a lot of black and white photos with my little Kodak camera and set up a darkroom lab in our bathroom. This became problematic as family members had to use our only bathroom occasionally when I was developing film. Following their polite knock at the door I covered everything that couldn't be exposed to light before I let them enter. I still have

some of the photos that I developed. They're of pretty poor quality – at least by today's standards – but I had a lot of fun developing my own pictures.

When we started to travel, my interest in photography returned. I bought a good SLR camera with an excellent zoom lens and began photographing our travels. I chose the best of my photographs to display in identical 8 x 10 inch frames in my NSP office. The company paid for the framing as all executives were allowed to decorate their offices with artwork of their choosing. I collected over 60 cherished photographs of which I alternately displayed about 20 at a time on one of my office walls. When I needed a break they provided me with an outlet for daydreaming of other times and places. Upon retirement there was no good location in our home to display my collection so we took the photos out of the frames and placed them in albums. I learned that photography is a poor substitute for viewing the real thing but far better than trying to describe something visually stimulating in words alone.

Cut It Twice – Still Too Short!

When I was twelve or thirteen, I became interested in woodworking. Dad had some rather crude woodworking tools, which were used occasionally in his business. Among them was a table jigsaw. I ordered some plans from a book on woodworking and began to create a few simple items, primarily from pinewood. One of the items was an end table with a book holder on the bottom. I was quite proud of it and mom used it in our home until she gave it to Liliane and me for use in our Portland Avenue home. I made other simple items such as a gun rack for dad, then abruptly quit as other projects I was interested in required carpentry tools that I didn't have access to. I took up woodworking again when we were married – but on a very small scale. I made a wall-hung Spanish-style wine rack, which was displayed (with wine) in our family room for many years.

As stated in the chapter on ***Our Family*** I decided to build Mara and Maria each a dollhouse. I saw a photo of a Bavarian-style design in a magazine and set out to replicate it as a miniature house.

I probably spent 200 hours in the construction, as the houses were quite elaborate. I cut up real shingles into miniatures for the roof, had real glass in the windows, and I electrified it for the tiny indoor lights I installed. The houses had Tyrolean style balconies, half-framed exteriors with faux stucco and operating doors.

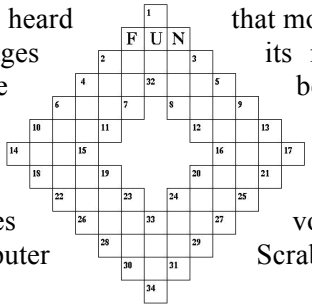
My woodworking was then limited to carpentry, which is also covered in the chapter on ***Our Family***.

Keep It In Balance

After Liliane and I were married and the children were in grade school we began camping. We were on a trip to the east coast when the tongue on our camper succumbed to stress and cracked. Fortunately I was able to pull into a rural combination antique store /home where the owner helped us to make contact with a welder friend of his in nearby Hoosick Falls, New York. It was July 4th so we assumed that a quick repair would be impossible. Fortunately, the antique storeowner was able to persuade his friend to help us since it was early in the day. While the camper was being repaired our family rummaged through the antique store and I felt obligated to buy something. We noticed that they had an abundance of antique barometers of every design and vintage imaginable. The owner mentioned that he found it enjoyable to pick one object to collect and he chose barometers because there were nearly an unlimited variety of models. I was enamored by a rather attractive antique scale and decided to buy it. The owner stated that scales would make a great collection, as they also were unlimited in type, size, style and origin. That purchase was the genesis of my next hobby -- collecting scales. Over the next 10 years or so, I couldn't pass an antique store without seeking an addition to my collection. We displayed the scales throughout our home. Finally, Liliane felt that we had overdone it and we started to "scale" back. Today we just have a few remaining scales that are discerningly used as decorative tchotchkes in selected locations. Collecting them was great fun but it was time to move on to another hobby.



At one of my first meetings of Mensa I heard that most members were very active in solving daily crossword puzzles. The Society encourages its members to do puzzles as one means of maintaining a healthy intellect. I have been completing at least two puzzles a day ever since. Many who exercise their bodies regularly claim that they become addicted to the workout routine. Apparently that can happen with mental exercise as well. I have to admit that I have a compulsion for solving crossword puzzles, which also help to improve ones vocabulary. Lately, Liliane and I have become rather hooked on a game of computer Scrabble, which we play regularly on our iPad.



The World's First Crossword Puzzle.
By Arthur Wynne - December 21, 1913

Genealogy Fixation

This excerpt from ***Who Do I Ask Now?*** explains how I have become appreciably obsessed with a hobby which I have been actively involved for over 30 years. Someone once said, and I agree, that a step backwards is progress to a genealogist. I have taken many backwards steps.

> *"In the weeks following dad's death, I continued to grieve for the loss of his companionship and, surprisingly, for the historical record that he took with him. Dad had shared with me many tales he had heard from his parents, grandfather, aunts and uncles, about our family history along with his own observations while growing up. He talked about losing his parents at an early age and the other hardships and joys experienced in portions of the two centuries his life traversed. Although my father's tales had already inspired me to begin a compilation of genealogical records, dad had been my sole source for word-of-mouth family stories and lore. Though he was a middle child among 14 siblings, he lived to the age of 90 and was the last among them to die. The question I often asked myself in the months immediately following his death was* ***-- Who do I ask now?****"*

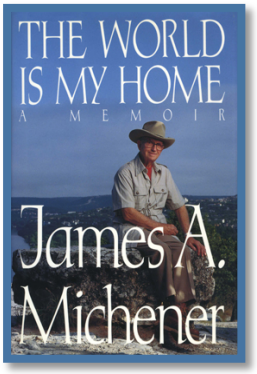
This nagging question propelled me into a more feverish pace in seeking family records. I was particularly anxious to complete much of the record collection phase of my research while I worked in Washington D.C. for several years. My employment with Northern States Power Company (NSP) (now Xcel) was bridged while I gratefully accepted a request from the U.S. Department of Energy to become a Loaned Executive for the last six months of 1979. It was a Presidential election year, so it was an exciting time to be in Washington D.C. NSP encouraged and supported the arrangement by agreeing to temporarily move my family as well. Our entire family enjoyed nearly three summer months together visiting the many sights of our nation's capitol and surrounding areas. When Liliane and the children returned home to Minnesota for the beginning of the school year, I began an every-other-weekend commute back to Minneapolis. My evenings and weekends in Washington allowed me to peruse thousands of records in the National Archives and other Federal resources.

I enjoyed working in Washington and applied for an open position with NSP as a lobbyist upon completion of my Loaned Executive stint. I was selected for the position, which provided me with an additional opportunity to research our family history during my non-working hours.

Another motivating factor in pursuing our family history was the thought that perhaps, someday, our children or other family members would develop the same interest in our roots. If I did not compile these records, stories and family histories, might they someday ask that same haunting question – ***Who Do I Ask Now?***

Instead - ***"Now They Ask Me."***

Books – A Portable Companion



Following college and during the earlier years of our marriage I became a regular reader of novels. I read a book by James Michener entitled ***The Source***, one of his first novels. I was so captivated by his writing style that I sought out all of his novels and now have a complete collection, which consists of about 40 books. Michener died in 1997, and I miss his imaginative and entertaining style and his attention to detail. He wrote in such a way as to seamlessly mix fact and fiction so that one could learn historic facts through the lives of actual and fictional characters. His characters were always playing out scenarios in a variety of settings around the world. Michener's choice of subjects dovetailed nicely with my love of international travel, languages, and cultures. The title of one of his novels shown here would also have been a good title for a combined memoir of Liliane and me.

Since Michener's death I have taken to reading many other authors. Among my favorites are David Baldacci, John Sanford and Vince Flynn. The latter was an acquaintance of our son, John. Flynn and his brother, Kevin, attended St. Thomas Academy where John and Kevin were basketball teammates. Tragically, Flynn died of prostate cancer on our anniversary this year. We will miss his exceptional talent. I recently read a book by Laura Hillenbrand entitled ***Unbroken***. It has moved near the top spot in my all-time favorites list.

Bavarian Folk Art

Liliane had a hobby during the early years of our marriage. She took Bavarian folk-art painting lessons from a woman using the pseudonym of "Pipka." She was quite well known locally for her artistry, which she sold in her studio/shop near 54th Street and Penn Avenue in south Minneapolis. Pipka's main endeavor had been the painting of the twelve guest rooms at Schumacher's Inn in New Prague. Each of them was named, in German, after a month of the year. We stayed at Schumacher's a couple of times and it was difficult to leave our room because of the beauty of her folk-art which surrounded us.



Liliane became quite proficient with her artistry. She painted many objects that were very attractive and well liked by friends and family. As the children grew older, she backed off from her painting to devote more time to them and their activities. She gave many of her painted objects as gifts and we sold others to antique dealers. One such item was a very old metal drinking water container with a spigot. We paid $30 for it. Sometime after Liliane painted it we sold it for $100 to a downtown antique dealer. We later saw it displayed in his show window for sale at $400.

The Great Outdoors

Gardening is not exactly a hobby for either of us, but we do take pleasure in adding new plants, flowers and other features to our yard. We enjoy watching the changing seasonal landscape daily during the spring, summer and fall from what Liliane calls "my favorite room" -- our backyard deck. We do spend considerable time maintaining these areas, which we continue to improve each year.

We also enjoy the numerous varieties of birds that visit and nest in our backyard. Recently (late summer), we observed a robin building a nest at eye level in our Gingko tree, which extends nearly to our deck. We watched her arduous ritual of carefully placing and twisting twigs into a perfectly circular nest for several days. We then waited patiently for her to lay her one egg a day for four days, which is the normal size of a clutch. After several days of incubation we finally saw three tiny beaks appear above the brim of the nest. Perhaps she only had three eggs or one wasn't fertilized. For the next twelve days the female robin and her male companion continually made trips to the nest to feed worms to their fledglings. We could watch the entire process, as our yard must have an abundance of worms.

Each day we were amazed at their rapid growth as they became covered with feathers. On the thirteenth day the three chicks stood on the edge of the nest from where they took their first flight. Once that happened the nest was abandoned. We did see the newborn robins in our yard for a few days as they had now learned to find their own worms through their incredible sense of hearing, which allows them to find the worms below the lawn surface. We never thought that we could get so much joy out of watching this miracle of life unfold in such a short period of time.



Our Gingko Treelings

We are fortunate to have a lovely park with a lake just across the street from our home. We enjoy walking the approximate one-mile route around the lake, which provides us with needed exercise while taking in the ever-changing seasonal scenery and very abundant wildlife.

"Legendary innovators like Franklin, Snow, and Darwin all possess some common intellectual qualities -- a certain quickness of mind, unbounded curiosity but they also share one defining attribute. They have a lot of hobbies."

Steven Johnson, 1968-

"Today is life -- the only life you are sure of. Make the most of today. Get interested in something. Shake yourself awake. Develop a hobby. Let the winds of enthusiasm sweep through you. Live today with gusto."

Dale Carnegie, 1888-1955

"A man practices the art of adventure when he breaks the chain of routine and renews his life through reading new books, traveling to new places, making new friends, taking up new hobbies and adopting new viewpoints."

Wilferd Peterson, 1900-1995

"Artistic talent is a gift from God and whoever discovers it in himself has a certain obligation: to know that he cannot waste this talent, but must develop it."

Pope John Paul II, 1920-2005

Health and Injuries

My parents both lived into their nineties. My dad, in particular, overcame some rather dire prognoses regarding his health and survived several major surgeries.

When he was in his twenties, dad was diagnosed with rheumatic fever. The doctors told him that he would have a relatively short life expectancy because of the resultant damage to his heart. Inflammation of the heart, or myocarditis, is common in cases of rheumatic fever. If the case is mild, there is no permanent heart damage, but if the valves of the heart become inflamed, they may become scarred and deformed, permanently impairing their function. Thankfully his case was apparently not too severe. Dad did have some heart problems late in life. He had a pacemaker implant which was placed in his chest to help control abnormal heart rhythms. The device used electrical pulses to prompt the heart to beat at a normal rate.

Dad also had prostate surgery when he was in his late sixties or early seventies. The surgery was performed at Eitel Hospital in Minneapolis, the same hospital where all of our children were born.

The Mayo Halo

By far the most serious, and life threatening, health problem that dad had was the threat of an eventual complete blockage of his intestines with a large tumor. The tumor was diagnosed when he was in his mid-seventies. Physicians in Sioux Falls felt that he could not tolerate surgery because of his weakened heart. But without a surgical solution we were told that his death was inevitable as the tumor would eventually grow and completely shut off his intestinal tract. Since there appeared to be nothing to lose, we took dad to the Mayo Clinic for a second opinion. The Mayo physicians concluded that dad would have no more than two weeks to live unless surgery was performed immediately. The family was not willing to cede his death without trying whatever was necessary regardless of the risk. Dad concurred with our decision and the surgery was performed. Afterward the doctors reported that dad took the surgery well and it was successful. We were shown the 6-7 inches of tumor-filled intestine. The tumor was non-malignant. The resection was a complete success and after a period of recovery in the hospital he was released to return home to enjoy his life for almost two more decades.

The Mayo Clinic has been good for our family. Ever since the Mayo doctors performed this life-saving surgery on dad, we have extolled the virtues of this world-famous institution. Liliane and I have frequented the Clinic for an annual exam for many years and Liliane has undergone major surgery performed by one of their renowned physicians. Virgil has also benefitted from their legendary diagnosis and treatment.

Virgil has a rare type of cancer called chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL). It starts from white blood cells (called lymphocytes) in the bone marrow. It then invades the blood. White blood cells are what the body uses to fight infections, but in leukemia the body produces an overabundance of cells that are immature and are not able to fight infection at all. Virgil had been very weakened and vulnerable to serious complications, if not fatal results, from any type of illness. His immune system was practically non-existent. In 2012 he began and completed a series of experimental treatments at the Mayo Clinic with immunotherapy drugs when his white blood count was so high that he could no longer produce enough red blood cells and platelets. The result he experienced was much better than hoped for. His physicians at Mayo were delighted with the results. While he may have to undergo further treatment in the future, he currently looks and feels great except for a general weakness when he exerts himself.

Dad did suffer considerably from shingles late in his life. We all felt terrible about his affliction but there was little that could be done. There is no cure for shingles, so all we could do was to provide dad with topical creams along with other medications to relieve the pain. Thankfully, the shingles finally subsided.

I can recall three significant health issues involving mom. When I was in grade school, mom had a gall bladder operation. At that time removal of the gall bladder was a major surgery, which required at least a two-week hospitalization. She fully recovered from that painful malady.

In 1957, when I finished my basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, I was assigned to duty at Fort Carson, Colorado near Colorado Springs. I missed my parents, and I'm sure they missed me. The result was a visit from them when I had a few days leave that autumn. I arranged for them to stay in civilian quarters on the base during their stay. When they arrived I was surprised to see mom in an arm sling. She had fallen at home and broke her clavicle (collarbone). She was in considerable pain, but insisted on making the trip by auto. I was very happy to see mom and dad and really appreciated their visit, especially with mom in considerable pain. After the bone was sufficiently healed mom went through weeks of therapy and, as far as I know, didn't suffer any lingering effects.

Mom had both hips replaced several years apart. The first surgery was very successful as she worked diligently on her rehabilitation exercises. Although this routine was painful, she knew that a full recovery depended on a regular regimen of exercise to restore her mobility and strength. The second surgery, when she was somewhat older, was not as successful. She was then not nearly as agile and found the exercise more difficult and painful. Both surgeries, however, did relieve her pain and she was fully mobile until the very late stages of her life.

Liliane and I have been extremely fortunate, not only with our own health but that of our family's. All four of our parent's lived into their nineties. They all had some health issues, some of them serious, but they were able to manage them successfully and did not experience prolonged periods of severe pain except perhaps, dad's shingles, which were described earlier

I have been extremely fortunate and have had only two minor surgeries.

As a child I had the usual sicknesses including chicken pox, ringworm, whooping cough, measles, and worms. My mom told me I would get the latter if I didn't stop eating raw hamburger! I sailed through all these childhood maladies and still like raw hamburger.

Summer Bummer

On the last day of school as I finished the eighth grade I suffered an injury that was very debilitating but did not require surgery. That evening I was playing a game on our school grounds and, while running, my knee sounded a loud pop and I fell in considerable pain. I limped home thinking I had temporarily distended my knee. The next day the pain had subsided somewhat but I was still very uncomfortable as my parents and I drove to Rochester to visit my sister Bev who was in nurses training at St. Mary's Hospital. While in Rochester mom and dad determined that I should see a chiropractor about my knee. His diagnosis was that one of my legs was shorter than the other. Even at age 12, I was quickly able to make my own evaluation of the chiropractor -- he was a quack and charlatan!

When we returned home, mom and dad took me to an orthopedic specialist in Sioux Falls who correctly diagnosed my problem as Osgood-Schlatters disease. Basically, the tendon that goes over your patella (kneecap) and attaches to the tibia pulls partially, or fully, off the bone. The solution at that time was to immobilize the entire leg by putting it in a straight cast from crotch to ankle.

That was the most miserable summer I have ever experienced. Swimming was my favorite summertime recreation and, for obvious reasons, I couldn't participate. I walked like the Frankenstein monster. We had no air conditioning so when it was really hot I would perspire and the sweat would trickle down my leg inside the cast. That tickled like crazy so I fashioned a scratcher out of a straightened wire coat hanger. When the cast was finally removed just before the start of my freshman year in high school, my leg was encrusted with dried blood from the scratching done by the coat hanger. Miraculously, I didn't get an infection. It took me awhile to get full motion back in my leg, but eventually I completely recovered.

The same thing happened to me yet once again, but less severely, when I was a senior playing in the last game of the State Catholic Basketball Tournament in St. Paul. I didn't see a doctor this time. I simply did nothing to stress the joint during recovery and it healed itself in time for spring baseball. An orthopedic surgeon friend of

mine recently told me that what I did for this second injury is now the proscribed treatment for Osgood-Schlatters.

Tennis Anyone?

When I was in my late thirties, I had rhinoplasty surgery to repair a deviated septum (the dividing membrane in the nose). My nose had been broken several times during my basketball playing years, which resulted in a worsening breathing problem. My surgeon suggested that I take up tennis. Following the surgery, which consisted of chiseling away a part of the septum, I had a rather severe setback. When Liliane came to visit me in Eitel Hospital the day after surgery, she was shocked to see my entire head swollen and my face severely blistered. That was my first clue that I was allergic to surgical tape. I recovered in a few days after a non-allergenic tape was substituted and the surgery did improve my breathing. However, I still have some difficulty breathing normally much of the time, especially at night.

Unwelcome Inheritance

My great-grandfather, Nicholas Reifenberger, had severe varicose veins. His vein problem is detailed in his Civil War medical records, which I obtained from the National Archives. Dad had his veins stripped three times, and Virgil, too, has had surgery. Heredity plays a large part in the presence of these ugly and sometimes painful, veins. In fact, the detailed description of my great-grandfather's ulcerated veins is identical to what I have personally experienced in location and severity.

I have twice had varicose vein surgery (stripping) and I recently underwent treatment for the third time. Now, however, there are procedures available that don't require the very invasive stripping that was routinely performed in the past. The method now being used is called sclerotherapy. In this procedure, the doctor injects the varicose veins with a solution that scars and closes those veins. In a few weeks, treated varicose veins start to fade. Although the same vein may need to be injected more than once, sclerotherapy is effective if done correctly. Sclerotherapy doesn't require anesthesia and is an outpatient remedy unlike the hospitalization required for stripping. My third and final session was completed early in 2013. I have experienced significant vein reduction and the accompanying bruising is nearly gone. The process has worked beyond my expectations.

Viable Vertebrae

I have avoided back surgery, which at one time was presented as an option for the chronic lower back pain, which I have experienced for many years. A basketball injury, which crushed my 5th lumbar vertebrae, is the probable cause of this sometimes debilitating condition. I rejected surgery many years ago when I was told that there was a 50-50 chance that it might make the situation worse. I decided then that I could live with the once-or-twice a year painful episodes to avoid that risk. The flare-ups occur randomly, often without a discernible cause and with varying degrees of severity. I have had episodes brought about by a sneeze, picking up a shoe, or a sudden movement. Other times I awaken with the pain, which always includes a sciatic component in one or both legs. The severity varies from moderate, where I can function fairly normally, to a crawl-on-your-hands-and-knees-to-the-bathroom scenario where you cannot function at all. Recently, I found that when I have an episode, immediate application of ice for prolonged periods seems to provide relief much faster.

Hypertension Suspension

I have also inherited high blood pressure, which is currently under control with medication. Our son, John, has repeatedly told me that I could do away with some medications if I lost weight. I have lost weight, perhaps about 2000 pounds in my lifetime, but I so enjoy food and drink that the weight reduction experienced from controlling my diet has never been permanent. Actually, as of this writing I have lost over 25 pounds in the last year and have been able to discontinue two of my medications. I feel much better and I think I have the resolve, this time, to keep the weight off.

I Must Be An Athlete!

The weight loss seems to be having a beneficial effect on another of my recent ailments – plantar fasciitis. Plantar fasciitis is inflammation of the thick tissue on the bottom of the foot. This tissue is called the plantar

fascia (duh!). It connects the heel bone to the toes and creates the arch of the foot. The ailment is most common among athletes.

I started noticing this very painful pediatric problem during the early summer two years ago. It was most noticeable when I was playing golf. I began taking therapy treatments, which helped marginally, but I was still unable to play golf while walking, which I much prefer, however I had to ride a cart that entire summer. I finally visited a podiatrist who confirmed the diagnosis of plantar fasciitis in both feet and recommended custom-made inserts for my shoes. A mold was made from my feet and the inserts were soon a part of a routine of rotating them between shoes. I eventually ordered another pair so I could have one set for my golf shoes and another for everyday shoes. I told Liliane that our trip to Europe in the spring of 2012 would not be as pleasant as usual because I would not be able to walk the Marbella promenade as often or for as long as in previous years. Incredibly, I found the inserts to be not only very comfortable but therapeutic as well! I was able to walk the nearly 100 rounds (a personal record) of golf I played last summer (2012) and, with the inserts, feel very little pain. Since experiencing plantar fasciitis, I'm amazed at how many acquaintances have, or have had, this malaise. Most have also experienced successful outcomes with shoe inserts and therapy.

Pitter-P-P-P-P-P-Patter

A couple of years ago, during one of our annual Mayo Clinic exams, I was diagnosed with atrial fibrillation. Atrial fibrillation, or A-fib, is the most common cardiac arrhythmia (irregular heart beat). It may cause no symptoms, but it is often associated with palpitations, chest pain, etc. However, in some people atrial fibrillation is caused by otherwise idiopathic or benign conditions. I didn't have a clue that I had A-fib when I was diagnosed.

A-fib increases the risk of strokes; the degree of stroke risk can be up to seven times that of the average population, depending on the presence of additional risk factors such as high blood pressure, which I have. It may be identified clinically when taking a pulse and the presence of A-fib can be confirmed with an electrocardiogram, which demonstrates the irregular ventricular rate. My physicians do not recommend medication to slow the heart rate since mine is already very slow, or to use synchronized electrical stimulation to bring about a normal heart rhythm. The latter usually is only a temporary solution as most of the time the heart will revert back to A-fib within months.

I have been on an anticoagulant blood thinner (Warfarin) to minimize the potential for clotting and strokes ever since. I have my blood tested once a month. I have no noticeable indications of the problem, as is the case with about 50 percent of the sizable portion of the population suffering from A-fib.

Overall, I currently feel great and I thank God for the great genes that I have inherited. I feel blessed that, to date, I have not suffered from any life-threatening health issues.

Liliane, too, had the usual childhood illnesses including an appendectomy, which occurred in the first year after she and her family, arrived in the U.S. She also remains in good health, although she has recently experience a life-threatening ordeal that, fortunately, was successfully resolved.

The Long And Winding Road

Liliane has had intestinal problems since she was in grade school. Later diagnosis indicated that she had slow food transit, a prolapsed intestinal wall and diverticulitis, all contributing to a near lifetime of chronic problems. Flare-ups of these issues sometimes resulted in trips to the hospital emergency room. We had discussed surgery through the years, but we knew that option would be a major undertaking with possible poor outcomes. We kept choosing to forestall surgery for as long as possible.

On the way home from the emergency room following one of her worst and most painful episodes of intestinal compaction in the fall of 2004, I asked her if she was now ready for surgery. She said, quite emphatically, "Yes!"

After getting two opinions from specialists at the University of Minnesota and the Mayo Clinic, the surgery was performed by Dr. John Pemberton at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester. We were assured that he was the best surgeon, in the best facility for this type of operation (medically termed an abdominal colectomy with ileorectostomy) in the entire country.

Dr. Pemberton advised us that the surgery was somewhat exploratory, but would definitely include removal of the entire large intestine. He planned to reattach the remaining colon, once the damaged portion had been removed. If this did not work, a dreaded colostomy might have to be performed.

When Dr. Pemberton came into the waiting room following surgery, his smile told it all. Everything went as planned. We were so relieved and grateful. Liliane did have some complications that kept her in St. Mary's Hospital for nearly two weeks, but we came home with the hope of a much better and healthier life. Time has proven this to be true. She currently has some minor anticipated problems, but we both agree that she should have had this surgery much sooner.

In the autumn of 2010, Liliane became seriously ill with abdominal cramping. An emergency room visit, led to a series of tests showing an obstruction that, with some treatment could, hopefully, be relieved. After one-and-a-half days of observation and no improvement, the surgeon assigned to the case recommended that immediate surgery be performed to remove the source of blockage. There was concern that a portion of the small intestine was no longer viable and that more could be damaged if surgery was not performed as soon as possible. Liliane was moved up in the queue, and the surgeon, Dr. Aasheim, performed a resection where he removed 65 centimeters of the necrotic (dead) small intestine. The blood flow had been completely obstructed and, if the surgery had not been performed, it would have likely led to a fatal result, as eventually the entire remaining intestine would have been non-functioning.

The second surgery was totally unrelated to the first. The only things they had in common were that they were intestinally related and that both were performed by, in our opinion, world-class surgeons.

Other than the two major surgeries Liliane's health has been good. She has some trouble keeping her weight up because food now passes more quickly. She takes medication to keep her cholesterol in check and some medication for anxiety, which seems to be prevalent in her family. She too is thankful for her parent's good genes, and to God, for guiding her through some very serious health issues.

Owies And Assorted Maladies

The kids have all had their share of health issues, though very few in their childhood and only one that was life threatening.

When Mara and Maria were about four months old our pediatrician noticed that their feet seemed to be out-towing. This is usually caused by an outward tilt of the tibia. The medical term for this is femoral anteversion. The doctor recommended that we buy some shoes with a hard bottom and glue a plastic slat to the soles so that the shoes, and thus the feet, would be aligned correctly. They were to wear this apparatus only during their nighttime sleep. They stopped using the corrective device well before they were ready to walk and the procedure was considered successful. They never had any indications of the problem as they grew to adulthood.

While Liliane and I were on vacation the kids were staying with Liliane's parents. Mara and Maria got into their medicine cabinet and, between them, swallowed a whole bottle of aspirin. Liliane's mom found the empty bottle on the floor and panicked. She had a hard time extracting them from under a bed where they retreated when they realized that what they had done was, from observing their Oma's reaction, not a good idea. A trip to the emergency room and a stomach pump took care of the problem.



One day Mara decided it would be interesting to put a portion of a hamburger hot dish in her nose instead of her mouth. I could jokingly tell you that she was a sophomore in high school at the time but she was actually still in her high chair. We had to make a visit to the emergency room where a not-so-amused doctor removed the food particles with a long instrument.

John may have had the most serious disorder during their collective childhoods when he was not quite two years old. He was experiencing severe abdominal cramping along with excruciating pain. It was wintertime so the initial diagnosis from our pediatrician, Dr. Sanfilippo (recently deceased), was that it probably was the flu. After further observation at home, Liliane insisted that it might be something more serious so Dr. Sanfilippo, in concurrence, ordered an x-ray. The long-shot suspicion turned out to be correct. John had an intussusception. Intussusception occurs when one portion of the intestine slides into the next, much like the pieces of a telescope. When this occurs, it can create a blockage in the intestine, with the walls pressing against one another. This, in turn, leads to swelling, inflammation, and decreased blood flow to the part of the intestines involved. It can be fatal.

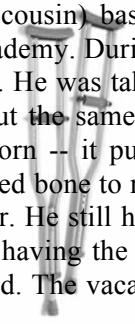
We immediately took John to the hospital, and a simple procedure was used involving a barium injection that unfolds the intestine. He fully recovered and we were assured that it would not happen again. Liliane's insistence that the malady was more than just the flu may have saved his life.

Another time when John was about 10, I allowed him to take his bicycle to nearby Pearl Park while I worked around the house. Liliane had taken Mara and Maria somewhere (shopping I suppose) assured that I, a responsible parent, would not neglect my oversight duties. This story could be in the chapter – ***Oops****!*

A car pulled into our driveway carrying a bloody-faced John. The driver told me that John had hit a tree and flew over the handlebars with his face landing on a paved surface. John's problem, it turned out, was minuscule (a slight concussion) compared to mine when Liliane returned. She has the most amazing memory when it comes to recalling the very few errors in judgment I have made. John healed up -- I'm still hurting!

We were on a picnic with my sister Bev's family at Bloomington's Bush Lake Park when John, about 3 years old, came screaming into the area where the adults had gathered. His face and mouth appeared to be a bloody mess. I was especially concerned about his mouth, which looked bloated and hemorrhaging blood. One of the kids said that he tripped and hit his mouth on a concrete picnic bench. I examined his mouth, and to my horror, it appeared that he had bitten off a piece of his tongue. We were prepared to immediately take him and his severed tongue to an emergency room. When I extracted the bloody mass I found, to my relief, that what I thought was tongue was a piece of a hot dog and most of the "blood" was catsup. We found that he did chip one of his baby teeth; however he went back to playing a few minutes later. Whew!

John was attending his Uncle Ziggy's (Liliane's cousin) basketball camp at Mounds View High School the summer after his freshman year at St. Thomas Academy. During one session John heard a loud snap in his knee and fell in a heap while experiencing terrible pain. He was taken to the hospital by ambulance. It turns out that he had the same injury that I experienced at about the same age -- Osgood-Schlatters disease. His was more serious however, in that the tendon wasn't just torn -- it pulled off a piece of bone from his tibia. Surgery required the insertion of a screw through the severed bone to reattach it to the tibia. He healed up rather quickly and went on with his high school basketball career. He still has the screw, which does not trigger alarms when going through airport security. He is considering having the screw removed as the under-the-skin screw head causes pain when kneeling or if the area is bumped. The vacant cavity where the screw resides will fill in with bone.



We were having a weekend TV night with the whole family when we decided to have some ice cream. I frequently created an ice cream concoction that the entire family enjoyed. It’s homemade syrup that consists of brown sugar and water. I call it “gookums.” It is heated in the microwave and then poured over vanilla ice cream. This particular night John wanted to make the syrup as he had seen me prepare it numerous times. I consented, and John headed for the kitchen. Five minutes later we heard a pop and then a blood-curdling scream

from John. The syrup had boiled in a plastic beverage-mixing container with a pouring lid. When John took it out of the microwave the lid popped off, startled him, and he dropped the container spilling its contents on his upper thigh. He was only wearing pajamas so the burn was substantial.

We took him to the emergency room at Fairview Southdale Hospital where he was diagnosed with second-degree burns. The physicians removed an entire layer of skin from the burn, which was of football size and shape. The burn was covered and we returned home. He had to have the dressing changed every few days in which more skin would be sloughed off. Amazingly, the scars that he had for a long time gradually disappeared and only the painful memories remain.

John had other basketball injuries including stress fractures that required casts, stitches, and a case of paroxysmal supra ventricular tachycardia. This is a condition of very rapid and regular heart beats that begins and ends abruptly. The heart rate during an episode is usually between 160 and 200 beats per minute. The event begins suddenly, without warning, and ends abruptly. Atrial tachycardia means that the upper chambers of the heart are beating abnormally fast. Paroxysmal atrial tachycardia can occur without any heart disease being present. It is usually more annoying than dangerous. It occurred during several of John's St. Thomas Academy basketball games. Until we learned about the relative gravity of the condition, we were very concerned. He hasn't experienced another incident in years.



Supraventricular Tachycardia - EKG @ 180 Beats/Min.

Mara and Maria were relatively free from serious health issues in their early years. Mara had to remain in the hospital for about a week after we brought Maria home from their birth. Apparently, a majority of the blood supply went to Maria during gestation due to a tangling of the umbilical cords. Consequently, Mara was anemic when she was born.

During their school years there were many minor injuries, most of which were mutually administered as a result of disagreements or competition (we had only one bathroom for awhile). Use of the telephone and shower was a frequent point of contention. As an aside, but still health or hygiene related, I have always contended that when John discovered girls he went from one shower every three weeks to three showers a day! **It's mine!**

No it's mine!



The M&M Girls

Mara broke her arm while playing basketball at Resurrection grade school. I was watching the game so I drove her to the hospital where she had a "fork break" reset and her arm put in a cast.

In recent years all three of the kids have had issues with their backs. They are usually spasms and in John's case, a severely herniated disc. Mara and Maria have had episodes of migraine headaches. Mara has had meningitis twice and has a degenerative disc in her neck. All three, like their mother, suffer from anxiety, which they reconcile with medication.

Maria has had five surgeries for cholesteatoma, an abnormal skin growth in the middle ear behind the eardrum. Repeated infections and/or a tear or pulling inward of the eardrum can allow skin into the middle ear. Cholesteatomas often develop as cysts or pouches that shed layers of old skin, which builds up inside the middle ear. Over time, the cholesteatoma can increase in size and destroy the surrounding delicate bones of the middle ear leading to hearing loss that surgery can often improve. Maria has had marginal improvement from the surgeries and now uses hearing aids.

While, collectively, our family has experienced a variety of medical issues, we currently are in relatively good health. Nobody is experiencing debilitating injuries or illnesses. Liliane and I exercise regularly, primarily

through walking around the lake in our adjacent park. I walk 18 holes of golf at least three times a week and during inclement weather we both exercise on a treadmill or stationary bike.

Good health is the best gift one may receive in life. When Liliane and I walk about the Mayo Clinic during our annual visits, we see many examples of lives that are shredded by critical health issues. We thank God for protecting us as we have primarily experienced only minor health setbacks. We have also been fortunate to have access to the best health care in the world when needed for the few major issues we have dealt with.

"The only way to keep your health is to eat what you don't want, drink what you don't like, and do what you'd rather not."

Mark Twain, 1835-1910

"Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in hospitals dying of nothing."

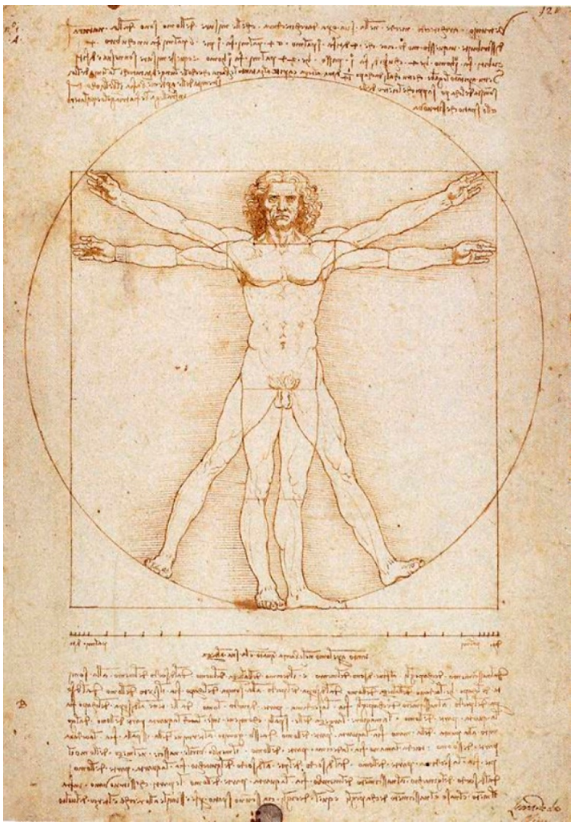
Redd Foxx, 1922-1991

"If you do everything you should do, not do anything you should not do, you will, according to the best available statistics, live exactly eighteen hours longer than you would otherwise."

Logain Clendening, 1884-1945

Leonardo da Vinci's famous drawings of the Vitruvian proportions of a man's body first standing inscribed in a square and then with feet and arms outspread inscribed in a circle provides an excellent early example of the way in which his studies of proportion fuse artistic and scientific objectives. Circa 1490.

This image provides the perfect example of Leonardo's keen interest in proportion. In addition, this picture represents a cornerstone of Leonardo's attempts to relate man to nature. Leonardo envisaged the great picture chart of the human body he had produced through his anatomical drawings. He believed the workings of the human body to be an analogy for the workings of the universe.



Humor

Much of the humor in our family occurred on my father's favorite day -- April Fool's Day and to a lesser degree on Halloween. He reveled in the tricks he played on others and his tradition has been carried on by succeeding generations.

The Great Duck Caper

A legendary trick was played on my Uncle Henry one Halloween evening. After dinner he was relaxing in a living room rocking chair reading a newspaper. His wife, my Aunt Frances, had left for some church activity. Their only child, Henry Jr., an infant at the time, was asleep in an upstairs bedroom.

Suddenly he heard a commotion in the kitchen area so he arose and walked with his cane to find the source of the din he was hearing. He found several ducks flying around from one room to the other dropping feathers and other more vile excretions ducks are well noted for. Uncle Henry started chasing them with his cane, which only made the situation worse. Some of them made their way upstairs and woke Henry Jr. He finally got the ducks under control but the house was a mess. We can only imagine that his agony increased many-fold when Aunt Frances returned.

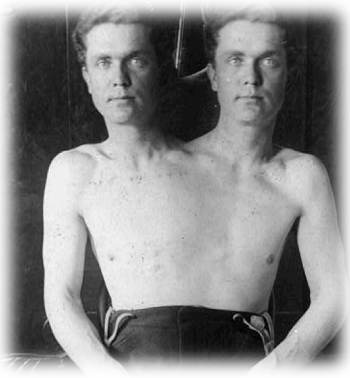
The next morning Uncle Henry came into the hardware store and approached his brother, my Uncle Nick, who was sitting in his usual lawn chair near the store office. After a short greeting Uncle Nick said, "It was a pretty calm Halloween night – I haven't heard of any commotions." Uncle Henry went ballistic and related his story about the ducks. I'm sure there was more than one German swear word used in the description of his miserable evening.

Uncle Henry tried to offset this painful ordeal by keeping the ducks in his chicken coop where they would stay until they became his Thanksgiving dinner. Alas, Mr. Stromberg, the original owner of the ducks, was informed by "someone"* that his "runaway ducks" had possibly made their way to the Henry Schutz home. He retrieved them and Uncle Henry's anguish was intensified even further.

This story made its rounds about town every year. For years Uncle Henry sought futilely to find out whom the contemptible scoundrel was who played this dastardly trick. Henry Jr. took up the cause after Uncle Henry died. Only recently did he find out that it was my brother *Virgil.

You Have To See This

One of the earliest pranks played on me by dad occurred when I was about six years old. On the 30th of December he suggested that my friend Dave and I make a trip to the railroad depot and wait for the daily passenger train. He told us that he had heard that a man was arriving on that train with as many heads as there are days left in the year. Dave and I hurried to the depot and strained at every arriving passenger to hopefully get a glimpse of this incredible phenomenon. Disappointed, we hurried to the store to tell my dad that he was wrong, wrong, wrong! He then told us that we indeed had seen many people that met his description. We had been fooled but thought it was a cool trick. I have tried to play the same hoax on our kids and grandchildren but they are all much smarter than I was at that age and they never fell for it or -- their parents wouldn't take them to the train station or airport.



Our Minimum Expectation

It Had To Be Hell

I didn't intend to make what turned out to be an amusing statement when I was about seven. Mom, dad and I, along with a family friend and our parish priest, Father Quillen, traveled to Sioux Falls one summer day on a shopping trip. Our way home on the old Highway 16, which directly connected Adrian and Sioux Falls, took us

past a crematorium. When I saw the buildings, I asked what they were. They told me it was a crematorium. I asked what a crematorium was? Dad ineloquently and tentatively told me that it was a place where they burn people. I immediately responded with, "Oh that must be hell." Father Quillen couldn't stop laughing. Further explanation comforted me somewhat but I still thought that cremation was some sort of punitive ritual. In later years Father Quillen never failed to tell that story to others whenever I was in his presence.

Razzle-Dazzle

Whenever we traveled and came across some gaudy, glitzy or eye-catching advertisement along the roadside, dad would always say, "If that isn't something to make you dizzy!" In his honor, I always repeat that phrase whenever we see roadside glitter or garish attention-getting promotions or advertisements.

Dan'l Boone He Wasn't

Dad tried to hide his fear of fur so that no one would take advantage of this perceived weakness. An abnormal and persistent fear of fur is called doraphobia and is more common than one would think. Dad was comfortable to be around shorthaired animals such as our pet Nippy, but loathed the thought of even touching the fur from fox, bear, mink or other longhaired animals. We couldn't help ourselves. Whenever we had the opportunity to taunt dad with fur we would. Occasionally, someone would slip a piece of fur between the sheets on his side of the bed and then await his very vocal reaction. We have no idea where this fear came from but I now regret that we teased him about something that he perceived as a real menace. He did seek retribution for our antics, however, and we all knew we would eventually be paid back with one of the many tricks dad had perfected.

Yes, You Can See It!

In 1949, our family made an extensive trip to the east coast. Mom and dad thought that this might be the last time we could make such a trip with our entire family. During our travels we would pass the time by playing in-car games. While traveling in Pennsylvania, we were playing one such game, which will be long remembered. We had devised a game that had each family member pick some object that could be seen at all times from the car. The only hint we could give was the initials of the object(s). When my turn came I picked BOTW. The family guessed and guessed and didn't come close to a solution. They accused me of picking something that we couldn't see all the time. I assured them that we could always see it. They finally gave up and I revealed that BOTW were the initials for "Bugs On The Windshield." That got quite a laugh!

Bombs Away!

We had an area in the basement of the hardware store where pipes were cut and threaded. Directly above were some holes in the ceiling where pipes from a previous heating or plumbing system had passed between floors. Frequently, dad would wait until someone was working diligently below before dropping a lit firecracker down one of these holes. Many knuckles and heads were bruised and bloodied as a result of this antic.

Very Scary Mortuary

Before we were living together at college, my cousin Henry was working part-time at a Washburn-McReavy mortuary/funeral home at Central and University Avenues in northeast Minneapolis. He was studying mortuary science at the time. One Saturday after an evening of barhopping near campus we both agreed that perhaps we had a little too much to drink. I was living with my sister and her family in Bloomington at the time so to avoid a long drive in my compromised condition Henry suggested that I stay the night with him at the mortuary where he was provided a small apartment unit as an employment perk. I accepted his offer.

When we walked through the mortuary we were greeted by several open caskets with bodies lining a dimly lit room. Henry suggested that I might want to see what an autopsy looks like. This proposal was rather creepy but the drinking had dampened my inhibitions so I agreed. He took me to the preparation room where he lifted sheets to expose bodies in various stages of examination. This I did not like, but I tried to act macho. We then picked up some linen from a cabinet and took them to his apartment. We made up a bed on a pullout couch with the green sheets. The sheets were clean but blotchy with unresolved bloodstains. To add another garish element

to my brush with the macabre, I went to bed with a flashing red neon sign illuminating the room every few seconds. Buzz. Mental image. Buzz. Mental image. I slept with one eye open the entire night!

Formal Attire Only

While in college I became very good friends with one of my housemates, Andy Anderson. We played intramural sports together; double-dated, bar hopped and, in general, spent a lot of time together. Each of us accompanied each other to our respective hometowns for weekends. One autumn Andy asked me to join him for a weekend in his hometown of Crosby and I agreed. Before we left I asked what kind of clothes I should pack. He said that we would probably go to the Cuyuna Country Club Saturday evening for dinner so I should take a tie and sport coat.

We stayed with Andy's parents. For most of Saturday, Andy and I barhopped in Crosby with some of his high school friends. Many of the bars had a sauna, which was consistent with, and supportive of, the Finnish heritage of many Crosby residents. We would drink beer, spend time in the sauna, beat each other with pine boughs (a tradition) and then repeat the ritual at another venue.

That evening Andy announced that we would not have to wear ties as his cousin was a manager at the Cuyuna Country Club and, for us, he would overlook this normally required clothing formality.

Five or six of us climbed into a car and headed out of Crosby in a northeasterly direction. The other passengers were oddly mum when I began inquiring about the Club. We finally arrived in what I would describe as a replica of an old-west Ghost Town. As we entered the town, a sign did identify it as Cuyuna. Lights appeared to be on in only one building in town, a dilapidated wooden structure that was leaning askew. Our car stopped and we all got out and entered the building, which turned out to be a rather seedy but interesting bar. The laughter and guffaws were relentless as everyone was in on the ruse. I really fell for the Country Club thing and the need to dress properly for this exclusive outing.

The town of Cuyuna was indeed a ghost town. It lies at the edge of one of the largest open-pit iron mines in the world. It had long since been nearly abandoned when the iron ore deposits were depleted.

The town is now well known for its annual Wood Tick Races. For one day each year thousands gather to compete, drink beer and eat. How does it work? Two color-coded ticks are gingerly placed in a center circle on a wooden board. Between swigs of beer, the referee yells "Go!" and the ticks are off. Regardless of their grasp of that word's meaning, the little guys do go -- sometimes in circles, often hesitatingly. The winner is the tick that makes it first to an outer circle at the edge of the board. And they do make it (or at least one does) and the loser is eliminated (not literally) from the contest.

What Leak?

When our children were in the early years of grade school, I decided to install a dishwasher in our kitchen. This project took quite a while as I could only work on weekends and some evenings. I had cut out a section of the cabinets next to the sink and had the new washer installed in its final location. After making the necessary electrical connections I was now working on the plumbing.

I made the final plumbing connections the evening of April 1st and then asked Liliane to help me determine the source of a persistent leak. I had her looking into the bottom of the washer compartment while I rattled some wrenches on piping in the adjoining under-sink area. Every so often I would ask her if she could see a leak. She kept repeating, each time a little more exasperated, that she could see no leak. I did some more rattling and then asked her a final time. She angrily said, "There is no leak!" I then squirted her in the face with a spray bottle, which I had previously hidden under the sink. I again asked her if she could now see any water. She didn't grasp the humor in this most wonderful April Fool's joke! I successfully played the same trick on each of the kids.



See It Now?

It Ain't Necessarily So

One time I was mixing up some patching plaster in the kitchen for a wall repair job. One of the twins asked me what I was making. I just shrugged her inquiry off and said it was nothing. That piqued her curiosity to a higher level. I finally relented to the questioning by telling her that the concoction was cookie dough.

Our dialogue:

"Can I have some daddy?" “No, you probably wouldn't like it.”
"Oh please, just a little." “O.K., but just a spoonful.”

I will never forget her facial expression as the "cookie dough" sham was realized.

Switcheroo 1

One day, I was leaving for work and I couldn't get my car key to turn in the ignition slot. I kept trying the key by repeatedly reinserting it while at the same time pondering what my next step would be. Will I have to call a locksmith? Would I have to go to a G.M dealer? Exasperated, I got out of the car only to see Liliane and John's faces, both with wide grins, looking through the garage door window. They had replaced my car key with an identical looking one from Liliane's car. They got me good. By the way -- it was April 1st!

I Gotta Go!

On another April Fool’s Day I found myself doing a lot of fumbling while standing before a toilet in an unsuccessful attempt to complete my visit to the bathroom. Liliane had deftly sewed the flap shut on my shorts. Really funny – not!

Electronic Comic

We had a TV in our bedroom. One evening I couldn't get the channels to change and was becoming increasingly frustrated and irritated. After changing the batteries and banging the remote with still no success, I was ready to give up and manually operate the channel and volume controls on the set when a giggling John arrived to make his April Fool’s announcement. He had somehow rendered the remote inoperable. The kid was always clever with electronics! Me -- not so much.

Switcheroo 2

One year on April 1st Mara and Maria decided to play a trick on their grade school classmates and teachers. They were assigned to different classrooms for the term so they simply switched places for the day. They had a great time playing the role of each other without their classmates or teachers aware of the charade until told at the end of the day.

Maybe It’s For Moose

One time while we, along with Bev and Ron's family, were in Adrian for a weekend visit with mom and dad we had an interesting sideshow. There was a handmade horn-shaped device lying on the kitchen counter. It was made of copper tubing with concentric circles leading from what appeared to be a mouthpiece to a flared terminus. It was constructed in the shape of a French horn.

Ron saw the horn and asked what it was and dad replied that it was a deer call. Over the next days, Ron continued to make further inquiries, mostly about how it was blown and if it really worked? Finally, dad asked Ron if he wanted to try it. He jumped at the opportunity. Dad's only caution to Ron is that it would not work unless blown really hard. Ron took a deep breath, blew as hard as he could, and found his face blasted with talcum powder. The flared end of the horn directly faced the blower. Ron's eyes were partially glued shut and he kept blinking while we all laughed uproariously. Ron, however, was not as amused!

They All Say!

When mom tried to convince us of something she would attempt to use sheer numbers to support her cause. She would often use the expression, “They all say,” to bolster her argument. Example: “They all say that you should come to visit us more often.” If you questioned her about who “all” was she simply repeated the phrase. I’ve actually taken up the practice with Liliane. Example: “*They all say* that I should play more golf.” It doesn’t work for me either but it’s become my favorite cliché.



We All Support Ann

Language Faux Pas

I have been much amused by Liliane when she occasionally has a slight difficulty with her second language. In the chapter on ***Language***, I extol her bilingual capabilities. Her German is excellent, but sometimes she may hear things wrong in English and the result is often quite funny.

He Did What?

We had a neighbor across our alley on Portland Avenue who lived with his widowed mom. His name was Bruce Nelson, and he was an alcoholic. He was a really nice and talented guy. He had lost his job at the St. Paul Ford Plant and was living on a disability pension. The kids loved Bruce, and he often helped me do two-person jobs around the house. We would invite him to dinner on occasion.

Unfortunately, Bruce kept slipping back into drinking. On more than one occasion we would come home and find him passed out lying on the hood of his car.

One day when I came home from work I asked Liliane what she had done that day. She said that she talked with Bruce and had admonished him about his drinking as we had seen him inebriated the previous day. I asked her what his response was. "Oh he just gave me the usual blow job!" It's *"snow job"* Liliane.

A Social Disease

We were visiting Virgil and Mary in Adrian one summer. After dinner they suggested that we go for a walk and visit their neighbors, the Wagner's, who had a marvelous flower garden. We all oohed and aahed at the beauty of their back yard. Liliane said that she "particularly liked the chlamydia on the back fence.” It's *"clematis"* Liliane.

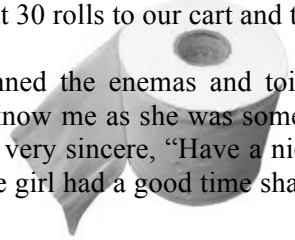
Safety First

We own a 1994 Buick Regal that has been driven less than 60,000 miles and is in mint condition. Liliane uses it infrequently so I like to drive it occasionally to keep it "exercised.” Whenever I suggest that we drive her Buick when we’re going somewhere together, Liliane objects. One time she said she didn't like to ride with me in the Buick because the passenger side does not have a "wind bag.” I responded by saying, "Oh yes it does!" Fortunately, I healed up within two weeks. It's *"air bag"* Liliane.

I like to tell these three faux pas’ as a package. When I related them in front of our family last year everyone but Liliane laughed, but Chris quickly put his arm around Liliane and asked, "How many of you speak another language?" That was sobering, and we acknowledged that Chris was right to defend Liliane, but the contemplation of these events still breaks me up.

We'll Never Run Out

One evening Liliane and I attended a movie near Brookdale and then decided to stop at a warehouse-type drugstore adjacent to the theatre. This was prior to Liliane's surgery at the Mayo Clinic, which cured her chronic intestinal obstruction problem. On a number of occasions I would have to make a special trip, sometimes at night, to a local pharmacy for some Fleet enemas, which Liliane administered frequently at the time. I saw a special sale on the enemas and bought more than a dozen. We were not going to get caught short handed in the immediate future! The enemas were the only thing in our cart as I approached the checkout counter and noticed a great sale on toilet paper. I added about 30 rolls to our cart and then entered the checkout lane.



The sixteenish-aged checkout girl scanned the enemas and toilet paper and then completed my credit card payment. Liliane pretended she didn't know me as she was somewhat embarrassed by our only purchases. The girl handed me the receipt along with a very sincere, "Have a nice evening sir." I nearly swallowed my tongue trying not to laugh out loud. I'm sure the girl had a good time sharing the details of that sale with coworkers and friends.

Brotherly Love

In 2002 Virgil and Mary celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Their daughter Cheryl who is also my Goddaughter asked friends and relatives to write something about Virgil and/or Mary to commemorate the occasion, preferably by relating past experiences with either or both of them. I decided to write mine as a roast, which I read before an audience attending Virgil's 80th birthday party five years later. I will repeat it here.

Virgil's Birthday Roast – 2007

When I was born my father was 46 and my brother Virgil was 11. This age disparity deprived me of a normal childhood of playing ball with either of them or, until much later, drinking beer with my male sibling.

Some claim that I was raised like an only child and was doted upon by my parents. Thus my sister, Bev, (also considerably older than me) has proclaimed on occasion (many) that I was a "rotten spoiled brat." My wife, Liliane, is more generous in her assessment; since she wisely chose me as a mate she simply tells me that I was "spoiled rotten." Our mother helped me maintain some sense of worth by often proclaiming that "I was"100%." She rescued my shattered ego on numerous occasions when I would urge her to repeat that apt description.

Virgil left for the Navy immediately after high school. I was only six years old. Being so young and doted upon, I hardly knew that I had a brother until he returned from service. In the years between his return to Adrian and his marriage to Mary in 1952 our relationship became very close, primarily because we shared a bed. I use the word "shared" but it doesn't' adequately describe the arrangement. At the time Virgil weighed, perhaps, 170 pounds, while I may have weighed 65 pounds, soaking wet. These were the days, mind you, when there were no Sealy Posteurepedic's with various levels of firmness, pillow tops, and individual firmness controls, etc. Virgil had this thing about "being touched" while in bed. When one assesses the physics involved in this sleeping arrangement it is easy to determine that the mattress would succumb to the relative weights of the two individuals by sagging proportionately. To put this situation in simplest terms -- my flyweight body was now on top of the hill while his massive torso was in the valley. I found that if I used a combination of finger clutching of the sheets while simultaneously applying a pillow as a barrier, I could avoid touching my brother for hours on end. Eventually, however, my death grip loosened as my body gave way to sleep and down the hill I would roll. A few select cusswords and a swift kick would suffice to start the process all over again.

This experience has left me with three lifelong afflictions. The sheet clinging created an abnormally overdeveloped grip that has resulted in:

1) Preventing a sure-fire NBA career (I had trouble releasing the ball).
2) Not being able to play the piano well; and
3) Lousy penmanship.

In addition, the bed-hill experience has led to a lifelong fear of hills (slopephobia) whereby I'm afraid to work on sloping roofs (more later), ski, drink beer on playground slides, or climb mountains. I pray that Virgil does not feel guilty for permanently affecting my life in such a traumatic manner. I have long since forgiven him. Presumably Mary has somehow cured him of his fear of touching in bed. Incidentally, for those of you who are so rudely aware that my weight now considerably exceeds that of Virgil, I have no immediate plans to ask him to sleep with me. I have my principles, and I fear that he may have developed additional methods of bedtime torture such as snoring or, perhaps, he has come up with a newly-designed "reverse-hill maneuver."

During these years I was a considerable annoyance to Bev and her friends primarily because she had to take me along to most of her play or social events. Virgil's friends, on the other hand, found me to be a combination mascot and toy for their amusement. One year, Virgil's friend, "Booger" Eshelman, borrowed me for an experiment at the annual Adrian Carnival, which set up on Main Street. As far as I can determine Booger probably brokered some sort of wager among his friends as to the time it would take for me to barf on the Tilt-a-whirl, which was located in front of the Bratsberg and Entwistle store. Whoever picked closest to the time won the bet. It didn't take long. To this day I get nauseous when I watch anything go around faster than the minute hand on a clock.

Considerably later, after I became unjustifiably trusting of him, Booger took me for a ride on his motorcycle. I burned my leg on the exhaust pipe.

Virgil's friends utilized other methods to amuse themselves at my expense. They would often send me on errands that, at the time, seemed like a great opportunity to please them while simultaneously boosting sales at dad's hardware store. Typically, they would ask me to go to the store and inquire about the availability of some clearly useful product such as a skyhook or striped paint. Can you imagine watching the tears well up in my eyes as Virgil or my dad laughed hysterically at my perfectly legitimate inquiry? (Hey- neither of those items is a bad idea!) Virgil not only endorsed this cruel behavior on the part of his friends, I'm sure he promoted it.

Another of Virgil's friends, "Gizmo" Thompson, always came to our house on Christmas Eve to partake in dad's famous Tom and Jerry's. After his marriage he no longer came over, however on the first Christmas Eve with his new in-law's family he called dad to ask for the recipe so he could make his own. As we all sat around the kitchen table listening to dad's side of the conversation, we heard him say "You take a dozen eggs, separate the yolks and whites then - pause - well how many do you want to make?" Dad broke into laughter and then continued with further conversation. When he finished he explained to us that Gizmo only wanted to make one Tom and Jerry - for himself!

You will have noticed that Virgil had a lot of friends with unusual nicknames. They were probably used to easily distinguish them from others with the same first name. There were not a lot of Virgil's in Adrian; consequently he never had a nickname.

(If Virgil had been given a nickname it probably would have been Lug-nut, U-bolt, or Solder-joint since he worked in dad's hardware store. I'd have opted for Hip-Boots Schutz since it has a kind of cute alliteration and acknowledges Virgil' s love of fishing at the same time.)

Had this nickname trend continued in Adrian along with the more recent custom of using hyphenated names including both parents, we could have had some real doozies. In a couple of generations we could have someone named Gopher Klein-Kellen-Honnerman-Lonneman.

Virgil had other ways of torturing his little brother. During high school and in the summers of my first years of college I worked in the hardware store. Virgil and Bev would probably give a collective "ha" at that statement, but I really did work, albeit intermittently and with minimal effort. Virgil, to his great pleasure and my chagrin, often assigned my jobs. Cleaning clogged floor drains while standing in six inches of water and assorted unmentionable sewer stuff was an automatic assignment for -- guess who?

Another favorite assignment was to have me put up rain gutters on homes with pitched roofs. As I mentioned earlier, I have slopephobia. Virgil didn't care; he reveled in my misery. No matter how many times I would hit my thumb with the hammer because I was afraid to look down from my perch on the roof, he would be unhesitant in sending me to another gutter job! If I had been given a nickname, it probably would have been Big-Thumb or Dumb-Shit.

I am grateful to Virgil for the advice he gave me when I was seventeen and about to graduate from high school. I had made all the preparations necessary to enter the University of Minnesota's Institute of Technology for fall quarter when he convinced me to alter my plans.

Four years earlier Virgil had completed his second stint in the Armed Forces. (WWII and Korea) He wasn't too fond of the experience and presumed that I would like it even less. So what did he suggest? I should enlist in the Army! At the time there was a reserve program wherein recruits would serve six months on active duty followed by six years of reserve duty. With the volatile conditions in the world at the time, he felt that there would be a good chance that I would be drafted immediately upon graduation from college. There was a lot of saber rattling among some Middle Eastern countries. I can't remember which ones, but they had a lot of people (fanatical and mean, as I recall). At any rate, the assumption was that if I got into the Reserves, I would probably be safe from induction except under the worst possible scenario. I would also be able to nearly finish my reserve obligation while simultaneously attending college. I fell for this "escape the draft" strategy and enlisted in June of 1957.

July and August of 1957 were very hot in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri where I took basic training. The camp was actually (I'm not kidding) radiating heat to the sun! There were really mean guys at Fort Leonard Wood. They called them Sergeants or Drill Instructors. They wouldn't let you do anything you wanted to do -- just the opposite! If you didn't listen to them they had things like K.P., stockade, and infirmary, which were, in ascending order, very bad. I swear this guy, who was my boss, was even worse than Sister Macrena (second grade) if your deportment was bad.

All of these Sergeants would make you do things like change clothes for no good reason at all. This was hard for me because, as you have heard, I was a spoiled brat. They didn't like it when you asked why? And they wouldn't let you write your mom to complain. Most of the other guys didn't have such swell brothers. They actually wanted to be there, but then most of them had the I.Q. of a bowling ball.

In the Army they have this hierarchy, which is very important to learn. I once called my Sergeant "Sir" and he hollered at me really good. You see, only his bosses were to be called "Sir." They all wore shiny metal bars on their shoulders, and you had to salute them but not Sergeants. For calling my Sergeant "Sir" I had to wash big pots (the aforementioned K.P.).

I found this rule, and others, were universal throughout the U.S. Army. At my first National Guard Camp at Fort Ripley, before I had received all the swell basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, I passed one of the Sergeant bosses and saluted him. He really hollered at me and called me "soldier," even though my nametag very clearly said, "Schutz," and I really wanted him to call me "Jack." He told on me to my boss, and they made some sort of agreement where I had to stand out in the elements for six hours guarding a road. Have any of you ever experienced hail pelting you while wearing a tin hat? I wanted to leave but I figured they would be watching me. Incidentally, I said I was guarding a road but I'm not sure what from or for what. This was one of my first experiences with military discipline, which requires obedience even if it makes no sense.

A couple more examples come to mind. While in basic training they would take us out to a part of the camp where you just knew that no one had been hanging around, but the ground would have a lot of junk on it -- mostly cigarette butts. We were to pick up anything that was manmade and not permanently attached -- like a park bench. This was called "policing the area." We would get it perfectly clean only to find out the next day that the Sergeants had returned during the night and threw all of our pickings back on the ground. We would then repeat, "policing the area."

Each of our WWII vintage barracks had a really shiny clean, red, linoleum strip down the main aisle between the bunks. It was a natural place to walk but we weren't allowed to! If it got dirty even with a dust bunny someone would have to scrub it until it was even shinier. That somebody would usually be the person who made it dirty or someone who called their Sergeant "Sir."

I tried for a while to explain that these things made no sense but after washing more big pots I came to understand that they did, indeed, make sense!

The K.P. thing reminds me of the meals themselves, appropriately called "mess." The meals were not the greatest and were served cafeteria style. That is not to say that you had choices. I got hollered at during my first meal when I asked for bread pudding. You just lined up, and they sort of threw scoops of food on your tray and they weren't careful as the food got all mixed up. No wonder they called it "mess."

At first you would try to make little dams to try and separate stuff but when you came to realize that the mashed potatoes tasted exactly like the muffins you sort of gave up and ate. Some guys who were real fussy and didn't mind getting skinny hardly ate at all. They just picked out the good stuff, wiped it off and ate it. The rest they threw away. That night (after the Sergeants had spread the days pickings back on the ground for the next day's "policing the area") the Sergeants would go the mess hall and pick out all of this discarded food and put it in a giant blender. Anyway, the next day the cooks were grateful because all they had to do was put this blended conglomeration into huge pots, some of which were the size of Nobles County. (I know because I had to wash them.) They poured this blended, heated mush over toast and called it S.O.S. I cannot tell you what that stood for since children are present. While the cooks were throwing the S.O.S. on your tray they all stood there smiling and saying "Yummeee!" Actually, S.O.S. wasn't all that bad.

Often while policing the area, scrubbing the aisle, or washing big pots, my thoughts turned back home to Virgil and his friends. I imagined them sitting in Ping's Bar drinking beer and every so often clicking their bottles while saying things like, "We really got him this time - but good!" referring, of course, to me. They would then all laugh uproariously and drink more beer.

When I returned home as a mean, lean fighting machine, I was going to use my newly honed skills to get even with Virgil's friends, but alas, they had all left. They got bored, no doubt, when all of their friend's little brothers grew up and caught on to them or fled town.

The Army, it is said, makes men out of boys. Although I cried a lot, I think I did mature. The experience convinced me that I didn't want to be in the Army even if - and this was promised - I could become one of those Sergeant guys. Furthermore I was now more motivated and was better prepared for the rigors of college. In college you weren't told what to do. You had choices - Biology or Brain Surgery, beer or bourbon. And nobody hollered at you - that didn't start again until I married Liliane but with her there is very little K.P. *and* I could write my mom.

In recent years Virgil and I have become reacquainted through our travels. Our spouses and we have been on trips to New Zealand and Europe. Travelling together has provided an opportunity to:

1) Learn more about our mutual likes and dislikes (i.e. Ice cream and Bill Clinton respectively) 2) Reminisce about old times (he doesn't like to talk about torturing me or purports to remember things differently)
3) Allow me to demonstrate my love and forgiving nature by giving him amnesty on knips, which are finger raps on the forehead earned by losing at card games
4) Provide an opportunity for Liliane and me to show our appreciation to Virgil and Mary for the many years that they, so unselfishly, cared for our parents.

Virgil is easy prey for practical jokes, but I won't embarrass him by revealing a lot of stories illustrating this weakness. I am compelled, however, to relate one example. It has to do with his attempt at an unbelievable cover-up of a most humorous incident.

We were on a day cruise among the islands off the northwest coast of New Zealand's North Island. The ship dropped us at a very picturesque island armed with box lunches, allowing us time to explore, eat, swim, and return to the ship. We found a cozy little inlet where we sat on large rocks partially in the water. We had just carefully placed our food on the paper plates when a gust of wind upended Virgil's plate, strewing the contents on the sand while a chicken leg fell into the ocean. Virgil pounced on the chicken leg like a hungry dog, sort of rinsed it around, and began to eat it. We all offered a part of our meal to Virgil, but he insisted that he had done this on purpose because the chicken needed more salt, which of course, the ocean water provided!

There are many more similar tales that I could relate; however, as I've previously stated, retribution is not in my heart and I want him to enjoy his fantasies. Besides, I admire him tremendously.

Virgil is one of the smartest and best-read people I know. The best proof of his genius is his choice of mates. Virgil and Mary are truly one of those perfect couples that complement each other ideally. I was so excited and proud to be a part of their wedding party over fifty years ago. I'm prouder still, to be part of their family today. We love them dearly and wish them many more healthy and prosperous years together.

I also want to thank Virgil for having such a profound and positive influence on my life (no kidding). Happy birthday brother!

With loving respect,
Jack

"A good laugh overcomes more difficulties and dissipates more dark clouds than any other one thing."

Laura Ingalls Wilder, 1867-1957

"Through humor, you can soften some of the worst blows that life delivers. And once you find laughter, no matter how painful your situation might be, you can survive it."

Bill Cosby, 1937-

"The more I live, the more I think that humor is the saving sense."

Jacob August Riis, 1849-1914

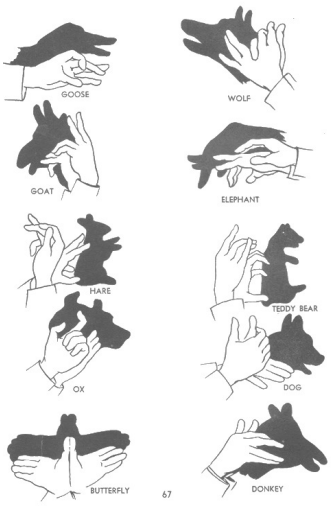
"A sense of humor is a measurement of the extent to which we realize that we are trapped in a world almost totally devoid of reason."

Dave Barry, 1947-

Entertainment

Let Me Entertain You

The very earliest entertainment that I can remember was that of dad creating shadow puppets on the wall of my parent's bedroom. At night they would allow me to crawl in bed with them after dad had strategically placed a small light behind him. He then created all sorts of shadow images, mostly of animals such as rabbits, or horses on the far wall. He had learned this talent as a boy when little other entertainment was available. In Germany the shadow theatre was very popular and families began to make silhouettes in their own homes. Immigrants, no doubt, brought the practice to America with them. I was very impressed with dad's ability and would beg him for more and more.



Shadow Puppets

The memories of the shadow puppets reminded me of another vision from mom and dad's bedroom. They had a wall-hung plaque of the Sacred Heart, which had a very small red or amber light illuminating it. I loved to look at it as I fell asleep. I was then carried to my bedroom for the night. I still have the plaque and hope to restore its illumination, which currently doesn't work.

Hometown Favorite

One radio broadcast that dad never failed to miss was the "Cedric Adams News Show" which aired around noon from WCCO in Minneapolis. Dad would come home for lunch and then lie down to listen to Adams' show. He would get in a short nap and then go back to work. Throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, Adams was the most prominent reporter, journalist, and broadcaster in the upper Midwest. Dad knew Cedric Adams who was born in Adrian in 1902 and came back to broadcast his show from the Slade Hotel in Adrian on occasion.

Shall We Dance?

My parents liked to dance. There were several ballrooms in the area including the Knights of Columbus Hall, which occupied the major portion of the upper level of the former department store owned by dad and two of his brothers. Mom and dad along with their friends frequented the Red Roof in Ellsworth, the Ritz in Lismore, the Hollyhock in Hatfield, and the Hardwick ballrooms. My friends and I also attended dances at these ballrooms in my late teens. (See chapters on ***Oops!*** and ***Food and Drink***.)

Oom Pah Pah

Dad liked to listen to polka music. at home he would lie on the couch KNUJ in New Ulm or WNAX in favorite bands was the "Six Fat Wilfahrt. Later, I went through basic New Ulm.



Every Sunday afternoon when we were and listen to polka music from either Yankton, South Dakota. One of his Dutchmen" led by "Whoopie John" training with one of his nephews from

Early to Bed

My favorite private entertainment in my pre-teen years was to go to bed early with a bottle of Nesbitt's Orange, my favorite soda, and listen to the radio. I was a huge Brooklyn Dodgers fan and I could hear their games when they played the Cubs or the Cardinals from radio stations in Chicago (WGN) or St. Louis (KMOX). I also listened to radio shows such as *Bob Hope*, *Red Skelton*, *Abbott and Costello*, *Burns and Allen* and *Fibber McGee and Molly*. One of my favorite shows was *Inner Sanctum*. It featured eerie sound effects, terror and suspense, and was *really* scary. I couldn't listen to that one while alone.

Losing is Painful

Playing cards was a favorite pastime. Canasta was popular in the 1950s, but Pinochle, Schmier, Deuces Wild Gin Rummy, and Poker were played regularly with friends and family members. When games were played between immediate family members, the payoff for the winner was being able to "knip" the loser in the forehead. "Knips" were finger whops of significant power that could render one semi-conscious for a few seconds. Losing was not fun, especially when the victor would purposefully delay his pleasure and your torture by practicing on a table, or other hard surface, demonstrating his awesome "knipping" prowess. Though we didn't use the word then, there is a uniquely German word that perfectly fits the sentiment of the winner: **Schadenfreude** – a word describing enjoyment at the misfortune of others. Today I use this word frequently, particularly on the golf course.



Proper Knipping Technique

The execution of a knip to the forehead, if done correctly, will result in considerable trauma, a possible contusion or minor concussion and a definite headache.

No Tree House This

My friends and I used to love to listen to after-school radio programs such as *Sky King*, *Hopalong Cassidy*, *The Lone Ranger*, *Captain Midnight*, and *The Shadow*. We would go to the bakery and buy 5 cents worth of skin-on salted peanuts and then go to our hideaway in the basement of the hardware store. This is where dad stored hog feeders and other merchandise too large for the main floor display areas. The hog feeders were about 6 feet in diameter and 6 feet high and fabricated from heavy galvanized tin. We took the lid off, crawled in with an electric trouble light, which kept us from getting scared as well as providing power for our little radio. We then listened to our programs while eating the peanuts. The shows always had commercials advertising some product that you could send for with mail-in coupons, which were found primarily on or in cereal boxes. At various times, they offered badges, pins, decoder rings, mugs, secret maps, masks, bracelets, manuals, comics, memberships, pictures of the stars of the shows, games, magic transfer pictures, puzzles, and much more. We would send in our money and then rush to the post office every day to see if our wonderful item had arrived. I remember ordering a secret decoder ring, which contained a concealed compartment and was so large that it dwarfed my fingers. I also remember buying some spurs with glow-in-the-dark rowels that fit nicely on my Roy Rogers cowboy boots. There were many other things that we found enticing. Virgil and dad also found something irresistible about our after- school rendezvous. They would come down to the basement, sneak up to and then pound on our hog feeder lodge and scare the beejeebers out of us.

Round And Round

Indoor roller-skating became popular in the 50s. There were a number of rinks in the area and, for a while, there was skating in the former dance hall above dad's hardware store in Adrian. Roller-skating became a dating affair or, at least, a place to meet and socialize with the opposite sex. It was sort of like dancing in that you would skate arm-in-arm while going round-and-round the oval floor. Skates could be rented but the really good skaters had their own. The music was generally sentimental. One of the favorite and oft-repeated songs was *The Moonlight Gambler* by Frankie Laine. The better skating venues even had mirror balls (now called "disco balls") for ambiance.

Moving Pictures In A Box?

It wasn't until 1954, when I was a freshman in high school, that television was available in the area. KELO in Sioux Falls started broadcasting a few hours each day and the signal was quite weak in Adrian. We probably got

our first television set, an RCA, the following year. We actually sat and watched black and white test patterns, which were broadcast before evening programming began.

Some of the most popular shows were *Dragnet*, *I Love Lucy* and *The Jackie Gleason Show*. *The Ed Sullivan Show* on Sunday nights was everyone's favorite. *Your Hit Parade* was a show I really liked. Each week the top seven songs were featured and sung by one of the four regulars on the show. There were changes in performers but the ones I remember best were Snooky Lanson, Gisele MacKensey, Dorothy Collins and Russell Arms. There was always a buildup from seventh to first place each week. The show always closed with the four stars singing these words "So long for a while, that's all the songs for a while, so long from Your Hit Parade and the music you've picked to be played . . . sooooo loooong!"

Splurge

For many years while I was growing up in Adrian the King Theatre charged nine cents for a movie. I'm not sure what the cost was for adults. My "night on the town" (every Saturday) cost 34 cents with 25 cents going to the Adrian Café for an after-movie hamburger and a Nesbitt's orange soda.

Bang-Bang

In my earlier years of watching movies, my favorites included cowboys Roy Rogers, his wife Dale Evans, and Gene Autry. Since we often played cowboys and Indians during the day we had to pick cowboy favorites to emulate. Mine was Roy Rogers while my best friend, Dave Nealy, liked Gene Autry. We would take our play six-shooters to the theatre and get involved in the action on the screen. One time I got a little too unruly and boisterous so Judd King, the theatre manager, snatched my toy gun only to return it to me the next day in the presence of my dad. Not too embarrassing!

We also liked comedy movies featuring such stars as Bob Hope (loved all of his "Road" movies), Red Skelton, Abbott and Costello and, of course, The Three Stooges.

Frightening movies such as *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* were favorites but they were always seen with some trepidation. After we saw one of these movies in Adrian, Dave Nealy and I would walk very briskly to the Catholic Church corner and then run the rest of the way to our respective homes (different directions) where we immediately called each other to make sure we were safe.

I've always found it interesting that two of the most popular movies of all time were debuted the year I was born. They were *The Wizard of Oz* and *Gone with the Wind*. As an aside, Liliane and I saw the latter movie exclusively with our respective fathers in the 1950s.

Say it with Music

Even when I was quite young I fell in love with musical theatre. In high school I didn't have access to live performances -- only movies, so I saw musicals on the silver screen whenever I could. A good example of what a nerd I was transpired on a trip to the west coast with my parents when I was sixteen. We were visiting my cousin Clarence Steinhoff and his wife Gladys in San Francisco. One evening the adults decided to play cards, so I asked if I could take the car (I had just received my driver's license) to see a movie. I was thrilled to see the newly released *Oklahoma*, starring Gordon Macrae and Shirley Jones.

Starting in college, I saw every possible live and theatre musical that I could afford. Liliane and I continue to love musical theatre and we don't miss an opportunity to see shows either in the Twin Cities, New York or in U.S. and foreign cities during our travels. Here is, to the best of my memory, an almost complete list of musicals that we have seen prior to or during our marriage. Some of them we have seen numerous times.

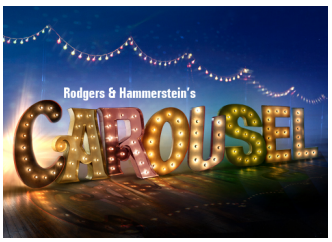
Musicals

- *Annie*
- *Fiorello!*
- *The Flower Drum Song*
- *Guys and Dolls*
- *Gypsy*
- *The King and I*
- *Kiss Me Kate*
- *The Music Man*
- *Porgy and Bess*
- *Show Boat*
- *The Sound Of Music*
- *South Pacific*
- *The Threepenny Opera*
- *West Side Story*
- *Annie Get your Gun*
- *My Fair Lady*
- *Anything Goes*
- *Babes in Arms*
- *Brigadoon*
- *Bye Bye Birdie*
- *Camelot*
- *Candide*
- *Carousel*
- *Madam Butterfly (Opera)*
- *Damn Yankees*
- *Cabaret*
- *The Fantastic's*
- *Finians' Rainbow*
- *Gigi*
- *Fiddler on the Roof*
- *Bombay Dreams*
- *Promises-Promises*
- *Wicked*
- *Les Miserable's*
- *Miss Saigon*
- *Paint Your Wagon*
- *The Phantom of the Opera*
- *Evita*
- *The Student Prince*
- *Chicago*
- *Rent*
- *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*
- *Jesus Christ Superstar*
- *Aspects of Love*
- *Sunset Boulevard*
- *Starlight Express*
- *Wicked*





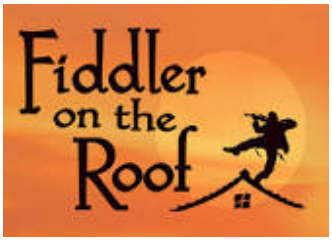


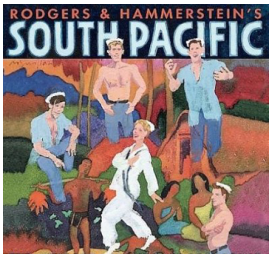














As you can see, if you know musical theatre, we are particularly partial to Rogers and Hammerstein, Andrew Lloyd Weber, Lerner and Loewe and Gershwin.



Our favorite all-time musical is *Les Miserables*, written by Claude-Michel Schonberg, which we have seen live ten times – once in New York, once in London, and eight times in the Twin Cities. We saw the just-released movie version with our family during the 2012 Christmas season. It was fabulous!

We saw *Madame Butterfly* in what was then Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) in the famed Mariinsky Theatre along with assorted other live performances in London, Sydney, Moscow, New York, Los Angeles, Portland, Las Vegas, and Washington D.C.

In addition to show tunes, I have always liked March music. I used to play John Phillip Sousa's music for hours on my little 45-rpm record player, which I plugged into my bedside clock radio. I'm dismayed to see half-time shows at football games, which have abandoned march-only music.

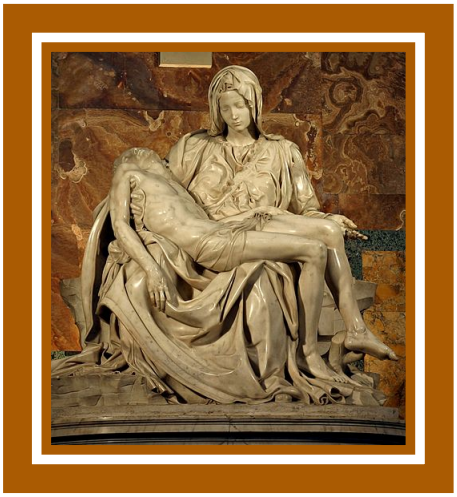
Among our favorite vocalists are Il Divo, Andre Bocelli, Josh Groban, Katherine Jenkins, Michael Ball, Sarah Brightman, André Rieu, Haley Westenra and Russell Watson. All of them are also known as crossover performers. Classical crossover describes the genre of music that includes recordings of popular music by classically trained musicians as well as collaborations between popular and classical artists. One of the best-known crossover groups was The Three Tenors consisting of Placido Domingo, Jose Carreras, and Luciano Pavarotti.

Other favorites are Johnny Mathis, Frank Sinatra, Céline Dion, Roger Whitaker, Neil Diamond, ABBA, Engelbert Humperdinck, Whitney Houston, Michael Ball, and Barry Manilow, most classical music and anything from the 20s, 30s and 40s. I can identify, possibly, 85% of the songs written in that era. Our favorite instrumentalist is pianist Richard Clayderman.

Real Artists

As with music, we have definite tastes in the world of art. We have been fortunate to see works from some of history's greatest artists on our travels around the world. We have also seen some rather grotesque "artistry" such as the Khajuraho, India temple walls which contain thousands of sculptured sexual poses inscribed in ancient text of Kamasutra.

Realism is the art style most people, including me, regard as "real art," where the subject of the painting looks very much like it appears in real life. From a little distance everything looks "real" but up close you'll see it's an illusion created by skillful use of paint, of color and tone. An example of this would be the famed painting of Mona Lisa. Some of the Old Masters of this technique were Leonardo da Vinci and Rembrandt.



Michelangelo's *Pietà*
St. Peter's Basilica
The Vatican



Leonardo da Vinci's
Mona Lisa
The Louvre, Paris

As for sculpture we like the Renaissance period when famous sculptors such as Bernini, Giambologna, and Michelangelo produced what I believe were the greatest of all masterpieces. My favorites are both by Michelangelo: “David,” which I photographed in Florence and is displayed in one of our bathrooms, and the “Pietà” which we have seen many times in St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican.

Audiologists/Optometrists Help!

I’ve written what I like in both music and art. Now I’ll attempt to give a summary of what I don’t like.

I generally dislike rock ‘n roll even though it was a huge part of the entertainment culture during much of my lifetime. I find most of the "artists" to be devoid of good singing voices, the lyrics to be superficial and, in some cases, nonsensical or crude. I tend to like songs where I can actually understand the lyrics - not many in this genre. * Ditto for Rap, which I don't even consider music. I have never heard a rock ‘n roll singer that could be accepted in a music conservatory but since I’ve largely ignored this “music,” genre I may have missed some real talent. Some rock ‘n rollers have voices so bad it has to be the uniqueness of the sound that attracts their fans (e.g. Kim Carnes, Joe Cocker, Rod Stewart). Perhaps Pablo Picasso's quote at the end of this chapter describes these "musical artists" also. Describing his own painting he said, "I have contented these people with all the many bizarre things that have come into my head. And the less they understand, the more they admire it."

There are two exceptions to the above diatribe. Liliane liked Elvis Presley. I didn’t dislike him, but I was not a huge fan. I could understand his lyrics, a must for my favorable appraisal of English* songs, and he has become more acceptable, even likeable, to me in recent years. I actually saw Elvis in person one time. He was entertaining at the Seattle World’s Fair in 1962. My parents and I were in attendance at the fair and saw him strolling around the grounds with a huge contingent of fans and paparazzi. At the time I couldn’t understand why there was so much excitement and enthusiasm.

Both Liliane and I found the Beatles to be entertaining. Again we could understand the lyrics and their music was harmonic, melodious and pleasant. They also wrote some very good songs.

Good singers don't need sideshows to present their talents such as grandiose multi-million dollar stage sets, casts of hundreds, fireworks and other distracting displays. They don't overdose and die before they are thirty-five, and they don't need to be on the covers of tabloids to get attention. They don't have to dance, gyrate, take off their shirts, dangle children off balconies, or do anything but sing to be appreciated. Most importantly, what I call "good singing performers" have longevity. Frank Sinatra will still be heard and admired generations from now. And I object calling most rock musicians? (ouch!) artists. Artists are supposed to create beautiful things.

I somewhat dislike Jazz. In my opinion, Jazz consists of random note generation. Improvisation is consistently regarded as being one of its key elements. In Jazz, therefore, the performer will interpret a tune in very individual ways, never playing the same composition exactly the same way twice. You can't hum Jazz. It's the musical equivalent of abstract art. I am not totally averse to Jazz, however. As background music it can be rather soothing and not terribly distracting unlike Rap, Hip-Hop or Heavy Metal, which I classify as really horrendous and harsh noise - not music. In contrast to my assertion about Rock where I try but cannot understand the lyrics, with these genres I am *glad* that I can’t understand them as most “songs,” I’m told, are vulgar, sexist and profane. Other genres with my opinion: Bop, 👎 Dixieland, Country, 👍👎 Motown, Classical, Polka, Ragtime, Swing and Easy Listening. 👍

I dislike abstract or surrealism art. It's the art equivalent of Jazz. Abstract art consists of random brushstroke generation. Abstract art doesn't try to look like anything from the "real world.” It is an art style that is intentionally non-representational. At its worst, abstract art looks like an accidental mess of paint. **

A couple of quotations from the best-known abstract artist, Pablo Picasso, summarize my feelings. "Titian, Rembrandt and Goya were the great painters. I am only a public clown. I have contented these people with all the many bizarre things that have come into my head. And the less they understand, the more they admire it.”



Perseo
By Salvador Dali***



Woman Reading
By Picasso

I have always contended that if you have to have a piece of art explained to you it isn't art at all. *Explain these*! Gosh, do I have an opinion on music and art? Told you I was a nerd!

"Modern art is what happens when painters stop looking at girls and persuade themselves that they have a better idea."

John Anthony Ciardi, 1916-1986

"Abstract art: a product of the untalented sold by the unprincipled to the utterly bewildered."

Al Capp, 1909-1979

"Rock 'n Roll: The most brutal, ugly, desperate, vicious form of expression it has been my misfortune to hear."

Frank Sinatra, 1915-1998

"One thing I like about jazz, kid, is that I don't know what's going to happen next. Do you?"

Bix Beiderbecke, 1903-

** Some might say I'm being hypocritical as many operatic songs are sung in a foreign language which I probably don't understand either. An operatic aria totally transcends the language barrier because of the beauty of the music. One doesn't need to understand the words because the operatic voice is a musical instrument. Thus, to me, an aria is an instrumental masterpiece.*

*** With deepest apologies to my grandniece, Elissa, who is an Assistant Professor of Art at Upper Iowa University. She would probably say that I'm old and just don't get it! She would be right on both counts.*

**** Ironically, this is a photo I took of one of 10 Dali sculptures on the Avenida del Mar which is the main walkway between the beautiful old town and the beach in Marbella, Spain. It is right next to the apartments where Liliane and I have stayed every-other-winter for the past 20 years. With its fountains, cafes and fabulous sea views, it's a beautiful esplanade, which could have been better served by more traditional sculptures.*

Hunting, Fishing and Boating

Hunting

Hunting and fishing were year-round activities for our family. Most Sunday afternoons in the summer were spent fishing. In the fall we were occupied with hunting pheasants, and occasionally, ducks and geese.

The pheasant hunting season would start at noon on an October Saturday. The men and boys would walk the fields until about two o'clock. Then with the back of a pickup truck nearly filled with birds they would meet the ladies at a country schoolhouse or some other predetermined site where a meal was served. Lunch never tasted so good.

Following lunch, the ladies would return home with the pheasants while the men and boys went back to the fields for more hunting. There were no limits and even hens were fair game. This bountiful hunting was generally confined to the opening day. After that the pheasants became much smarter and evasive so that one really had to *hunt*. After the opening day we often would "road hunt" by simply driving in the countryside while looking in the thick grass ditches where the pheasants nested. Sometimes we would shoot directly out of the car windows. Road hunting became even more prominent in later years when the pheasant population dwindled due to lack of good habitat caused by drained sloughs and fence-to-fence farming. Incidentally, the shotgun of choice for pheasant hunting was a 12 gauge although I often shot a smaller bore .410 gauge.



I remember a couple of times when Uncle Nick took me out of town into the countryside during a sleet or wet snow event. For some reason pheasants would accrue ice around their heads when frozen rain hit them. When we would spot pheasants in the roadside ditches I would get out of the pickup and follow Uncle Nick's instruction to sneak up to one and grab it by the neck. The pheasants couldn't see or hear so that part was easy. The next part -- not so much. Their attempt to free themselves by flapping their wings and flailing their claws was not much appreciated. I would throw them into a gunnysack and we would take them back to town for their final demise. I think Uncle Nick enjoyed my obvious misery more than the pleasure he got from "the hunt" or even from eating the pheasants.



Before

We had a couple of other roadside activities that took place in the spring. Shooting striped gophers was a good way for young boys to learn the proper use of firearms. We would drive to the country and shoot the pesky rodents from our car with a 22-caliber rifle, and if it was the right time of year, we could pick wild asparagus at the same time.



After

Not Real Pigeons

Adrian had a trap-shooting range where anyone could practice their skills with shotguns. The shooting stations were arranged in a line with the trap, the spring-loaded machine that propels the targets, in the middle. The trap propelled the clay targets (sometimes known as clay pigeons), which are the shape of an inverted saucer and are about 5 inches in diameter. They are thrown at different trajectories and speeds. Shooters would shout "pull" and the target would be thrown by the trap. If even a single shotgun pellet hit the target, it would shatter. Many hunters from Adrian would hone their skills at the range before the beginning of pheasant or duck hunting seasons, or shoot just for fun or in competition.

Fishing

Fishing was a very popular recreation for our family. Sometimes we would fish for the more popular game fish such as Walleye and Northern Pike, which would generally be caught from a boat. One of the best lakes in our area for Walleye fishing was Lake Shetek near Currie. The lake also had a nice state park on its shores where we would sometimes picnic.

Our family loved to eat bullheads, a bottom-feeding fish that is abundant in most lakes of southwestern Minnesota. They are easy to catch with worms** for bait. Nearly every cast would result in a bite and the resultant retrieval was fun as the fish fought with fervor greater than expected for their size. We would often go to local lakes, fish for a couple of hours and then head home with our limits. Sometimes we would catch them, dad would clean them, and mom would fry them on a camp stove right at the lakeside.



The Beautiful Bullhead

Dad was an expert at cleaning these ugly fish. They had a spiny protrusion from each side of the head and, if not careful, they could give you a painful stab. Dad could skin them very quickly. His method involved cutting off the head, pulling the skin off with a pliers, and gutting. The skeleton remained in the fish. They were prepared for frying by salting and peppering them before dragging in flour. When finished pan-frying they could be easily stripped from the bony skeleton and eaten with a fork. Bullheads are delicious, and they became a favorite of our kids. I like eating bullheads more than any other fish but, alas, they don't serve them at Red Lobster. We never could figure out why bullheads weren't more popular in other parts of the country. Perhaps it was their ugly looks or the difficulty novices experienced in the cleaning process.

Dad usually made an annual trek with friends to northern Minnesota for an ice-fishing weekend. Dad's favorite fishing partner and best friend was Allie Johanning, my uncle and Godfather. Dad was devastated when Allie was killed in a 1957 car accident. Ironically, dad then took up fishing with Allie's brother, Ray, who was also killed in a car accident while on an up-north fishing trip. Dad was planning to go on that trip but he had to back out for some reason.

One of the more memorable and pleasant fishing trips that I describe in more detail in the chapter on ***Travel*** took place near Alexandria. We were boat fishing on Lake Le Homme Dieu when I caught a fairly small fish that I was encouraged to throw back. The water was so clear that when I released the fish I was able to follow his movements and couldn't resist dropping my baited line back in the water near him. Fish are not too smart -- he bit again. I had caught the same fish twice within 5 minutes!

** We used the larger and aptly named "night crawlers" for bait. We would go into our yard at night with flashlights and catch the slimy creatures when they were extended out of their holes. One had to be quite deft as they were very quick to respond to movement (they cannot see). The best time to catch them was after a rain when they emerged to soak up the treasured moisture. Another method we used was to attach the ends of an extension cord to two metal rods, which were driven into the ground about 3 feet apart. When activated the underground current flowing between the electrodes drove the bewildered night crawlers to the surface

Hunting / Fishing Oddities

During the winter groups of jackrabbit hunters would gather on a Sunday afternoon and surround four sections of land (a section is one mile by one mile in area). The hunt began at a designated time after all had been instructed on the safety precautions concerning the semi-dangerous type of hunting they were about to undertake. All hunters started walking toward the center of this very large four square mile area. As the noose tightened on the jackrabbits they found less and less area to maneuver. This would ultimately bring them within range of the hunters and the slaughter would begin. Typically, such a hunt in those days could net as many as 100 to 200 jackrabbits and a couple of fox. Similarly, hunters would gather at a grove of trees on a moonlit night to slaughter hundreds of crows that were sitting in the upper branches of the grove. Both crows and jackrabbits

were considered destructive pests to farmers who were glad to have them eradicated. Gophers were also considered pests, as their economic impact on a farm can be enormous from damaging roots of fruit trees to tunneling through fields of grain. Bounties were established which encouraged shooting of these pesky critters. A striped gopher was worth 2 cents while a pocket gopher was worth 5 cents. The hind legs of the rodents would be the proof required to collect the bounty payments.

One Sunday afternoon my parents and I went to visit my Aunt Therese and Uncle Clarence at their farm home near Wilmont. My Aunt Tillie and Uncle Allie were also there. I was encouraged to take our 22-caliber rifle to do some target shooting or hunting while the adults played a few games of cards. I walked to a nearby pasture, which had a small creek running through it. While walking along the creek I saw a rather large fish swimming along. I took aim and shot at the fish. It floated belly-up to the surface. I grabbed what I now identified as a Northern Pike and brought it to the farm where I placed it in a pail of water. Within minutes the fish began to stir and I realized that I had merely stunned it. Uncle Allie took the fish to his farm and placed it in a stock tank where it survived for some time. I never sought to hunt fish but it was quite an interesting experience.

Since we went fishing and hunting so much during my youth I grew weary of both. For one thing the recreation became more arduous as pheasants, geese, ducks and fish became harder to hunt or catch. Finally, without dad or Virgil to clean them it really became less attractive. I used to tell friends that I no longer went fishing because I was afraid I might catch one.

We did go fishing and hunting with mom and dad when the kids were small so that they would experience these outdoor sports and see that not all food came directly from the grocery store. I would occasionally join some co-workers at NSP for an up-north weekend of fishing. I went along for the camaraderie, revelry and eating/drinking associated with these outings. The only one of our children to take up either sport is our huntress, Maria. She bags a deer on their property in Carver County nearly every year.



Maria Bags A Buck

Boating

When I was a sophomore in high school dad bought a fishing/recreational boat with a trailer for transporting it. Dad and Virgil used it primarily for fishing but it had a pretty powerful outboard engine so it could also be used for water skiing. I would take friends, usually to Round Lake, for an afternoon or evening of water skiing or just boating. I really liked skiing and became quite proficient at it. I loved to jump the waves created by the boat wake and I learned to turn 360 degrees and do some other tricks. Either there were no slalom skis at the time or we didn't get one, so I would simply drop one ski and maneuver on the other.



Dad's Boat in front of their Adrian Home

Canoeing and Kayaking

When the kids were old enough to help paddle we often took them canoeing. We canoed Minnehaha Creek when the water was high enough, most of the Minneapolis chain of lakes and, frequently, the St. Croix River above Stillwater. We would rent the canoes upstream, have a casual float down the river, stop for lunch on some island, and then at the end of our journey get picked up by the canoe rental company for a ride back to our car. Occasionally we did inner tube floating on the Apple River in Somerset, Wisconsin.

We often went canoeing with other families. One such outing took place in the late summer of 1970 with Ivars and Gloria and their family. Only Shari was missing as she was spending the day with one of her aunts.

We drove to Cannon Falls and rented canoes for what was expected to be a leisurely float downstream to Welch Village. Linda, Ivars and Gloria's youngest child, was not yet a year old and Perri, their oldest was twelve. All the other kids fell in between those ages including a neighborhood girl, Molly Wheeler, who also joined us that day.

Canoe Chaos

The float started out very peacefully as it was a beautiful day with moderately calm waters. After about an hour we stopped for a late lunch at an idyllic spot on the riverbank.

We resumed our peaceful float until we rounded a bend and encountered quite a different situation. With our entire family in the lead canoe we saw a rapidly changing course and a narrowing of the river. At the most constricted point a tree was leaning over the water, which required us to duck while passing under. The water, because of the constrained course, was very fast and turbulent. We barely made it through without capsizing and as we looked back, the first of Ivars and Gloria's two canoes did not make it. In trying to avoid the branch they struck an object that tipped the canoe. Scott ended up trapped under the canoe until it had been up-righted.

Thankfully, everyone had life preservers but we were all alarmed as everything in the capsized canoe started floating downstream. I jumped into the water and was able to grab one of the kids while Liliane was beaching our canoe in the calmer waters where the river again widened. Everyone, and everything, was rescued and brought to shore. We dried out, repacked our coolers, cameras, towels, clothing and other belongings before resuming our downstream ride. By that time it was starting to get dark and we were thankful that our misadventure had not happened later in the day when we couldn't see as well because of darkness.

We reached Welch Village where we got a ride back to Cannon Falls with the rental company agent. We will never forget our close call on that day and are reminded of it every time we see canoeists. Even in what appears to be ideal conditions, things can go wrong.

Kayak Sidetrack

In March of 2013 we were leasing a condominium at Pelican Sound Golf and River Club in Estero, Florida the winter home of Ivars and Gloria. Our daughter Maria and son-in-law Bill were visiting us for one week. During their stay we decided to go kayaking on the Estero River, which flows through the property. The kayaks were included as a part of our lease arrangement. On a beautiful day we set off upstream, as we had already taken the Club’s riverboat on a leisurely trip downstream into the Gulf of Mexico to Lovers Key on a previous day.

After about an hour we encountered a group of kayaks holding their positions at one of the river bends. When we inquired as to what they were stopped for they indicated that they had seen a Manatee cow and two calves. I immediately grabbed my camera while simultaneously attempting to stow my oar. While not quite settled I felt and heard a thud on our kayak, looked in the water to my right and saw the large Manatee, which was the source of the bump. I just aimed my camera in her general direction and snapped a picture. The other kayakers were somewhat upset that they had waited for some time for a glimpse of one of these friendly but endangered mammals while we saw one up close and personal in a matter of minutes. That was one of the most enjoyable days that I have ever spent in the outdoors with the possible exception of any day on a golf course.

Estero River Florida – March 2013



Manatee



Jack And Liliane

"Hunting is about family time, experiencing the outdoors, and enjoying what God gave us."

Unknown author

"Fishing is boring, unless you catch an actual fish, and then it is disgusting."

Dave Barry, 1947-

"The perils of duck hunting are great - especially for the duck."

Walter Cronkite, 1916-2009

"A fishing rod is a stick with a hook at one end and a fool at the other."

Samuel Johnson, 1709-1784

Camping

While we never gave it much thought our love of travel led us, eventually, to try a relatively inexpensive way to vacation domestically with our children. It provided us with the opportunity to learn about the vast, beautiful and majestic expanses of North America. We were able to experience the joy of communing with nature and, in contrast, also visit most of our major cities.

I had written many pages of this chapter when I realized that to document all of our camping experiences I would end up with a book-length chapter, which would probably bore most readers. I found the same problem when I started to write a chapter on travel -- so I concluded that the best way to deal with these two topics would be to write a separate book on travel, which will also chronicle the majority of our camping experiences. The book will be written primarily for the personal satisfaction derived from recalling and documenting the many happy memories of our camping and travel experiences. Non-participants, alas, will probably not have the slightest interest in reading this future tome. *

This abridged chapter will simply chronicle the various phases of camping and wilderness experiences that we enjoyed for more that a decade,

Not Really Camping

Our first foray into camping was simply a trip to the east coast for, as I recall, a business conference in Boston. Liliane and I planned to extend the trip by driving through Canada north of the Great Lakes with our Pontiac station wagon. Liliane's parents stayed with our kids who were not yet in school. Our plan was to camp out occasionally simply by parking in a secluded spot for the night and sleep on the mattress we had placed in the expanded (rear seats folded down) area of the station wagon. We would then stay at motels on alternate nights for more comfort and to catch up on our hygiene.



Econo-camper

Since this was in the late sixties, I have forgotten many of the details, but I recall that one night we were having a difficult time finding a suitable place to park in very rural Ontario near Sudbury. We finally found a remote gas station that was closed, parked behind it and crawled onto our mattress.

We opened the rear window for ventilation, as it was very hot even though the sun had set hours before. Mistake! Every mosquito in Ontario found us! We were finally able to shoo them out or kill them, but then we were trapped in a suffocating hot coffin. All our other phobias took over and we were unable to sleep for more than a couple of hours and then only because of sheer exhaustion. As soon as the sun rose we started driving to get cooled off and to find a restaurant for breakfast. I had driven about an hour when I had to pull over to keep from falling asleep at the wheel.

Later in the trip we planned a motel stay in New Haven, Connecticut, the Home of Yale University and, we found out, also the headquarters of the Knights of Columbus. It seems the latter organization was having their national convention in New Haven at the time and every available motel room was occupied. We drove to the back of a Holiday Inn parking lot and slept for the night. I don't recall any other really bad incidents from that trip probably because we gave up on our mobile bedroom idea.

Pole A into Slot B?

Surprisingly, several years later we decided to try real camping with the kids who were now of school age. Our first attempt at camping involved a tent rental that we set up in O'Brien State Park on the St. Croix near Stillwater. We were so inexperienced that some other campers had to provide assistance in setting up the tent -- and I had been in the Army!

Where's the Bathtub?

This trial run convinced us that camping could be fun and it was the only way we could afford to give our kids the opportunity to see this great land of ours. We bought a tent and planned a much bigger venture - - a trip to the Black Hills, Yellowstone and Teton national parks.



Tent

We generally chose to stay in state and federal campgrounds, as they were much less expensive and more rustic than their commercial counterparts such as KOA. Liliane quickly came to loath the rustic part. We had purchased a rather large tent along with a rooftop storage unit for our station wagon, which provided additional space for our camping accessories.

We stayed in a National forest campground in the Black Hills. Liliane very badly wanted to wash her hair and there were no facilities except a cold-water pump. I can still recall her scream as I poured the icy water over her head -- but her discomfort eventually subsided and she did get her hair washed. We had a great visit to Mount Rushmore and then saw the Passion play in Spearfish where we stayed at a commercial campground.



OOOh That's cold!

Mount Rushmore



Several nights later we stayed in a commercial campground in Casper, Wyoming. The city was sponsoring an evening rodeo. We thought that a rodeo would be a good experience by providing us with a sense of true west entertainment. It turned out to be a fun evening; however it was interrupted near the end of the show by a thunderstorm, which sent everyone packing. We returned to the campground to find our tent in a heap. We re-erected the tent only to find that the canvas had funneled a lot of water onto our possessions including some of our bedding. I had to keep promoting these slight setbacks as part of what I called "an overall wonderful experience." I suggested that someday we all would have great memories of camping and that few others ever have this opportunity. I was right, because we do remember these experiences -- especially the bad ones!

During the rest of this camping trip we experienced the breathtaking beauty of Yellowstone and The Grand Tetons. The kids were particularly excited about meeting Henry Winkler (The Fonz) at a restaurant we ate at one evening in Jackson Hole.

Prepaid Upgrade

Late one fall we planned a weekend camping trip to Whitewater State Park in southeastern Minnesota with our friends, Dale and Diane Pederson and their daughter Tanya. We had our tent and they had a pop-up Bethany camper. The temperatures dropped well into the freezing range and our portable propane heater couldn't keep up. We envied our friends in their relatively comfortable camper and the next day told them so.

Dale made an offer we couldn't refuse. He admitted that their camper was under-utilized as they only camped several times a year. He offered to give us half-ownership for half the price they had paid for it ($1,300). It wasn't hard to convince Liliane or the kids, and we began sharing without a single scheduling conflict for the two or three years of joint ownership.

Dale and Diane decided to move up in the camper world by purchasing a travel trailer, which they parked semi-permanently at a campground near the upper St. Croix River. We bought the other half-ownership of the Bethany camper for $650 and used it extensively for several years before selling it for the full original price. It was a huge upgrade from a tent, and provided us with many rewarding experiences. The camper had plenty of sleeping room for the five of us, an icebox, gas stove, gas furnace, dining table, kitchen sink and even a seldom used port-a-potty.



Bethany Camper

When Do We Get There Dad?

During our camping years we visited all 48 of the contiguous states, all of the southern Provinces of Canada from British Columbia to Nova Scotia and even made a camping trip to Mazatlan, Mexico. In the book on travel and camping I'll recount some of the more interesting events and experiences of these trips without detailing every stop, although I think I could. Our camping trips were very memorable to Liliane and me. It gave us the opportunity to really bond with the kids, to show them our country's natural wonders and great cities while educating them about other places, people and cultures.

Wilderness Excursions

Interspersed with family camping were two canoe trips. One, when John was a freshman in high school was to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area with a friend of mine, John Peterson, an experienced wilderness traveler.

The three of us drove to Grand Marais on the North Shore before heading inland on the Gunflint Trail where we picked up our supplies at the famed Gunflint Lodge. John Peterson was personally acquainted with the Kerfoot family, owners of the lodge and legends in this area. Over several days we canoed through lakes and rivers along the U.S. / Canadian border with some portages along the way. We ended up in huge Lake Saganaga where we picked up our car, which was shuttled there by the Gunflint Lodge. It was a terrific father/son bonding trip with some wonderful sights and experiences. We were fortunate to have a seasoned veteran to lead us on this most memorable excursion.

The second trip was to Quetico Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada. It was made in August of 1984 with a Washington D.C. friend, Tom Grahame, his friend from San Francisco, Mark Chin, John and I. I worked with Tom in 1979 while I was a Loaned Executive at the Department of Energy in Washington. Tom and Mark were experienced outdoorsmen as they had made several previous trips to the Boundary Waters / Quantico wilderness areas. This trip is completely documented in a booklet that Tom and I jointly wrote shortly after we returned. I will probably include all of it in my next book on travel and for now just cover some of the highlights.

We had a six-hour drive to Orr, Minnesota where our outfitter provided us with all the necessities for our weeklong canoeing adventure. From there we were driven to Crane Lake. After the outfitter ferried us, our canoes and equipment to Canadian customs we were on our own. During the week we travelled through Lac La Croix, Argo Lake, Ted Lake, Crooked Lake and many other smaller lakes and rivers. In some of the rivers we experienced rapids, which were somewhat treacherous but exhilarating for canoeists and also great places to fish.

There were many portages, but we handled them quite well. We caught all the fish we wanted and had some great meals. This area is very pristine and uninhabited. I can't recall how many other human beings we saw in the seven days we were in Quetico but there were very few. It is one of the most breathtakingly beautiful areas that I have ever viewed. Everything is striking including the ancient Indian pictographs that we spotted on lakeside cliffs.

On our final day we paddled to the Ranger station where we met our outfitter for a two-and-a-half-hour motorboat ride back across Lac La Croix to our origin near Crane Lake. Our outfitter told us that the ride back across this huge lake would have taken two-and-a-half days by canoe!

We enjoyed a sauna and ate some delicious hamburgers before getting into our car for our long drive back to Minneapolis. After a wonderful and relaxing evening at Pepito's, a local Mexican Restaurant, we slept comfortably before we ate breakfast at Embers, John's part-time employer. We then took Tom and Mark to the airport. They departed with the same feeling of accomplishment, camaraderie and fellowship that John and I experienced in this wonderful and memorable journey. I'm going to read the account in its entirety again, and so will you if you wish, when it appears in my book on travel and camping.

Close to Home

NSP had a campground near its Sherco Plant at Monticello called "Big Oaks." We usually camped there on the three major summer holidays. It is a very spacious and beautiful campground with nice facilities located right on the Mississippi River. We sometimes had guests or camped with friends on these occasions. Liliane's parents often accompanied us and as the kids got older they had their friends join us for weekends.

Moving On

We decided to end our camping days before we acted on an urge to upgrade to a travel trailer or motor home. The kids started to get more involved in teenage activities, school and work. They didn't want to part with friends for extended periods. Finally, we felt fulfilled and satisfied, having exhausted a very comprehensive list of desired travel goals. The camping experience created an environment for quality family time and bonding which everyone valued. Today we stay in motels and hotels.



Motel

"Camping is nature's way of promoting the motel business."

Dave Barry, 1947-

"John, what do you think this is - the Love Boat?!" **

Jack Schutz, 1939-

"When using a public campground a tuba placed on your picnic table will keep the campsites on either side vacant."

Anonymous

I now will have another goal when I complete this book. The book on travel and camping, which I have tentatively titled "Wish You Were Here", will be completed in my lifetime - God permitting. The Chapter on* ***Travel* *extends only through the years of travel with my parents. The travels, which Liliane and I have undertaken, will be chronicled in the new book.*

*** At John's urging I spent some time building a fire at our Big Oaks campground site. When the fire was at its roaring best John couldn't be found. Eventually, after the fire had retreated, he showed up with his girlfriend who had accompanied us that weekend. My first words upon seeing him are quoted above.*

Travel

The Great Dilemma

Similar to my experience with the chapter on Camping, I had written many pages of this chapter on ***Travel*** when I realized that to document all of our travels I would end up with a huge travelogue that would dominate the entire book and bore most readers. The chapter would still be voluminous if I merely provided the most basic details of our trips. Yet, I want to document these travels, as they constitute such a large and exciting part of our life. I concluded that the best way to deal with this dilemma would be to write a separate book on our travels which will also chronicle the majority of our camping trips.* Those interested in the details of that part of our life are probably few. Consequently, as stated earlier, the book will be written primarily for the personal satisfaction derived from recalling and documenting the many happy memories of our lifetime of travel.

There are a few exceptions relating to this resolution. Some of our trips are integral to other aspects of our life and have been at least partially included in earlier chapters. Excerpts of our first trip to Europe where Liliane and I were engaged, for example, are included in the chapter on ***Courtship.*** The chapter on ***Camping*** does not document individual trips. It merely chronicles the progression of the various forms of camping that we experienced. In this chapter I will also summarize a few travel experiences that were so unusual and memorable that they deserve special mention.

Finally, in this chapter I will address some of the travel that was done by, and with, my parents prior to my marriage to Liliane. As a precursor and, hopefully, a teaser for the travel and camping book I will include, at the conclusion of this chapter, a list of the countries that Liliane and I have visited in our 50 years of circling the globe.

Vacation Proclamation

My parents traveled infrequently, and then, only within the United States. Our most memorable family trip was taken in 1949 after mom and dad's proclamation that it might be "the last time that we could travel together as a family." That trip to the east coast included Washington D.C. (I was there on my 10th birthday) and New York City. It did prove to be our last trip together. Virgil was soon drafted into the army during the Korean conflict followed by his marriage to Mary in 1952, and Bev left home to attend nursing school at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester.

Our first night we stopped in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. I don't remember that stay but for one thing. Our evening meal was at a diner where I ordered a hamburger that, I swear, was the size of a small pancake. It protruded several inches outside the bun! My favorite food -- and big!

Some details of our trip are hazy but I do remember visiting Abraham Lincoln's massive tomb in Springfield, Illinois. While we were at the cemetery mom volunteered to walk back to the parking lot and drive our car closer so that we wouldn't all have such a long walk. While en route to pick us up she failed to see a rather large rock on the roadway that was set as a barrier to vehicle travel. She drove right over the rock which imbedded itself in the car's undercarriage. We had to call a towing service, which lifted the car and then dislodged the rock with some sort of lever. Mom, of course, denied any sort of transgression. Someone had laid a trap for her!

We stayed in quite rustic accommodations. At that time motels were not very prominent so we stayed primarily in cabins located in rural areas. I recall a rather lengthy drive on the Pennsylvania Turnpike, which was the forerunner of our modern-day Interstate Highways. This toll road was a marvelous thing to behold. There was no cross traffic and the highway had two lanes in each direction. Further, it was graded to avoid major curves and hills.

As an aside (which is also chronicled in the chapter on ***Humor***) one incident of our trip stands out. To pass the time while driving we would play a game where alternately each person would provide the initials of something they saw outside the car. It had to be something that was either in sight or regularly within view. I chose the

initials BOTW. The family guessed and guessed and finally gave up before I revealed the answer -- ***B***ugs ***O***n ***T***he ***W***indshield! There was a collective groan in the car followed by laughter.

Our visit to Washington D.C. was the highlight of our trip. I have a picture of myself standing on the Capitol steps on my 10th birthday. Seeing all the monuments and government buildings was a real thrill. Little did I know that in the future Washington would be my primary place of employment for nearly ten years.

We visited the U.S. Bureau of Engraving where we saw millions of dollars being printed at an astonishing rate. Dad was particularly impressed with this process.

As I recall, we stayed in a campground, which also had cabins and was located in southeast Washington near the confluence of the Potomac and Anacostia rivers. At night the fireflies were out in abundance. Since they were uncommon in Minnesota I found them fascinating. I located a mayonnaise-size jar with a lid and was able to capture several of them. I fell asleep while watching fireflies sparkle on the bureau.

Our next major stop was New York City. We stayed in a small hotel in Manhattan and visited most of the major tourist sites. The highlights for me was seeing St. Patrick's Cathedral and going to the observation deck at the top of the Empire State Building. Virgil recalls stopping at an intersection on Broadway Avenue to ask a policeman directing traffic how to find St. Patrick's Cathedral. He looked at our license plate, stopped traffic so that we could make a U-turn, and then directed us to the church.

The Empire State Building



St. Patrick's Cathedral



From New York City we drove across the state to Lake Erie and Lake Ontario where we were able to view Niagara Falls from both the U.S. and Canadian sides. We then drove through Ontario to Windsor where we again entered the United States at Detroit.

After crossing Michigan we boarded a car ferry at Muskegon for a trip across Lake Michigan to Racine/Kenosha. After visiting one of mom's Finke relatives in Kenosha, we were homeward bound. Mom and dad had arranged an ideal family vacation trip at the perfect time in our lives.

Travel Miscellany

Regional trips were made more often. Dad would make a journey to the Twin Cities a couple of times a year for hardware exhibitions and conventions or to visit the headquarters of hardware wholesale suppliers. I would sometimes accompany him along with mom. The trip would take about 5 hours as the highways went directly through all of the small towns en route. Dad would often question me, as an amusement, about the names of all

the towns between Adrian and the Twin Cities. I seemed to always miss one, usually Bingham Lake or Wilder, which were merely wide spots on the highway. When in Minneapolis we would usually stay at the Vendome Hotel. Ironically it was, prior to demolition, next door to the location of NSP's new headquarters building where I worked nearly my entire career.

Dad would usually visit Janney Semple Hill in Minneapolis and Farwell, Ozman, Kirk in St. Paul, two of his main wholesalers. The hardware conventions or exhibitions were usually held at the old Minneapolis Convention Center, also home to the Minneapolis Lakers or at the St. Paul Convention Center.

Sometimes dad would treat me to a sporting event such as a Minneapolis Laker or Minnesota Gopher basketball game. I remember seeing the All-American great Paul Giel play football for the Gophers at Memorial Stadium during one visit in the early 1950s.

I recall one daunting trip home from the Twin Cities. We encountered a sleet storm, which made driving treacherous and slow. Both mom and dad were anxious to get home so instead of stopping until conditions improved, dad purchased several sacks of water softener salt from a fellow hardware dealer in St. James. Loaded into our trunk, the several hundred pounds stabilized our ride home. Dad then sold the salt in his store. Clever man!

Most of our family trips took place over summer holidays such as Memorial Day, the Fourth of July or Labor Day. Sometimes we would even be gone from home for as long as a week, but these trips were primarily fishing outings. We stayed in rented cabins and would do our own cooking most of the time. I remember one stay at Green Lake in Spicer. We walked to the edge of town and picked some field corn for dinner -- yummy! I recall that the town was overrun by garter snakes at the time. Very creepy!

When I was a freshman in high school, my parents arranged to go on a trip to Lake Kabetogama in Northern Minnesota with the Dispanets. Their son Jim was a classmate of mine. On our drive we passed through Stearns County where Claire, the father, pointed out some woods where he procured moonshine (Minnesota 13) during prohibition. The Dispanets owned the famed Magnolia Steak House where we often ate on special occasions. Claire spent a short time in Federal Prison for his illegal dealings, which of course, were widespread at the time.

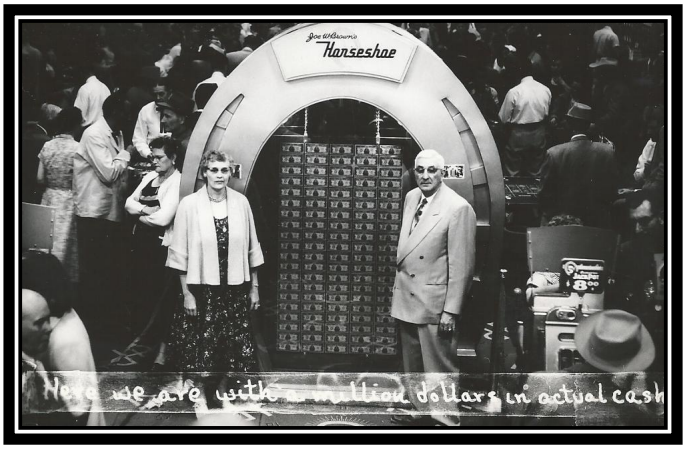
We stayed at a lodge on Lake Kabetogama, which was the most impressive lake I had ever seen. The water was crystal clear and there were many inlets and islands in this wooded wonderland. The lake is now located in Minnesota's only national park -- Voyageurs.

Another trip I recall was to the lakes area around Alexandria. We were boat fishing on Lake Le Homme Dieu when I caught a fairly small fish that I was encouraged to throw back. The water was so clear that when I released him I followed his movements and couldn't help but drop my line back in the water near him. Fish are not too smart -- he bit again! I caught the same fish within five minutes. On this same trip we visited a hardware store in Sacred Heart, Minnesota. Dad had met the proprietor at one of the trade shows and they became friends. When we were on these trips dad would take every opportunity to stop in local hardware stores just to "see how they did things."

In 1951 mom, dad, Bev and I visited Virgil in Dothan, Alabama where Virgil was stationed at Fort Rucker. Mary, Virgil's fiancé, also made the trip with us. Mary and Virgil were married the following year. All of us made a side trip to Panama City, Florida and the gulf beaches. Later, mom and dad, along with Mary's parents, made another trip to Alabama to visit the newly married couple.

Mom, dad and I took a couple of other motor trips when I was a junior in high school and again after my first or second year of college. Collectively the two trips included the states of Iowa, Nebraska, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, California, Utah, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota.

The first of those trips was prompted by a desire to visit Bev, Ron and their recently born daughter, Debbie, in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Ron, an army conscript, was stationed at the nearby White Sands Proving Grounds. We took a side trip to Ciudad Juarez in Mexico to see a bull fight before we headed toward the West Coast via Las Vegas. One of the more memorable aspects of this trip was the difficulty Dad and I had to convince mom to make the Las Vegas stop. Once we were there, however, she didn't want to leave. Mom was enamored by the glitz and gambling. I was only 16 at the time so we were asked to leave a number of casinos. Mom and dad returned To Las Vegas in 1969 on a trip I arranged with a travel agent friend of mine. I think that was the only time that they traveled by airplane.



Mom and dad pictured in Las Vegas' Horseshoe Casino in 1956. They are posing with one million dollars, which was a lot of money then – now, not so much. Note how they are dressed. This was accepted casino wear and, incidentally, what one would wear when traveling by airplane at the time.

The second trip, following my first or second year in college was prompted by my desire to see a girlfriend, who had recently moved to San Francisco. That part of the trip was a bust as she had already moved on to another relationship. I'm glad she did.

I do regret that mom and dad never took a trip outside of North America although we asked them to accompany us on some of our many European trips. Mom didn't like to be away from home for extended periods. She clearly wasn't the origin of my nomadic genes.

Travel Tremors

Earlier I promised to provide a summary of a travel experience that was so unusual and memorable that it deserves a special mention in this chapter. It occurred in 2011 while we were on a nine-week trip in the Far East. I sent an e-mail to our friends and relatives to relate details of the incident. Our General Manager at Midland Hills Country Club received the e-mail. He asked and received our permission to publish it in the club newsletter.

The Schutz's Adventure in Japan

Hi Everyone,

We're back in the U.S.A. happy to be standing on terra firma again!
Following a 28-day cruise, we disembarked the Ocean Princess early a.m. last Tuesday, March 8th in Osaka, Japan. We took the bullet train to Tokyo the same day averaging 136 M.P.H. including 5 stops. After 3 wonderful days in Tokyo we arrived at Narita Airport early on Friday afternoon. After checking in, going through inspections etc. we awaited our 4:35 p.m. American Airlines flight from a restaurant where we could see the gate we were to leave from. Our plane had not arrived yet at 2:45 p.m. when we were startled with the scariest moment of our lives! Initially, I noticed the water in my drinking glass starting to ripple. Then we heard a quiet

rumble that kept growing in intensity as the room started shaking. We got up and headed for a large pillar that we thought would afford us better safety, but the floor wasn't where we put our feet. The freight train-sounding rumble and shaking intensity kept growing as dishes and other objects started flying around. People were screaming and running in all directions. Liliane was concerned that we were standing near an outside window that might break. Although most new buildings in Japan are built to withstand earthquakes, they are not earthquake proof. The initial severe quake lasted several minutes and then it and the roaring stopped.

We were ordered to muster stations in the basement and then ushered out to the tarmac. Electrical power was limited. (No elevators or escalators etc.) As we stood on the tarmac we noticed that all traffic, air and other, had completely stopped. Aircraft that were taxiing stopped right where they were. Aftershocks, some severe, continued regularly. The indicator of severity became, as we defined it, the distance that the wingtips of a parked aircraft next to us would rise and fall as the aftershocks continued. My guess is that the highest arc swing of the wingtips was 3 to 4 feet.

As day turned to night and the temperature kept dropping, they pulled up some busses and allowed pregnant women, children and the elderly to board them. Surprise, surprise, we were candidates! We spent approximately two hours on the tarmac and another two hours in the bus, before they allowed us back into the muster area. It was so packed with people that there was hardly room to turn around. Needless to say, the toilets were busy for a while. The various airline and disaster relief personnel brought us blankets and some airline snacks. It was now quite cold, even inside, as the H.V.A.C. systems were inoperable due to electrical outages.

Everyone started to look for places to spend the night on the concrete floors. We had no means of communications, as the cell phones and Wi-Fi were inoperable as well. We were given no information, but that was understandable as there were people in far greater crisis than us. Our fellow refuges and we had nothing but our carry-on bags to find some degree of comfort. A gentleman from Saipan shared some sleeping pills with us and we were able to get some sleep between continuing aftershocks.

Around 4 a.m. there seemed to be a little bustle among the crowd. Wi-Fi was restored and those with laptops were frantically typing to get out their status to loved ones. A woman from South America let me use hers for a few minutes so I could reassure our kids as I (correctly) assumed that they would be very concerned.

When morning came and the reports and rumors circulated, we anticipated getting additional bad news about our status. We were not disappointed! After waiting in line for hours AA informed us that the earliest we could leave Narita would be next Wednesday on the same flight we had scheduled. They did give us a note, written in Japanese that said, I assume, that AA would honor any airline flight with a ticket exchange if we could find one leaving earlier. The schedule boards were lit up with "cancelled" although a few planes were coming and going. The other flights that were potentials for Los Angeles, our destination, were filled to capacity with 50-100 on standby. We decided to get a hotel and wait it out. Surprise! All hotels were filled to capacity and we had no way to get to them anyway. Apparently, airline employees filled them all as they were needed at the airport and could not get home. Sleeping for four more nights on a concrete floor, with no food (they had run out and had no means of getting more) seemed like a bad idea, so in desperation I borrowed a cell phone and called Mami, a volunteer guide, who had shown us the highlights of Tokyo on Wednesday. After a few conversations with her, she told us that she procured a hotel room near her home and that she and her husband would take the train, a 4-hour trip, to pick us up when service resumed. I couldn't stand the thought of this huge sacrifice and, with Liliane's urging, I resumed looking for alternatives.

*After a long stand in line, I spoke to a representative of Asiana, a Korean airline that had a flight to L.A. through Inchon/Seoul, Korea. Unfortunately, the segment to L.A. had only one open seat. The next day was available, but they had no flights to Inchon/Seoul. The representative was very sympathetic, especially after I told her that Liliane and I were running out of out medications (true!). Pharmacies were not readily available! She offered to make some calls to friends in other airlines. After awhile she said we could fly to L.A. on a Korean Airlines flight at 4 o-clock that afternoon, except, I held my breath; we would not be able to sit together! I almost hugged her! A miracle! When we lifted off the tarmac, I commented that I was never so happy to have solid **AIR** beneath us.*

So there is the story of our saga. Liliane always says that I thrive on taking chances and stretching our adventures when we travel. I would not have wished for this adventure, but we survived Japan's worst ever and the 5th most severe earthquake in the world since 1900 (9.0 Richter scale) and are thankful to God for our safety. We will fill you in on the peaceful other 50 days of our trip later. You may resume your e-mails to us, as we will be in Palm Desert for the next several weeks.

Love, Jack and Liliane Schutz

Climb Every Mountain

The travel book that I plan to write will cover our worldwide travels to the following countries. The list, hopefully, will continue to grow.



Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Indonesia, Argentina, Aruba, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Bermuda, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Falkland Islands, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Vatican City, Venezuela, Vietnam, Virgin Islands, Yugoslavia.

"The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page."

Saint Augustine, 354-430

"Once you have traveled, the voyage never ends, but is played out over and over again in the quietest chambers. The mind can never break off from the journey."

Pat Conroy, 1945-

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore, Dream, And Discover."

Mark Twain, 1835-1910

** I now will have another goal when I finish this book. A detailed book on travel and camping, which I have tentatively titled **Wish You Were Here** will be completed in my lifetime – God permitting.*

Food and Drink

My mom was a great cook and, for the most part, I liked everything she made. Our meals were typically German and therefore heavy on meat and potatoes. Mom had a very sizeable garden where she grew all the usual vegetables including many potatoes. Our home was on a large parcel that was two lots in length. At the east end dad had several horseradish plants. Every spring we would dig up the roots of this pungent plant. I didn't care for horseradish but dad loved it. We also had plenty of rhubarb, also a perennial, but available only in the spring.

Every spring we would drive to the country and hunt for asparagus, which grew wild in the ditches. Mom had a terrific eye for it and when it was in season we always had asparagus in abundance.

We would get our eggs and chickens from farmer friends. The chickens were purchased live and sometimes I would help mom behead them in our back yard.

I remember visiting the farm home of my dad's sister, Aunt Mollie and her husband Uncle Ben. I would help her churn butter on occasion, which I thought was fascinating and fun.

I Like It

Our local creamery delivered our milk. It came in bottles with cardboard caps. Before homogenization, the cream migrated to the upper neck of the bottle. It was then be poured off to be used for cooking, coffee etc. If the bottles weren't brought in quickly in the winter, the milk would start to freeze, expand, and shove the cap off the bottle exposing a 2-4 inch curved, circular, frozen shaft of cream. Although milk is probably the food item that I would select if stranded on a desert island with only one choice, it was not as appetizing when many glasses of milk would contain little lumps of cream that were not properly separated from the milk.

My other most favorite food was, and still is -- hamburger! I never tire of eating it in almost all forms such as hot dishes, meat loaf (Liliane makes the best) and even raw (tartare). But nothing is better than a plain old-fashioned medium-rare hamburger with raw Vidalia onions and lots of ketchup. Yummy!



As mentioned in the chapter on Adrian, Saturday evenings were special. The stores were open, so after my once-a-week bath I would ride downtown with dad and see a movie at the King Theatre. After that I would cross the street to the Adrian Cafe and order a hamburger and a bottle of Nesbitt's Orange Soda for a total of 25 cents (the movie cost 9 cents). Mrs. Kemper always brought the hamburger with the top half of the bun off so that you could see the pad of butter she had put on top. To die for!



Right next to the theater was a very small restaurant owned by a Mrs. Viesmann. Her specialty, at least for me, was Sloppy Joes (I told you I liked anything with hamburger). The best way to eat her Sloppy Joes was with chocolate milk. To this day that combo is irresistible to me.

At home, I got hooked on a food that is rarely eaten today, but was quite popular in my youth, particularly in German circles. Braunschweiger (liverwurst) was a food that I couldn't get enough of. Mom always had some around, as the whole family, particularly dad, liked it too. No one could figure out how I got so hooked on this particular snack food, but I was definitely addicted to it. One day I took a package out of the Frigidaire (all refrigerators were “Frigidaires” even if that was not the actual brand) and was ready to eat when I came close to vomiting. I couldn't stand to see, smell or think about Braunschweiger for a long time. I was probably in my 30s before I would even try it again and then I found it to be only mildly appetizing. In recent years I have returned to liking it a lot. We snack on it regularly, but my craving is under control.

When I was in high school, I became somewhat superstitious about what I ate before basketball games. My pre-game dinner was always tomato soup and a grilled cheese sandwich. I liked that combo then and still do today.

I Don't Like It

One of the few foods that I refuse to eat is oysters in any form. Another is liver -- but remember -- I love liverwurst. Go figure.

My dad and brother predictably encouraged my abhorrence to oysters through their method of eating oyster stew. This revolting food was always the main entree in our Christmas Eve meal. When I was first introduced to these disgusting, slimy, bivalve mollusks, I almost lost it before even trying one. The issue was definitely settled when dad and Virgil pretended that they were still alive in their stomachs and were kinda flopping around! Virgil and his family still have oyster stew every Christmas Eve. We do not!

Speaking of yucky food . . . as a merchant in Adrian, dad felt obligated to attend all the church dinners, which were held annually. The Lutheran church had a lutefisk dinner. For those of you unfamiliar with Lutefisk, it is made from dried whitefish usually prepared with lye in a sequence of particular treatments and steamed or baked conventionally and usually served with melted butter. A Norwegian dish, it is usually accompanied with lefse, a traditional soft, Norwegian flatbread made out of potato, milk and flour and cooked on a griddle. It looks and tastes somewhat like a conventional pancake. Dad seemed to like any fish so he didn't mind attending this annual dinner but he had difficulty getting someone to go with him. I was often asked to go along and I complied because I liked lefse smothered with butter and sugar. I skipped the Lutefisk after trying it.

Many years later we had some Norwegian neighbors living across the alley from our Portland Avenue home. Paul and Barb Henderson invited us and other neighbors to a Christmastime brunch, which featured a very large variety of rather exotic foods, but the central featured food was -- Lutefisk! I deftly managed to load up my plate without taking any Lutefisk but Paul busted me. He asked if I didn't want to try the lutefisk. I responded, "Paul, I suppose as a Norwegian you have grown up with lutefisk and that's why you like it so much." He said "Jack, who the h--- said I like it -- I just eat it because I'm Norwegian and it's expected of me!"

Slinking And Drinking

When I was in high school, drinking alcohol was allowed at age 18 in South Dakota and you could get by at age 16 since they rarely checked I.Ds. Occasionally a group of guys would pile into a car and drive to Sioux Falls for an evening of revelry in one of the many beer joints. Concerned about highway patrol cars on the most direct route home (old Highway 16), we would wind our way through little out-of-the-way towns to get back to Adrian.

Somehow my dad, and probably other parents as well, found out about our excursions and dad confronted me. "I understand you and your friends like to drink beer?" I hedged a little but admitted that we did. "I know you also like to play poker because you've played at our house on occasion, so I have a proposal. I'll buy the beer and you invite your friends over for an evening of moderate, chaperoned drinking and card playing." Whoosh -- with that one sentence dad took all the fun out of, what we thought, was a covert operation, meant to get by the law -- and our parents. We never again made our drinking trips to Sioux Falls. By the time we were of age, we had graduated and the gang had all but disbanded into our respective new lives. Our past drinking and driving capers were just a memory. Dad was so wise.

We also started attending dances while in high school. Most of the ballrooms had a policy of BYOB (Bring your own bottle). It wasn't difficult to get liquor as someone, never parents, of legal age would provide it for us. Virgil remembers that an employee of the Post Office in Hatfield used to sell booze out the back door on dance nights when the liquor stores were closed.

My first experience with "hard liquor" was at one of these dances at the Hollyhock Ballroom in that small town of Hatfield near Pipestone. A group of us drove to the dance on a Saturday night and we started drinking whiskey sours. That was a popular drink at the time, and they tasted pretty good. One of us had the sense of not drinking too much, and he drove us home. The only thing I can remember of that trip home was getting shoved out of the car when it reached the end of our driveway. I must have been pretty noisy in my entrance to our house, but I made it to my upstairs bedroom before passing out. The next morning I awoke to hear my parents

talking in the kitchen. They were about to leave for Sunday Mass without me. Unheard of! The fact that they didn't check on me, scold me or get me up drove me crazy. I was so tortured with guilt that, in time, I recognized that their silence was my punishment. We never talked about it, but in the nearly sixty years since that incident I have never had, nor desired, another whiskey sour! My parents were wise.

Early in our marriage, Liliane and I used to drink Cuba Libres (rum and coke), Screwdrivers, Tom Collins and occasionally other concoctions such as a Sidecar or Fuzzy Navel. Liliane then started drinking wine while I remained a rather eclectic drinker. I sometimes drink beer, but mostly in the summertime. Today I have pretty much settled into drinking almost exclusively Brandy Manhattans although I'll have an occasional Screwdriver or a Gin & Tonic. Liliane's favorite wine is Chardonnay. We make frequent trips to Trader Joe's for cases of their famous "Three Buck Chuck." A memory spark just caught my attention. Pleeeeease don't get me started. Oh-oh -- too late!

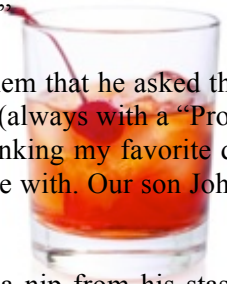


The topic of "Three Buck Chuck" (it's Two Buck Chuck in California) presents me with the opportunity to bring a few of my strong feelings and prejudices about drink into the open. The following was an ABC News report on a blind taste test of California wines. "The connoisseurs may cringe, the snobs may even sob, but the judges have spoken: California's best chardonnay costs less than $3. Charles Shaw Chardonnay, better known as "Two Buck Chuck," beat hundreds of other wines and was named the top prize in a prestigious tasting competition in California. The characteristics that we look for in our gold medal winner … a nice creamy butter, fruity … it was a delight to taste," said California State Fair Commercial Wine Competition judge Michael Williams. The affordable wine beat out 350 other California chardonnays to win the double gold. Second place went to an $18 bottle, and the most expensive wines at the event, at the price of $55, didn't even medal.

I believe similar results would be found for liquors of all types. The much more expensive "label" liquors are, after all, chemically identical to their cheaper cousins, albeit they are possibly tweaked in the distillation process so perhaps an imbiber's first drink may taste better. After that who notices the difference or cares? I think James Bond started the whole drink snobbery thing with his martini request (medium dry. . . shaken, not stirred). The same holds true for prescription drugs (the active ingredients in generic drugs are identical as in brand-name drugs), and bottled water, which I'm sure, comes out of a hose in some factory while the owners laugh all the way to the bank. There, I've said it, and no one can ever call me a label snob when referring to food, drink, clothing or cars.

The World's Best Drink

I introduced my father and Virgil to brandy manhattans, my favorite cocktail, in the 1960s. It became their favorite drink as well. Dad was not a big drinker but he enjoyed social drinking and cocktails before dinner. He made fun of his poker club members for drinking scotch, which he said, "tasted like medicine." He always maintained that blackberry brandy was the liquid equivalent of "an apple a day."



I also introduced Liliane's dad to brandy manhattans. He became so fond of them that he asked the doctor if he could have one while lying on his deathbed. I shared one with him at that time (always with a "Prosit!") and had another in his hospital room with relatives shortly after his passing. I miss drinking my favorite drink with my father and father-in-law but recently I found someone new to share this pleasure with. Our son John has become quite fond of brandy manhattans also. I'm so proud!

It was fun watching dad in his later years sneak into their basement to take a nip from his stash in what we called the "fruit room". I'm not sure why he tried to hide this activity since no one, to my knowledge, would have begrudged him a drink at any time. Perhaps he did it because he thought he might be criticized for imbibing at a certain time of day (anytime) or simply because it was exhilarating to think he was getting by with something. Ironically, the latter was my rationale for drinking while hiding it from dad in my teenage years.

From Farm, Garden, Lake, Or Field To Table

Because we had so many relatives that lived on farms, butchering beef or pork was a large, extended family communal, undertaking. Usually the butchering would take place on a farm, but there were a number of occasions when hogs were butchered in the hardware store basement. Sausages were made from a shared sausage-maker and meat was smoked at either a farm smokehouse or at the town meat market. The sausage maker was used by most of my relatives. I still think that the sausage we made was the best I have ever tasted.

Prior to home freezers being common, most people had rented freezer-lockers at the local meat market. This is where we kept the beef, pork, chicken and fish that we had prepared and packaged in various cuts. Dad would just walk across the street to Egan's Meat Market and take what mom had ordered for dinner from our rented freezer compartment.

As I mentioned earlier, our German heritage and acquired tastes caused us to rely heavily on meat and potatoes. We still carry on dad's custom of saying grace before all meals when potatoes are served – at that time – basically every meal! A family favorite potato concoction was what dad called qualmentia (sp?). After the small boiled potatoes are smashed with a fork, cream or sour cream and lots of diced raw onions are added with salt and pepper to taste.

We always had good vegetables, grown in our own garden. About half the peas made it from garden to house; we shucked and ate them while picking. When we finally got an in-home freezer, we could have home grown vegetables year-round.

Our family had one odd custom. We all put salt and pepper on cantaloupe before eating. When I'm questioned about this unusual practice, I always say, "Don't knock it until you've tried it." It brings out the melon flavor and tempers the sweetness, not unlike the current trendy use of sea salt in chocolate products.

As mentioned in the chapter on ***Hunting, Fishing and Boating***, we always had abundant game from hunting along with fish in our diet. These wholesome foods along with the butchered livestock and the harvested vegetables supplied almost all our needs. Even bread was routinely baked. Grocery stores supplied only those indispensable products that weren't routinely available from our bountiful home grown or locally bought provisions.

Mom made great pancakes, caramel rolls and pies. She made my favorite pie which was – and still is – sour cream raisin.* When we visit Virgil and Mary I often boldly request this pie, which is incredible.

Dad introduced us to a treat we all loved that should have instantaneously slammed our arteries shut. We had access to wonderful farm bacon, which we would have for Sunday breakfasts along with eggs, potatoes, and sometimes – pancakes. The pan-fried bacon would leave a residue of grease, and bacon crumbs. After we had completed our breakfast we would take a piece of bread and soak it in the cast iron pan, picking up the grease and bacon crumbs. We would then pour Karo syrup on the bread and eat the concoction with a fork. It was delicious, but as I said, it's a wonder we didn't have instant heart attacks!

Digestible Comestibles

In college I had wonderful meals as I spent the first two years living with Bev and Ron, initially in St. Anthony Village and then in Bloomington. Bev is a wonderful cook and even after I moved out of their home to live on campus I would enthusiastically accept any meal invitations. Our campus meals were tolerable, but very basic.

During college my three housemates and I would share cooking duties when we would have meals together which was a rather infrequent occurrence. Our varying schedules often conflicted with dinner times. Each of us would buy our own food and keep it separated for our personal consumption on the honor system. I would eat a lot of tuna and canned vegetables. I would often create something out of my favorite food – hamburger.

* Sorry Glor. Your peach pie is close - but a solid second.

We would occasionally eat out. Burgers, pizzas and other fast foods were either eaten at the restaurant or brought home. When we made meals together, they would usually consist of hot dishes or stews in massive quantities.

When I started dating Liliane we would frequent a bar/restaurant called the "Pine Tavern" on East Hennepin near Central Avenue. It had an "up north" motif with no windows so it was rather dark but the food was great. As a special treat we would sometimes have lobster tail which was, surprisingly, not very expensive. The Pine Tavern burnt to the ground after we left college but was replaced by “The Legend,” a sports bar, which we still frequent.

I sometimes ate at a lunch counter at Gray's Drugstore in Dinkytown. They had good, inexpensive meals and an interesting, somewhat eccentric, clientele, which provided entertainment at no cost. Several mathematics professors from the Institute of Technology would frequent Gray’s. One was a pudgy Chinese man who always wore untied sneakers so the laces dragged while he walked. Another was a professor who looked exactly like Harpo Marx. The two of them would argue continuously about math theories. I couldn’t understand the arguments of course but I very much enjoyed watching the discourse. One time I sat near “Harpo” who on this day was unaccompanied. While awaiting his food he kept taking napkins from the holder and writing formulas on them. He would write for a while then crumple the napkin in anger and start anew. He was just finishing one of his silent tirades when his food arrived. He tossed down a couple of bills and left in a storm leaving his food untouched!

A couple of blocks from the Pine Tavern there was a White Castle located at Central and University Avenues. We often frequented it after an evening of drinking. "Gut Bombs" or "Sliders" really helped settle our stomachs and prevented hangovers -- at least we thought so.

Another treat we would occasionally enjoy was a "La La Palooza,” a huge multi-scoop ice cream sundae with many different toppings, whipped cream and a cherry. It was the featured treat at all Bridgeman Restaurants. It was so large that it was usually shared. If you ate it yourself you would get a certificate. I think I still have one around here someplace.

My roommates and I would drink, usually beer, at a number of campus bars. The Big Ten, Mannings, Stub and Herbs, and one favorite located between the railroad tracks a couple of blocks from our Fulton Street college home. Bambi’s was a very unusual drinking establishment. The owner, Don, related that he only wanted to break even after paying all his personal and business expenses. He lived in the rear of the building so his expenses were minimal. Each month he would tally his receipts and expenses and any excess would be used to supply free beer on a Sunday evening for regular patrons until his books balanced at zero profit. We easily qualified for his largesse. One time he overdid his generosity and failed to pay some bills. At that time Don told us that we could only buy bottled beer because the city had shut off his water for nonpayment and he couldn't wash the glasses!

Don was rather eccentric in other ways as well. One evening we were sitting in a booth drinking when we heard this loud report from a pistol. We all ducked until we heard uproarious laughter from behind the bar. On a dare Don had shot the eye out of a walleye on a Hamms beer advertising sign hanging on one of the walls. He certainly was a colorful character.

At Viking games we would always bring a flask of "Schnapps" to keep us warm on the bleak tundra of Met Stadium. A few fans would overdo it, but generally they were respectful, unlike many patrons of current-day professional sporting events.

Feeding The Family

In the early years of our marriage after the children were born we would rarely eat out except for the occasional evening with the kids at Burger King.

We had a few dining rituals that we faithfully adhered to. Sunday evenings were almost exclusively homemade pizza night. We made two cookie sheets of pizza using Chef Boyardee dough mixture, which came in a box along with a can of sauce. We added hamburger, onions, green peppers and mushrooms. I still think they were the best pizzas ever, but preparation took a lot of time.

Saturday evenings after our routine baths (a ritual from my childhood) we would all gather in our family room for a meal and an evening of TV viewing -- usually a show like “Love Boat.” The meals were varied but we often had barbecued ribs, Daddy's potatoes (my special baked concoction of layered, sliced potatoes with onions, salt, pepper and butter). Meat loaf (Liliane makes the world's best), pork chops, spaghetti, lasagna and, naturally, hamburgers were also regular meals. We would also occasionally enjoy a couple of other German dishes; Raclett was a meat, potatoes, cheese and pickles concoction with ingredients personally selected and cooked on a special electric on-table grill. We also had fondue, which is considered a Swiss creation, but it was German at our house.

On special occasions such as Christmas Eve we would have lobster tail, which I purchased from a wholesale company through my cousin Ron, who, at the time, owned several restaurants. A typical cold-water 8 to 10 ounce lobster tail would cost one to two dollars. I wish we could still find a deal like that.

On Christmas Day we would always have rouladen with dumplings and red cabbage, an all-German meal, which is still our once-a-year delight. Our hors d’oeuvres were always Pirogen, a German/Latvian pastry treat. It is a small turnover or dumpling filled with bacon or ground beef and onion wrapped in dough before baking. It is everyone's favorite comfort food. Liliane’s mom made hundreds of them every year and we still have them annually as the tradition has been passed to our children. Making them is laborious and very messy but fun! They are best made at a “Pirogen Party” with competition between families. Liliane and I are observers and judges. It’s a tough job but somebody has to do it. Each year, it seems, there is a different winner. That helps to maintain a competitive interest so that the tradition is assured of continuity.



Pirogen

"It is a scientific fact that your body will not absorb cholesterol if you take it from another person's plate."

"Without question, the greatest invention in the history of mankind is beer. Oh, I grant you that the wheel was also a fine invention, but the wheel does not go nearly as well with pizza."

Dave Barry, 1947-

"I always cook with wine. Sometimes I even add it to the food."

W.C. Fields, 1880-1946

“My Mother’s menu consisted of two choices: Take it or Leave it.”

Buddy Hackett, 1924-2003

“Jack, don’t eat that - it’s not good for you!”

Liliane Schutz, 1942-

“Oh yes it is – it makes me feeeel good!”

Jack Schutz, 1939-

Oops!

I chose this title because it best describes a number of incidents that occurred over the years that, at the time, I wish hadn't happened. Most of these incidents could also be appropriately included in ***Humor***, ***Camping*** or other chapters. Since most of these regrettable episodes were of my doing, I chose to try to hide them here. A chapter with a weird title might be ignored by sophisticated readers and only lightly perused by those who are mildly interested. For those who might consider teasing me about these – forget it! I have long ago established plausible deniability.

The Sandpit Pond

In the chapter on "Adrian" you have read that at quite an early age boys were allowed to roam freely in and around town, finding different ways to pass the time. Our only restriction was that we were to report home when the town fire siren sounded at noon. That requirement let our parents know that we were okay and provided us a break for eating lunch.

One day my friend Dave Nealy and I wandered to an active sandpit about a mile west of Adrian. The sandpit had various piles of gravel and sand, which had been sorted by size primarily for sale to companies using the material for roadwork or to individuals for various projects. There also was a small office located near a very deep pond created by excavating the material. The circular pond was probably about 100 yards in diameter. Once while visiting the sandpit with dad, he warned me about going near it as the water was freezing cold and very deep.

Dave and I found a wood pallet near the edge of the pond and decided it would be fun to float on it. A couple of boards, also found nearby, would work great as paddles. We launched the pallet, climbed on and paddled to the center of the pond even after finding that our makeshift raft was semi-submerged from our weight. We had to balance perfectly to keep from capsizing! Even with wet feet, we found the experience rather exhilarating until we sighted something that struck us with terror. One of the Schutz Hardware pickup trucks, which my dad usually drove, came onto the property and stopped at the office. I was sure that someone in the office who knew us (everyone knew everyone in Adrian) had called my dad after seeing us on the pond! **Oops!** I was already pondering the type of punishment (really bad) that would be coming as a result of my disobedience. Dave and I just sat on our raft shivering partially from the cold water and partially from trepidation and fear. I was hoping they would just rescue us and then quickly administer whatever punishment we deserved. We were surprised to see dad get back into the pickup, drive somewhere else on the property where he loaded some material, and then drive off. We had watched from the edge of the pit where we had hidden after slowly rowing back to shore. We were very grateful for our good fortune and we never, ever, went back to the sandpit again!



Great Balls Of Fire

On my seventh birthday I received my first "big boy" bike from my parents. It was a full-size men's bike, which didn't allow me to reach the pedals while sitting. I had to sort of "waddle" from one side to the other across the horizontal bar to pedal the bike. I was supposed to "grow into" the bike. The first time I tried riding my new bike I mounted it near our garage and headed down our driveway. Whee! I was having great fun until I approached the main highway and realized I didn't know how to stop. I redirected my course into our neighbor, Mama and Papa Wallrich's, front yard where I hit a tree head on. **Oops!**

I learned two lessons from that 15-second excursion:

1. Take lessons from a skilled person before attempting to operate any kind of mechanical apparatus.
2. Avoid, at all cost, actions that could lead to trauma of those dangly things between your legs. Mine hit the horizontal bar very hard and I was in agony for what seemed like hours. That was a never forgotten "testy" incident.

The Graceful Suitor

About two weeks prior to our marriage, Liliane and I were at her parents' home in Forest Lake. While goofing around I ended up chasing her for some reason. I thought I had her trapped on a sofa and made a dive for her. She adroitly avoided my lunge and my hand hit the hard wooden edge of the sofa with fingers extended. The pinkie finger on my right hand now was in an "L" formation, but not in the normal direction a knuckle bends **Oops!** I had to visit an emergency room, as it was a weekend. The doctor confirmed that I had a broken finger, which was splinted. If one looks closely at some of our wedding pictures, you can see me trying to hide this injury with little success. I still have a crooked finger.

Leg One in Hole A - Or - ?

In December of 1966 Mara and Maria were just eight months old. Liliane and I had a late invitation to a New Years Eve party but were unable to get a babysitter. In an unrelated telephone discussion with Liliane's cousin Juris, we casually mentioned our dilemma. He then offered his and his brother Andy's services for the evening as long as they had access to our liquor cabinet. Both were bachelors at the time so they had no special plans.

When they arrived at our home we gave them rudimentary instructions on feeding and diaper changing, pointed out the liquor cabinet and then left for the party.

When we returned around one a.m. they were both quite cheerful and told us that everything went very well. Just to be sure we checked on the girls and found that they had an unusual pallor. Upon further inspection we found that they both had one of the leg holes from their rubber pants around their waist. **Oops!** While Liliane and I went about changing them by putting both legs in leg holes, Juris and Andy were blaming each other for the faux paux. Neither of them would admit that perhaps their drinking was at least partially responsible.

Pocket Prohibition

I was somewhat athletic but I had two left feet when it came to dancing. Dancing was a popular social activity among our friends when we were in college and in the early years of our marriage. Liliane loved to dance while I did not care for dancing in general, but especially dances where the couple's bodies were separated - even for a few seconds. That restricted my dancing to "slow" and allowed my female companion to "lead". As you might have noted in the chapter on ***Entertainment***, the music played for "slow dancing" is also agreeable to me.

We danced at a number of local ballrooms including Schlief's Little City, in South St. Paul; the Prom in St. Paul; the Marigold in Minneapolis; and the Medina Ballroom in Hamel. All of them were BYOB.

One evening Liliane and I were to join friends for a dance at the Prom Ballroom, which was located in the Midway area of St. Paul. After we parked our car I grabbed our bottle of liquor from the trunk. I think it was rum as we were probably drinking Cuba Libra's, a popular cocktail at that time. I was wearing a trench coat that had one of those slits behind the side pocket so you could easily reach your trouser pockets. This is where I deposited our bottle thinking it was the coat pocket. **Oops!** The bottle fell to the sidewalk and broke into many pieces. Fortunately our friends were willing to share that evening, but we all probably drank less than normal. Not a bad thing.

Myopia – Jose* Can You See

On one of our camping trips, I found that I was always misplacing my reading glasses in our camper. I decided that one place where nobody would disturb them would be our infrequently used oven so I made a habit of placing them in there for safekeeping. Unfortunately, we did use the oven while camping in Mexico and midway through pre-heating the noxious odor reminded me that I had not removed my glasses. **Oops!** The plastic case had melted around the glasses and they were reduced to a worthless blob. Fortunately I had another pair of glasses in our car.

*We *were*, after all, in Mexico.

Working without a Net

In our country's bicentennial year of 1976 we went on a long camping trip that eventually took us to our planned and very appropriate Grand Canyon destination on the Fourth of July. As I was taking pictures from the south rim of the canyon my lens cap fell across the restraining barrier and down about eight feet onto a ledge -- **Oops!** It was so tantalizingly close that I decided to go around the barrier and retrieve it. Liliane became semi-hysterical which rubbed off on the kids. A crowd gathered to watch that nut (me) risk his life for a $1.50 lens cap. This event became the paradigm for "doing something dumb." Now, every time we leave on a trip, John's last words to me are, "Dad, don't do anything dumb."



The Grand Canyon

(Arrow Indicates Approximate Location of Lens Cap)

Politically Savvy

While working in Washington D.C. as NSP's Federal Affairs Manager, I often had to attend fundraisers for congressmen and senators. NSP's PAC would contribute money to their campaigns so our representation at the fundraisers was essential.

One very hot afternoon I had been making various agency and congressional stops on Capitol Hill prior to an early evening fundraiser being held at a lobbying firm's office. When I arrived, exhausted, thirsty and dripping from perspiration, I found that I was one of the first guests. The office had just been newly remodeled with the carpet installation completed just two hours earlier.

Everything was in disarray, as they had to make temporary accommodations for a bar, a food table and catering facilities. I saw that the bar was set up and an office employee had stationed himself as bartender. I was so thirsty that I ordered a screwdriver that I finished in about 30 seconds. I did notice that the unskilled bartender had made my drink with about a 50/50 mixture of orange juice and vodka. I didn't care -- I ordered another.

These two powerful drinks along with my somewhat dehydrated condition brought about a serious alteration in my perception and motor skills. I recognized what was happening to me and knew that I had to have some food -- immediately! I was the first person at the food table where I found all kinds of hors d'oeuvres to my liking. I felt that the best food for my rapidly deteriorating condition would be barbequed meatballs. I stabbed a couple of them with a toothpick, stuffed them in my mouth but in the process dropped one which hit the front of my white shirt on its way to the floor. **Oops!** The meatball then fell onto one of my shoes and finally to the newly installed, light-colored carpet. I gently nudged it under the table, leaving a telltale dark brown trail.

I headed for the unisex washroom to clean my soiled shirt. Since the office had just opened they did not yet have all the usual accessories for a washroom like towels. Instead they were using blue cocktail napkins. The blue completed a theme, which, I assume, included the colors of the guest of honor's alma mater, perhaps Michigan. I thought to myself, "Oh well, I'll just wet this napkin and wipe off the meatball stain." Now I had brown *and*

blue stains covering a much larger area of my shirt! I'm not sure whose alma mater I was honoring with that combination of colors.

I emerged from the washroom, carefully concealing the stains with my suit coat, which, thankfully, had escaped any damage from my graceful maneuvers. I then walked slowly and carefully out the door and headed directly for my apartment, where I collapsed on the couch.

Later that evening I tried to launder my shirt by rubbing the ugly stains with a bar of Ivory soap. Eureka, it worked perfectly! I called Liliane to tell her about my great discovery of using a common cleaning agent for such stains and we have since used it successfully on more than one occasion. As I recall, I didn't give Liliane the full details of my misadventure on that day until sometime later.

We Need a Passport? Tickets?

In 1998 Liliane and I were about to leave Athens for our flight home after spending two and one half months in Israel, Cyprus, Turkey, several Greek Islands and much of the Greek mainland. We had a very early six a.m. flight so we decided to get a hotel within a couple of miles of the airport. I spoke to our car rental company concerning our car return at that early hour and they told us to simply park in their lot and leave the keys in a drop box at their unattended booth in the terminal.

We made a dry run to the airport to familiarize ourselves with the route and to identify the proper drop location for our car. We then had a very restless night, as there were dozens of high school students staying at the hotel for what I assume was a “prom.” They partied loudly throughout the night.

We left for the airport in total darkness. I dropped Liliane at the terminal with our luggage and then parked and locked the car before dropping the keys in the lock box at the car rental booth in the terminal. I joined Liliane at the airline counter to check in. They asked for our tickets and passports. **Oops!** Perhaps it was my lack of sleep or anxiety about being on time but I had locked all our documents in the car. They were in a leather attaché case, which I had placed on the backseat and failed to see because of the darkness in the rental car parking lot.

I left Liliane with our luggage and went back to the car rental booth to see if it was now being attended or, if not, how I might otherwise retrieve the car keys. No one was there and a man in an adjacent booth told me that personnel from my car rental company would not arrive until much later. I examined the drop box and saw that it opened in the rear but was secured with a padlocked hasp. Four screws held the hasp. I asked the other attendant if he had a screwdriver that I could use. He spoke respectable English and told me that he did have a screwdriver but felt uncomfortable letting me use it for that purpose. I was now frantic as the time of our departure kept creeping closer. I noticed an airport policeman and approached him with my dilemma. He didn’t speak any English so I asked the attendant to translate my plan to open the box. After some very animated discussion between the two, the policeman finally relented.

I got the hasp off and opened the drop box only to find a pile of dozens of sets of keys. I took three sets (the limit set by the policeman) near the top of the heap and set out for the parking lot. Shazam! The very first set of keys I tried was luckily - ours. Now sweating profusely, I ran back into the airport with our papers and the keys. I put the keys back in the drop box and started running toward the check-in counter. Whoa - the policeman stopped me and made me go back and replace the hasp exactly as I had found it. He wouldn’t even let the other attendant do it for me.

Finally we got checked in and made it to the slightly delayed flight just as they were closing the doors. I was extremely chilled until my clothing started to dry. I have since been much more careful as I now create checklists to avoid similar misadventures.

Never On Sunday (Another Key Story)

During the winter/spring of 2013 we spent several weeks in Estero, Florida following our Cape Horn cruise from Buenos Aires to Santiago. On Easter Sunday we had two invitations for dinner. One was for early

afternoon at the home of Dale and Diane Pederson, longtime friends, who now live full time in Florida. The other was a late afternoon invitation from Ivars and Gloria who own a winter home in Pelican Bay Golf and River Club, the gated community where we were leasing. The dilemma was resolved when we decided to partake in both meals. Ouch!

While waiting for Liliane to get ready I decided to start packing our car for our move as our lease expired the next day. After packing some items in the far end of the trunk, Liliane arrived and we were ready to leave for the Pederson's when I couldn't locate the car keys. Upon reflection, I concluded that I had laid the keys inside the trunk to free my hands while arranging the trunk contents. **OOps!** Fortunately, I had unlocked the car doors and was able to access the car's manual to determine how to open the locked trunk. It described the process for accessing the trunk through the rear seat console opening where, supposedly, one could reach in and pull a lever located on the trunk lid. Unfortunately, I had carefully packed my golf clubs immediately adjacent to the access console door and they blocked my ability to reach into the trunk.

I called Dale and told him of our predicament. He offered to pick us up but we had plenty of time before they were planning to have dinner. He suggested that a last resort might be to take out the back seat, which was not described in the manual, or call a locksmith - but on Easter Sunday? I told Dale to stand by and I would keep trying.

Fortunately, the rear, lock end of the trunk was not yet filled with anything so I was able to turn my golf bag semi-parallel with the car. This allowed me to one-by-one remove the clubs from the golf bag through the small door behind the rear seat console. Now I could maneuver the bag enough to allow the full length of my arm to access the space. Unfortunately I could not locate the opener lever. I was quite sure I had laid the keys nearest the rear, lock end of the trunk, which was impossible to reach. I remembered however, that I had previously placed a large plastic storage bag on the floor of the trunk to protect the carpet. With the weight of my golf clubs removed, I was able to carefully pull the storage bag toward me and - voilà! - the keys rode along with the bag and I finally had them in my hands. Exhausted and sweaty, I called Dale and told him we were on our way. Our two meals that day following several sorely needed brandy manhattans, were exceptional. We will never forget that Easter Sunday. I'm now very careful about where I lay car keys.

Safari Skills

While in South Africa with Ivars and Gloria on one leg of our 2001 round-the-world trip, we experienced a flat tire on our rental car. We were in a relatively unpopulated area but, fortunately, we were able to stop on the nice hard-surfaced driveway of a farm entrance to change tires. While I operated the jack, Ivars started to remove the flat tire. He took the tire iron to unscrew the "lug nuts" from the wheel when he broke one of them off. It turned out that they were simulated plastic lug nuts on the wheel cap made to look authentic - **Oops!** We pried the wheel cover off where we found the "real" lug nuts and made the tire change. The car rental company never charged us for our screw-up. I kept the broken lug nut and gave it to Ivars years later on one of his birthdays. We had a good laugh and Ivars gained another moniker – "Nutcracker."

On this same trip we visited Tanzania where we enjoyed a wonderful safari. After flying from Capetown via Johannesburg we arrived in Dar es Salaam, the capital, where we had a reservation at a downtown Econo-Lodge Hotel. The cab took us through unpaved streets to the hotel, which was being fumigated so our choice of rooms was limited. Our bags were carried up three flights of stairs (there were no elevators) to the most disgusting hotel rooms we had ever seen. They were filthy, with soiled sheets, dusty furniture, torn shower curtains, etc. The doors had three sets of locks – on the outside! In addition we were told that the hotel did not have a restaurant. The area was very scary, even in daylight. We didn't see another tourist anywhere. We couldn't fathom going out at night to find a restaurant. The hotel was one of two recommended by our safari company. We chose this one because we were only staying one night, the name was familiar, and it was less expensive -- **Oops!**

Ivars and I left to find the Takim Safari's offices, which, we were told, were nearby. A 15 or 16-year-old English-speaking boy offered to take us there. We refused his offer but he kept following us and continued into the office with us.

I complained bitterly to one of the managers about our accommodations, and after much arguing he finally relented to have us moved to the other hotel they had suggested -- the Peacock. In addition, he offered to give us a tour of the city in one of their vans. We were eager to see the ruins of the U.S. Embassy which had been bombed by terrorists a couple of years earlier. The boy now became the interpreter for us and the driver, who didn't speak English.

After our tour we arrived at the Peacock Hotel, checked in and found it to be much more comfortable although the dated rooms looked much like those of a Holiday Inn circa 1957. However, the hotel did have a restaurant and it was located in a much better part of the city.

Ivars wanted to change some money needed for incidentals on our upcoming safari so he went with the driver and boy, who assured him that he knew where to make the exchange for Tanzanian money. Gloria, Liliane and I stayed in our respective rooms.

About an hour later we had a knock on our door from Ivars and Gloria. Gloria was incensed about the tale that Ivars had just related to her. The boy had the driver take them to a commercial area where Ivars gave him $100 to exchange for local currency. While Ivars and the driver waited, the boy went up some stairs into a building and never came back -- **Oops!** He had simply walked out the rear door of the building. Ivars, with his big heart, rationalized that the money would probably feed the boy's family for a year and considered it a generous tip. Glor had no such empathy.



Misplaced Memory

Of course there were many other incidents in which other family members and I made conspicuous, thoughtless and stupid mistakes. I don't want to embarrass them and, somehow nature has a way of protecting us from uncomfortable memories. I assert that further tales of my miscues are forever unavailable due to either selective amnesia or a permanent long-term memory loss. I'm elderly. That's how the Mayo Clinic describes me, so give me a break!

"The trouble with using experience as a guide is that the final exam often comes first and then the lesson."

Anonymous

"Good judgment comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgment."

Barry LePatner, 1947-

"Whenever there is a simple error that most laymen fall for, there is always a slightly more sophisticated version of the same problem that experts fall for."

Amos Tversky, 1937-1996

It's a Small World

Most of us have had surreal experiences that seem to defy odds. Some are merely remarkably amazing coincidences such as meeting friends in faraway places. This happened to us twice in the same place -- Schipol Airport in Amsterdam, and several other times in the U.S. and abroad.

Home Again

Another experience given much more detail in the chapter on ***Pets*** is the return of our dog Nippy after a two-year absence. He reunited with us at the Luverne swimming pool on a Sunday afternoon when mom, dad, and I saw him running toward us followed by a final leap into dad's chest. He had been with his adoptive caretakers ever since he wandered off from dad while they were hunting somewhere northwest of Adrian. Not only was the chance meeting at that location and time an incredible coincidence, but it became more astonishing when dad saw the people Nippy had been living with. He had wandered to Kenneth, which is about 16 miles from Adrian. There, the town's hardware dealer whom dad knew had rescued him!

Bad Timing

While this story is not a personal experience, it certainly is appropriate for this chapter. It is a narrative told to me by Liliane's father, Hermann, and is repeated in the chapter ***The Family Kauls***.

As the war ground to an end in the spring of 1945, Hermann and other members of his construction company had retreated to an area between Ulm and Augsburg in southwestern Germany. The allies were nearby and were attacking small pockets of German resistors in the area. One evening, Hermann was out for a walk on the outskirts of the small village of Hoselhurst when he saw a group of Allied soldiers approach a farm with the intent of capturing some of the retreating German military. Hermann saw a German soldier come out of a farm building where he was spotted by the Allied soldiers. They ordered him to surrender, and he raised his hands, one of which held a smoking pipe. It was construed to be a weapon and he was gunned down and presumably killed. It was 27 April 1945

When the war ended and Hermann returned home to Heilbronn, one of the first things he learned was that his brother-in-law, Erich Schwechheimer, Gretel's husband, had been killed on 27 April 1945 near the village of Hoselhurst. Further descriptions of his death gleaned from others convinced Hermann that he had actually seen the killing of his brother-in-law!

Such occurrences are rare, but two other experiences in my life are simply astounding, mind-boggling and well beyond mere coincidence.

Truly a Blood Relative

The first event occurred when I was twenty-one and a student at the University of Minnesota. I had a part-time job but I found that there was another way to help defray college expenses. I could get paid $15 for a pint of my blood, and I could do this once every month at the University Hospitals. I would drop by after classes and the procedure would take less than one hour.

On one of these occasions, I was in the middle of the blood-drawing procedure when a nurse came to me and asked if I was providing my blood for a relative. I told her that I was not. After about 10 minutes she returned and told me that my blood was going to be used for an open-heart surgery the next morning. The patient's name was John Schutz. I told her that her information must be mistaken, but she had already confirmed it twice. What are the odds? The same blood type, the time I chose to visit the blood bank, the schedule for his surgery, our identical names, all coming together in one huge coincidence?

I found out where Mr. Schutz was hospitalized for his pre-op exam and decided to visit him. He was in a private hospital room with his wife sitting at his bedside. We exchanged greetings and I related the incredible story that

led to our meeting. Even more remarkable -- he was a Mechanical Engineer from Milwaukee working for Allis Chalmers. My major was Mechanical Engineering.

We determined from some background discussion that we were probably not related. If we were it was certainly not a very close relationship. Had I had access to all the genealogical information that I now have at my disposal, I could have easily resolved the question. After our rather long conversation I wished John well with his surgery and departed.

After classes the next day I stopped by the hospital to find out the result of his surgery. I knew I would not be able to visit him, as he would probably be in the Critical Care Unit. I was told that Mr. Schutz had died on the operating table! I felt terrible about his death and was left with a peculiar feeling knowing that he probably died with some of my blood in his body.

Rain Forest to Adrian

Six degrees of separation is the theory that anyone on the planet can be connected to any other person through a chain of acquaintances that has no more than five intermediaries. I had such an experience while we, along with Ivars and Gloria, were on a 2004 Panama Canal cruise trip from Fort Lauderdale to Los Angeles aboard a Princess liner.

We learned quickly on our earlier cruises that shore excursions could be done much less expensively and with more control of the venue if we arranged them on our own. Most of the pre-arranged cruise line excursions are done with large numbers of passengers, which slows down the tour. They also take you to places such as markets (tourist traps), which you may not wish to visit. You have little control of the scheduled stops or the time spent in each.

On this trip we had a shore excursion at the Costa Rican port of Puntarenas. We arrived very early in the morning and had until 7 p.m. to tour the country.

When we disembarked, Ivars and I split up to interview the dozens of guides that were waiting for the opportunity to ply their trade. I soon spoke with a woman guide by the name of Doris Carvajal who spoke excellent English. She told me that she had a large van with a skilled driver and they would take us wherever we wished for the full day. She already had made a similar arrangement with two elderly Canadian ladies for the trip and told me that if the four of us would agree to join them, she would not solicit more passengers. The price was $40 per couple for the entire day! This was at least four times less expensive than what Princess was charging for what I suspect was an inferior tour. After receiving Ivars and Gloria's approval we set off to see as much of Costa Rica as possible in the approximately 10 hours before departure.

We visited some resorts, coffee plantations, rain forests and other attractions during the day. Occasionally we would see busloads of our fellow passengers, usually stopped at some tourist-trap market. We nixed any such stops in favor of more sightseeing

.

During the day we carried on conversations with Doris about Costa Rica and about her life experience. The following paraphrased conversations took place between Doris and me during the day. There were usually long breaks between the various conversations.

> **Jack:** *"So Doris, where did you learn to speak such good English?"*
>
> **Doris:** *"I met an exchange student from the United States while he was here in Costa Rica, and we fell in love. We were soon married and I lived with him in the U.S. where we had two children. Unfortunately, our marriage didn't work out, we divorced, and I moved back to Costa Rica. I eventually remarried and my second husband died two years ago."*
>
> **Jack:** *"I assume your children are still in the U.S. living with your ex husband. Do you ever see them?"*

Doris: *"Oh yes, my ex husband and I maintain a good relationship so I visit them every two years. I'll be going back next summer to be at my son's graduation from high school."*

Jack: *"Where did you live in the United States?"*

Doris: *"My ex husband and children still live in St. Paul, Minnesota."*

Jack: *"Wow! What a coincidence. The four of us live in the Twin Cities."*

Doris: *"Really? My son attends Tartan High School."*

Much later…

Jack: *"Doris, I don't know why I'm asking this, but what's the name of your ex husband?"*

Doris: *"His name is Tom Lais."*

Jack: *"Is that spelled L-a-i-s?"*

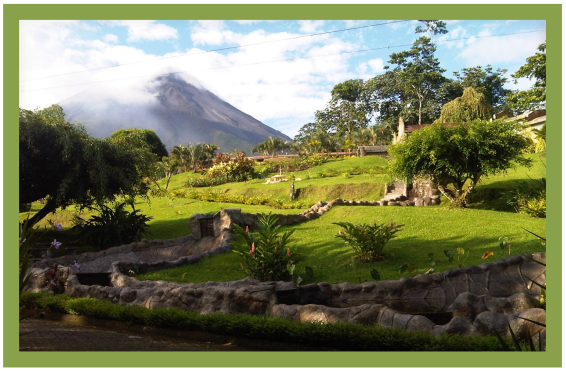
Doris: *"Yes, why do you ask?"*

Jack: *"Well, I don't think it is a very common name, but we had some Lais families in the small southwestern Minnesota town where I grew up."*

Doris: *"Could that possibly be Adrian, that pretty little town with the beautiful Catholic church on the hill?"*

Okay, that was too much to comprehend! We were in the middle of a Costa Rican rain forest talking to a local person who had been in my little town in Minnesota!

When we returned home I related the story to my brother, Virgil, who was more acquainted with the Lais family. He not only knew Tom's father, but his aunt and uncle as well. His uncle, William Lais, was just four months older than Virgil and attended St. Adrian School with him. It is, indeed, a small world!



Arenal Volcano
Costa Rico

Adrian
Population - 1300



"The probability of a certain set of circumstances coming together in a meaningful way is so low that it simply cannot be considered mere coincidence."

V.C. King

"Coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous."

Albert Einstein, 1879-1955

Auf Wiedersehen*

Our Formula

As Liliane and I are now in the autumn of our lives and all too quickly nearing winter, we seldom reflect on the few disappointments and sadness's of times past and much more frequently on the many times of great joy and fulfillment. We have found that happiness is not the staple of good fortune or worldly possessions, although we have been blessed with both. It's primarily a mental attitude that comes from appreciating what we have, instead of being despondent about what we don't have. It's a simple formula that has served us well.

The only major sad times in our lives occurred with the loss of our parents, other relatives and friends. Still, we can rejoice in the good memories accumulated during our years of companionship. We were able to take pleasure in the company of all four of our parents for many years as they all lived into their nineties -- a rare and blessed occurrence indeed.

Around the World

Just prior to our marriage we had the good fortune of being introduced to international travel. Liliane, as you have read, was an "international traveler" within days of her birth, but the circumstances surrounding that trek were not so pleasant.

We were both infatuated with the desire to navigate the world where we could experience different cultures, languages, spectacular vistas and, on occasion, investigate our family roots. These excursions have allowed us to explore the history of our planet and its amazing physical and architectural wonders. We have seen a multitude of natural wonders such as the Grand Canyon, Yangtze, Nile and Amazon rivers, Mounts Everest, Etna, Fuji, Table, Matterhorn, Kilimanjaro and Vesuvius, the Great Barrier Reef, Ngorongoro Crater, Bali, Cappadocia, Iguaçu Falls, the Serengeti, the Fjords of Norway and New Zealand, and southwestern Minnesota. Among the majestic man-made marvels we have visited are all of the great cathedrals of Europe, the Louvre, Hermitage, Vatican and Prado museums, the Taj Mahal, Mount Rushmore, Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Panama Canal, Halong Bay, the Acropolis, Hoover Dam, the Sphinx, the Parthenon, Neuschwanstein Castle, Palace of Versailles, the Eifel Tower, the Great Wall, Stonehenge, the Forbidden City, Machu Pichu, the Terra Cotta Warriors, the Great Pyramids of Giza and Adrian, Minnesota. Travel is seductive in its power to keep asking you to go further, become more adventuresome and visit again.

Early in our marriage we contemplated the sacrifices we were willing to make in order to accomplish this dream. We decided that putting off the purchase of furniture and other "stuff," would allow us to begin our travel ventures very soon. The willingness of Liliane's parents to watch our children for extended periods enabled us to take many trips to faraway lands. While we recognized and appreciated their sacrifice involved in that undertaking, it did afford them the opportunity to develop a grandparent/grandchild bonding that resulted in a warm and endearing co-relationship for the rest of their lives.

One rationalization for traveling in those early years was that "stuff" that most newlyweds buy wears out and goes out of style, but the memories that one might accumulate through travel would last a lifetime. Indeed, Liliane and I still spend much of our time reminiscing about our past journeys alone and with wonderful traveling companions. We have never regretted our decision to build these permanent memories and, although delayed, we eventually were also able to buy "stuff."

A Gratifying Profession

As stated in the chapter "***Career,"*** I spent my entire career with one employer, Northern States Power Company (NSP). That kind of longevity with one company was a very rare occurrence for employees during my working years -- but even more so now. My chosen profession as a Mechanical Engineer gave me the necessary foundation to accomplish the goals and objectives that I envisioned for my family and myself.

Work is a huge component of one's life and the way to get maximum satisfaction from your job is to work at something you love to do. While I had other opportunities for employment during my career, I remained with NSP because I had a job that I loved, performed it well, and was treated fairly by my employer.

My career at NSP allowed Liliane to be a stay-at-home mom, provided us with the necessities of life along with the ability to educate our children in private schools, a decision we have never regretted. It also allowed us to satisfy our yearning to travel and to become members of Midland Hills Country Club, which continues to provide me with the opportunity to regularly play a game I've grown to love.

The Joys of Our Lives

Liliane and I are very proud and appreciative of our children. They are not only our progeny; they are our link to the future. We love them and their spouses profoundly and are elated to have a very close relationship with all of them. We are fortunate that they all live within one-and-a-half hours of our home, and we can visit them often. Liliane speaks daily with Mara and Maria and John often calls us on his way to or from work.

Liliane and I cherish our seven grandchildren and enjoy watching them grow to adulthood. We look forward to observing continued growth and achievement and, God willing, we will someday experience this same joy with great-grandchildren.

Advice To Our Progeny

While I may be naïve about electronics and other new-age phenomena, which has passed me by, your adoption of the lessons learned from our life experiences may be relevant to and a useful guide for your future well-being. Therefore I will boldly offer this advice to you, our descendants.

Your feelings will change and people will come into and out of your lives. You cannot change *who* you are but you can change *what* you are. In order for you to enjoy life at its fullest I offer a few pieces of advice. And, by the way, it's never too late!

- Consider what you want to achieve in life then design and seek fulfillment of that ideal.
- To accomplish great things in life you must dream, plan and believe.
- Don't wait for good things to happen to you. Create your own opportunities.
- Bring a fresh start to every day. Don't dwell on what has happened in the past.
- Don't waste time trying to reconcile things you can't change.
- In conversation don't continually talk about yourself. There's a 100% probability that the person you're speaking with will listen if you talk about them. Avoid changing the topic to you.
- Be positive and do not complain. Life isn't always fair.
- Monitor your health. Timely treat any abnormalities or ailments.
- Exercise your body *and* your brain. Strive for complete physical, mental and social well-being.
- Continue your education. Read newspapers and non-fiction books. Take classes. Seek diverse interests.
- Foster an interest in one or more hobbies. They tap into your creativity.
- Have at least one friend whom you respect who will provide you with unconditional trust and support.
- Establish a moral code for yourself with high standards of ethics, integrity and values.
- Donate some of your time, talent and treasure to the less fortunate.
- Pray daily to God for guidance and support. He is the final arbiter of how you lived your life.
- Change happens around us every day so you should enjoy every moment while you can. Tomorrow it will be history.
- If you agree with any of this advice, review it periodically to monitor your compliance.

Reflection

Writing this memoir has been a very therapeutic and fulfilling exercise in recalling the highlights of my life. It has brought about feelings of admiration, gratitude and appreciation for all those who have been an integral part in shaping my destiny. In my writing I may have underplayed or completely omitted some "bumps in the road."

In the overall assessment of my being, they simply don't register. I am aware that each day from now on my mind will probably conjure up other memories that I will rue not having put to paper. I'll still enjoy them in my daydreams. I'm grateful that I succumbed to the urging to undertake this writing venture when I did. *Time passes, memories fade and tomorrow may never come.*

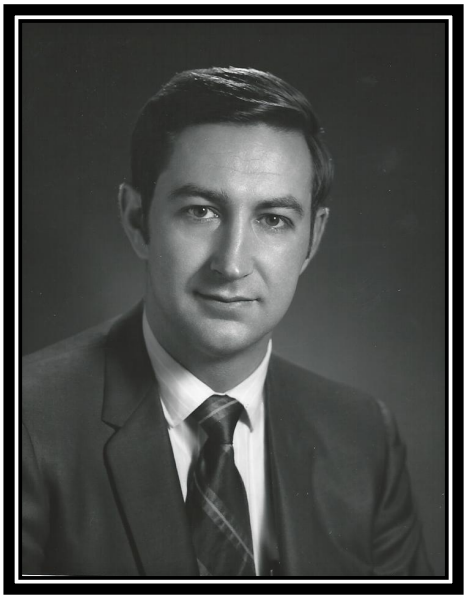
As Time Goes By

As we move closer to the sunset of our lives, Liliane and I have become more aware of our impending mortality and have often conversed about our years together. We have jointly concluded that if God should take us this day we would have no regrets as we have lived a life of abundance, fulfillment and joy.

The defining moment in my life occurred nearly a half-century ago when I had experienced the joy of holding all three of our children in my arms for the first time. I knew then that my life was complete.

I realize that the winter of our lives has nearly arrived, and when it does I'm not sure how long it will last. This however I know, that when it's over on this earth a new adventure will begin! Our faith has brought us peace and serenity so when that final day arrives we look forward to meeting our Savior and all our loved ones in eternity.

Auf Wiedersehen! *



Jack

"There is only one success - to be able to spend your life in your own way."

Christopher Morley, 1890-1957

"I have been the recipient of God's blessings throughout my life and have easily met Christopher Morley's definition of success."

Jack Schutz 1939-

"God gave us memory so that we might have roses in December."

James Mathew Barrie 1860-1937

"I've tucked those negative thoughts in a drawer, and for the most part, though I know the drawer still exists, it never gets opened."

K. Martin Beckner

*The title of this epilog, "***Auf Wiedersehen"*** is intentionally scripted in the German language as a gesture of respect for the heritage of our families. Auf Wiedersehen loosely means, "Until we meet again" -- a most appropriate ending for this memoir.

Timeline

Event	Date	Location
Birth	24 June 1939	Adrian, Minnesota
Beginning of Grade School	September 1945	St. Adrian Grade School
First Communion	May 1946	St. Adrian
Confirmation	October 1951	St. Adrian
Beginning of High School	September 1953	St. Adrian High School
Graduation – High School	June 1957	St. Adrian High School
Joined National Guard	June 1957	Luverne, Minnesota
Basic Training	July - August 1957	Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri
Communications Training	Sept. - Dec. 1957	Ft. Carson, Colorado
Continuing Reserve Training	Jan. 1958 – June 1963	Minneapolis – Camp Ripley
Honorable Discharge	4 June, 1963	Luverne, Minnesota
Enrolled - Institute of Technology	January 1958	University of Minnesota
Mechanical Engineering Degree	June 1963	University of Minnesota
Began Employment at N.S.P.*	July 1963	Minneapolis, Minnesota
Engagement	21 September 1964	Vienna, Austria
Marriage	19 June, 1965	Basilica of St. Mary - Minneapolis
Birth of Mara- Maria	21 April, 1966	Eitel Hospital – Minneapolis
Birth of John	10 August, 1967	Eitel Hospital – Minneapolis
Retirement - N.S.P.*	November 1996	Minneapolis, Minnesota
Retirement Xcel – Consulting	November 2001	Minneapolis, Minnesota
Reaping The Rewards	Retirement To ?	Around the World

* Northern States Power Company