

# STORIES TO REMEMBER

**A Compilation of Life Stories**

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## **WHY THESE STORIES?**

I'm in my 92nd year and in reasonably good health. My life has been blessed in so many ways, and oh! so many memories that I wish to share. Each of us has them, but only if they are recalled or recorded can they be passed along to others. So, I present these "snapshots" of my life, and perhaps you will do the same for your family and friends. These reflections are at random, and not in a sequential order or time or importance. I have added to this collection 3 times

The reflections are my recounting of events. Names and places are used to authenticate, and certainly not to be critical. And the word "authenticate" is a loosely used term, as time and locations can become quite vague as we age. The main reason for this effort is the tremendous love and helpfulness from my family and friends that I have received throughout my life. Thank you and God bless you all!

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## **WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?**

I entered Union College in the Fall of 1949. I played Freshman football, joined a fraternity, ran for and was elected Freshman Class President, and worked part time in the Alumni Office. Yes, I even went to classes. I looked forward to the end of the Football season because I learned that college studies were not like high school. A week after the season ended, Dean Huntley gave a quiz in Psych I, a required Freshman class. In the next class, Dean Huntley went around the room and returned the graded quiz, with a comment or two to the student. When he came to me, he withheld the quiz, and asked me to see him in his office after class. Oops! When I went to his office, he showed me the paper and said the questions were not that hard, and I had done a lousy job, and had I not studied? Dean Huntley was also my Freshman Advisor, and that was a tough question. Football was over and fraternity initiation finished, leaving more time to study. Right? Wrong! He asked me what I would be doing at this time of the year back in high school, and I told him I would be playing basketball. He asked me if I had tried out for the Fresh basketball team, and I said no, because I wanted more study time, and anyway it was too late to try out. What he did next, I will never forget. He picked up his phone and called Pete Nistad, the Frosh basketball coach and told him I wanted to try out the team. Even after Coach Nistad told him the team had been selected, he told him I was coming over anyhow. I did make the team, my grades improved, and I graduated from Union. Dean Huntley understood what this small-town kid needed, and we became good friends in and after Union. What great perception he had.

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## **A DIFFERENT KIND OF 'THANK YOU**

Most of my business career life was working for IBM in the Office Products Division in marketing. In 1972, I was asked to take a new electric typewriter that was built in IBM's Lexington, Kentucky plant to Europe and explain the operation and marketing strategy to the European countries management. One of the meetings was scheduled for Stuttgart, Germany, and I elected to drive a rental car from my meeting in Paris to Stuttgart. At night, not familiar with the language or roads I arrived at a motel outside of Stuttgart about 2 AM in the morning of the meeting. After a few winks of sleep, I got up about 6 AM, found a cab in front of the hotel, and asked the driver if he understood English. The answer was a "yes", so I explained that I would follow him in my rental car with the new model typewriter, and would pay him when we arrived at the meeting location. About 27 miles and 30 minutes later we arrived at the meeting location, and I was so grateful. When I asked the cab driver "how much", he said "you owe me nothing." Confused, I asked him to explain. He told me that he

had been a very young soldier in the German army, and had been badly wounded in the war. If it had not been for a U.S. medic that recognized how badly he was wounded and got him to an aid station, he would certainly have died, and this was the first time he had a chance to repay the kindness of the United States. WOW! At the beginning of the meeting, I told the audience what had just happened, and they all stood and applauded. I will never forget that event.

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### **BARGAIN DAY AT GRAND UNION**

In the summers when I was in High School, I worked at the local Grand Union grocery store. I had lots of different things to do, but on Wednesday's, I was in charge of the Produce Department because that was Mr. Heroy's day off. To set the stage, Mr. Koenig, the Store Manager, would also expect that I would clear out all the produce and fruit that could not be carried over because new deliveries arrived on Thursday mornings.

Blemished fruits and vegetables are one thing for you and me, but most often had to do with appearance and not food value. You know, a spot or two on the banana peel, or a small spot on an orange. There were some really poor families in New Paltz, and the word spread that "the Harp boy" was in charge on Wednesdays. In they came, and I would mark their paper bags full of this produce with a very "attractive" price. There were 101s of poor families with good food, and the produce shelves were ready Thursday mornings for fresh produce, and a big smile from Mr. Heroy for my work clearing out the "throwaways".

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### **P. S. TO BARGAIN DAY**

As I mentioned in my last entry, Thursday was restocking day, except for meat and fish that arrived more often on different trucks- Usually, it. was just a matter of slacking boxes of canned goods and boxed vegetables and fruit on the sidewalk, and then carrying them into the store after the truck left.

All was pretty simple except for watermelons in the summertime. That was a special job. The truck driver would pass each watermelon to the person nearest the truck, who would then toss the watermelon to a person across the sidewalk who would stack them up so that they would not roll away before we carried them into the store. It doesn't sound like a problem, Right? Wrong! Never all summer would this procedure work without a broken watermelon. Without fail, Mr. Koenig, the Store Manager would come out and watch this part of the unloading. Each time, during some part of the "watermelon derby", a watermelon dropped and split open. It was not always the same person, or time in the procedure, but "drops do happen" as they say, Mr. Koenig would stomp his feet, utter some non-religious comment, and storm back into the store. What a treat on a hot day, and such a shame to waste it. All or the store's personnel would help dispose of the "tragedy" except Mr. Koenig As I remember, watermelons sold for about 50 cents back then.

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### **WHO IS 'I'**

After I jotted down a few of these "memory memos", I realized I was taking up too much space explaining who or why I was in the story. In brief, I grew up in New Paltz, NY and after high school went to Union College in Schenectady, NY. After graduation I worked for General Electric for three years, joined IBM in 1956, and moved to West Hartford, Ct in 1985 to work for my Uncle Vernon and start a small manufacturing and design shop called El Mar Inc., named for, and presided over by my wife Elsie. The name El Mar is a combination of Elsie and Martha, the first and middle of her maiden names. Once during a reporter's interview of our company for a business article, she was asked why the name, and she replied that growing up she had always wanted to be a dress designer with a business called El Mar, and how she ever got talked into running a machine shop she

wasn't sure. We designed products and manufactured several, including "Uncle Bill's Sliver Grippers", a precision tweezers, but that's another story.

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## **IT COULD HAVE BEEN ME**

In our lives, each of us has had "close calls", maybe several. One of mine was in the Spring of 1954 when I was working GE in Schenectady as a Test Engineer, and assigned to their Building # 273, the Steam Turbine test facility. Our job was to monitor and balance the huge generators driven by steam using very sensitive instruments. To get inside the turbines to adjust the balance weights, large porthole covers would have to be removed after the generators were stopped, the heat and steam drawn out by big Pans, a rope tied around you and then climb inside to make weight adjustments for balancing. Even with the cooling down procedure, we still climbed inside with temperatures around 140 degrees. The need for the rope is obvious, but. I remember the heat would cause the rivets on my dungarees to burn my legs, and it was difficult to breathe inside.

The last generator I was working on was with an Engineer recently graduated from RPI in Troy, NY who had been asked to continue this assignment for another 3-month period. I had accepted an assignment in Pittsfield, MA with the GE Power Transformer Plant. I always asked for night shifts because they paid a 15% bonus.

When I reported to Pittsfield the next night, there was a notice on the bulletin board that the generator we had been working on two nights earlier had blown up, and my friend Dick had been killed. WOW!

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## **I STILL REMEMBER**

In 1961, I had worked for IBM for four years selling typewriters with good success, and wanted an opportunity to be a manager. My manager asked me to take on a huge territory in northern New York, from Glens Falls north to Rouses Point at the Canadian border and west to Malone, NY. If I did a good job, I would get my requested promotion. I had a great year, and was offered a nice position in Product Planning in Lexington, KY.

But I had a problem. I loved Schenectady, a Boy Scout troop leader, YMCA, Director of the Youth Group at church, graduate work at Union College — the whole bit. How could I leave?

But the kids in the church youth group made it doable. They gave me a belt buckle with the inscription inside that read "YOUR BEST FRIENDS YOU HAVE YET TO MEET". I know that is true, and it has always sustained me in my several location changes.

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## **BETTER WATCH OUT**

While going to college I had several part time jobs, including selling Fuller Brushes door to door. Not an easy job, but it earned me a lot of money to help pay for college. Most of you don't know about Fuller Brushes, but it was a good business when more door-to-door sales were made by companies. The deal with the Fuller Brush Co. was that salespeople were trained by the local manager, assigned a sales territory, paid for the catalogs that were left by the salesperson in the assigned territory with the plan to return in a few days to see if the home or apartment would order something from the catalog. In exchange for giving the catalog back, the prospect would be given a choice of a free gift, i.e. a vegetable brush, hair comb, etc. You see, Fuller Brush charged the salesperson 12.5 cents for each catalog, and 12 cents each for the "giveaways", so it was important to make a sales presentation and retrieve the reusable catalog.

About 1952, Fuller introduced several items in aerosol canisters, including a moth spray item. Because I was a student and could only work part time, my assigned territory was apartment houses rented primarily by blue collar families. Even back then, people were very cautious about salespersons coming to the door, and often

would not even open the door. I would explain that I needed the catalog back for a free item, and then ask if I could just demonstrate the new moth sprayer by just lifting the edge of the front door rug- With a blast from the can, even Martha Stewart's rugs would have some dust fly. I would quickly pat down the rug, and say I was so sorry to disturb the moths - The sale was easy.

Then I would go to the upstairs apartment to retrieve my catalog for a free item. If a sale was made, good, but I would always mention that the person in the lower apartment had just purchased the new moth spray item, and "you know if those little critters get disturbed, they have to go somewhere". So on to the next house with two orders.

PS: I soon learned that you don't make any money distributing catalogs or delivering the ordered items, so I hired some of my fraternity brothers for those jobs, and all of us were happy.

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## **LOOKS GOOD TO ME**

In the 1970's, Xerox led the copy machine industry, and IBM had just announced their first model. A nice machine, but so slow compared to the Xerox range of models designed for various production requirements, I was Branch Manager for IBM in Trenton, NJ, and the State Purchasing Agent sent out a bid request for copiers which included a host of copy production requirements. Of course, Xerox had all the production volumes covered, BUT IBM WAS LOW BID ON THE LOWEST VOLUME LEVEL! The NJ Purchasing Agent gave the entire award to Xerox initially, and I protested "We don't expect to get the whole banana, but IBM is low bid for the low volume range, and we want it". When the Purchasing Agent spoke to the Xerox Branch Manager, (actually, a good friend of mine), he agreed that IBM should have that tiny part of the award based on price. So here we go. On a cost basis, IBM's model beat out the faster Xerox equipment if more units were installed closer to where the copies were required, and we really took advantage of that fact. The problem was that the IBM model was "SO SLOW" that I received complaints about the secretarial "wait time" for their copies. The answer, "Go to a department store and buy a bunch of inexpensive wall mirrors". When we hung the mirrors near the slow copiers, the "wait time" disappeared as lipstick and makeup got applied.

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## **I'M NOT SO SURE**

Selling typewriters was not an easy job. I was living in Schenectady, but my 1961 territory assignment was north of Glens Falls to the Canadian border, (Rousses Point), and west to Malone, NY. A postcard from a Catholic church in Elizabethtown, NY requesting prices on IBM typewriters led me to meet Father Michael and to demonstrate our latest model typewriters. In sales, you always "lead" with your best model, and the IBM Executive model could type with proportional spacing that looked like printing because each letter would take up the amount of space based on its size. I showed the father how it could justify right hand margins, "shadow print", and do really neat things- While I was doing my best to explain how great the typewriter was, he kept asking me why I wasn't Catholic, and how great it would be if I were. I explained that I was satisfied being a member of the Presbyterian church in Schenectady, headed up a Boy Scout troop, and (the church's youth group, did not desire to change.

When I finally answered his many questions as to the price, and I told him it was \$595, he grimaced and explained that "he only had \$250 in his budget, and it was too bad that I wasn't Catholic".

I then demonstrated the IBM Standard model, which didn't have all the fancy abilities, but \$200 lower in price. Finally, he said he might consider an IBM, but not if I wasn't Catholic. I had nothing to lose, so I asked him what was the name of his church?

He replied, "Why it's right on the sign outside, The Second Immaculate Conception Church of Elizabethtown". I then said I didn't have any questions about the first time, but I really questioned the second one. He Cooked at me, smiled, and said he would buy the Executive model. He and I became very good friends.

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## **WHAT TO DO**

When IBM announced the IBM Selectric Typewriter in 1961, It incorporated a changeable type font so that the typestyle could be selected to match the application. Then too, optical character recognition was just coming into vogue, so lots of new typing applications were opening up. The Chicago Board of Education was one of our product test locations, and they were considering several thousand typewriters that would type the optical character typestyle for grading students and keeping records. All was looking pretty good for IBM because we were the only equipment supplier that could change typestyle right on the machine.

THEN- One Friday evening I got a frantic phone call from the salesman that Dr. Willis, the Superintendent of the Chicago Board of Education had told the salesman they were going to purchase Underwood typewriters because they were going to supply two machines for the price of each IBM. I told the salesman to get an appointment with Dr. Willis for Monday, and I would fly up from Lexington, KY where I lived.

So, at noon Monday morning I was in Dr. Willis's office with the account salesman hoping to retrieve the initial order for 700 typewriters at stake. Dr. Willis explained 11M he was favorable to the IBM machines, appreciated all of IBM's work in establishing the procedures, but the two for one price differential was too big to ignore. I thanked him allowing IBM to work with him, and that I realized the price factor was important, but had just one question — knowing that the Underwood typewriter weighed 38 pounds and it had to be moved somewhere when the Underwood with the other typestyle was to be used, who would be around to make the switch? He looked at me for a full minute, and then said, "You just got the order". After thanking him, two happy guys from IBM left.

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## **I CAN'T BELIEVE IT**

Focus group reviews are a great way to get user or "wish there were" opinions. Used for numerous projects, the Yankalovich Group in New York City was employed when IBM was preparing to announce the correcting feature on the IBM Selectric Typewriter in the mid 1960's. A white colored key was located on the lower right corner of the typewriter keyboard. When touched, it would initiate the backup of the typing element, remove the last character typed, and keep the location for the correct character to be typed. My IBM position was in Product Planning, and we would select different focus group participants to evaluate the importance of this benefit, i.e., executives, purchasing agents and secretaries. The secretary's comments and suggestions were important for feedback because they would be the ones actually using the machine.

The focus group would be selected by Yankalovich, paid a small amount for their time, and each given finger sandwiches and drinks of their choice. I recall one late afternoon when about 20 secretaries were there. I asked them what features they would like to have on a new model typewriter and wrote their suggestions on an easel board. A typewriter that could spell was the first choice, and I told them we were working on that, but what else would be helpful. An electric built-in eraser was next high on the list, and many other things like colors, ribbon changing, and quietness were listed.

The focus groups had no way of knowing what company had manufactured the typewriter on display before them, and the keyboard was displayed on a large screen so all could see.

With name signs for each person, I asked Helen, who was sitting in the front row to come up and help me, and to type her name on the keyboard as HELAN. I told her I knew the spelling was wrong, but to just "do it". Next, I asked her to hit the "X" key on the tower right side of the keyboard twice to remove the "a and n". When I told

her to hit the E and N to correctly spell her name, there was a gasp from the group, and one person in the back row exclaimed "I think I am going to wet my pants".

#### **ALWAYS ON TIME**

One of my hardest sales for a large number of IBM typewriters was to Amsterdam Carpet Co. in Amsterdam, NY, now known as Mohasco. The company employed 140 people office secretarial duties, most of which included typing of various kinds for four or more hours a day. I knew this because their Procedures Department had given me permission to interview each typist and also to give a course in streamlining typing procedures. I was really pleased when the Procedures people told me [hey had sent. a request to Purchase for 35 IBM typewriters to start replacing 140 manual typewriters. Boy, I could hardly wait!

My IBM office was in Schenectady, NY, 22 miles Southeast of Amsterdam, and I was really excited when Mr. Dunne, their Purchasing Manager, called and asked me [o see him [he next morning at 9AM. "What a sale I thought, about 2 month's quotas". The next morning, I was anxiously waiting the good news when Mr. Dunne told me he was going to award the order to Howard Sands, the Remington Rand salesman. Mr. Dunne knew I had done a lot of work for the sale, and the Procedures Department had recommended IBMs, but the Remington price was lower, and frankly he had known Mr. Sands for many years and had purchased lots of office equipment from him, in fact, he told me he had asked Howard to see him at 10 AM.

You can imagine how I felt, but I told Mr. Dunne several reasons why IBM would be a better value, shook his hand and left his office. Years ago, Reception areas in large companies were partitioned with semi-transparent green colored glass. As I approached the reception area, I saw the silhouette of Mr. Sands waiting for his appointment. With no other logical way out, I "sucked it up" and went into the reception room and looked at Mr. Sands who I knew and often competed against. "Howard", I said, "Nice to see you. This is one of the best days of my life". I shook his hand, smiled, and left for a lousy ride back to my office.

About 2 hours later, Mr. Dunne called to say he had changed his mind. He had checked with the Procedures people, recounted my reasons for IBM's being a better value, and to come up with the order. And, he added, Mr. Sands had never shown up for his scheduled IOAM appointment.

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#### **AN IMPORTANT PHONE CALL**

In a conference room at the IBM Typewriter manufacturing plant in Lexington, KY, I was making a chart presentation to key Division leaders when the rear meeting room door opened, and the Secretary indicated to me that I had a phone call that couldn't wait for "break time". The customary thing was for phone and other messages to be pinned on a cork board and picked up at recess time, and I tried to wave her off to no avail. I asked a member of my staff to continue the presentation and left to answer the phone. With three children back home in NJ, and a daughter in college, I was quite apprehensive about the call 's importance.

A few minutes later I returned to the meeting, and of course the question of concern was "what was wrong". I explained with some embarrassment that the call was from my oldest daughter Susan, a Sophomore at Union College to tell me she was the first woman at Union to earn a Varsity Track letter. Union had just become coed, and she had tracked me down because I had gone 10 Union in Schenectady, NY and she was sure I would want to know. The meeting room responded to their big concern with a round of applause.

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#### **PROBLEM RESOLVED**

For about six years my IBM job was located in Lexington, KY, but presentations were done in our Division Headquarters in NY City- Often with fellow IBM managers I would fly to New York City via Newark Airport and return home later in the week from the Newark Airport, In the early 1960's, there were many airplane hijackings, and bomb scares. One Friday afternoon, the IBM Headquarters building had been evacuated because several suspicious looking people were seen in the building and had run away. My fellow travelers and

I had picked up our luggage from the storage area just off the Reception Room, and it was now on the ground with other baggage near the plane waiting to be loaded at Newark Airport. As we waited for our flight, one us thought a great place to hide a bomb would be in the IBM storage area where we had left our baggage during the day. You could never know.

I asked to speak with the Airport Supervisor, and he and I went out to where all the baggage was waiting to be loaded on the plane. While we were wondering what to do, the pilot for the flight was walking around the plane checking it out. He saw us contemplating and asked what was up. When the Supervisor explained our concern, he had a quick answer — "Just sort out their luggage and put it on the next flight to Lexington, and they can fly with me". I don't think that would happen today.

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## **COLOR MATTERS**

One of the best typewriter sales potentials in my assigned sales territory was the Army Supply Depot in Voorheesville, NY- There were hundreds of typists employed there, mostly using Remington Rand manual typewriters. It was difficult to work with the Purchasing Department, but I asked their typewriter repairman, Gran Vroman to ask the Commanding Officer's office if I could do a Typing Station Analysis so he could better advise the Procedures Department on what equipment should be replaced based on usage and help to schedule his work. I was given permission to survey every typist and to present it to Colonel Kelly and the Procedures Dept. as soon as it was completed. A big job, but it was completed in about 3 weeks. The presentation was made in early June and recommended that 120 electric typewriters were justified based on usage, with the replaced manual typewriters going to unjustified manual typewriter stations based on machine age. Gran Vroman was at the meeting and concurred with the recommendations, but the Procedures Dept. wanted to get "competitive bids". The Colonel asked Gran what he thought, and he said the few IBM's they already had were very trouble free and IBM had sent him to their Service Training School already. Colonel Kelly asked how many typewriters could be purchased with funds that would have to be turned back if unspent by the end of June. Given the amount, my quick calculations indicated 47 machines. The colonel asked me what other decisions were needed, and I [old him type styles should be standardized, and machine color selected uniformity. When describing the colors, I started with "Dove (Gray)", but stopped when [ mentioned 'Cascade Green", but most often called 'Kelly (Green". "That's enough", he said, "order the 47 in Kelly Green and gel the rest in next year's budget". I had a pleasant drive back to the office.

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## **MUSKRATS**

A small animal about the size of a rabbit, a hairless flat tail that looks somewhat rat like used for steering and balance, muskrats live around water. Their fur is a beautiful dark brown and is a favorite with furriers. I trapped them as a youngster and sold their fur pelts. One day my dad suggested that I ask some less fortunate families that lived in houses along the railroad tracks in town if they would care for the skinned carcasses. He explained to me that they were clean animals that fed on water plants, and in the South were often on restaurant menus listed as "marsh rabbits". Several of the families were delighted, so I would take the cleaned muskrats to them.

I felt good that I was of some help, and also learned that they picked up coal along the railroad tracks just behind their homes for fuel. I found out that the coal was often helped to the ground as the twice a day train stopped at the station a short distance away to deliver material and get a fresh supply of water. On a few occasions I even helped gravity to get some coal from cars for the families when the trains stopped at the New Paltz station.

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## **YOU EARNED WHAT?**

When I told my family and friends that I was going to leave a good salaried position with General Electric to sell IBM typewriters on a commission basis they questioned my thinking. Taking a big chance with a new and growing family? Let's see why.

Joe Foley was a high school classmate and good friend. Joe was a little different and a little wild — you know cutting classes, smoking in the Boy's Room and a general cut-up. Nothing serious, but as Student Council President, Mr. Bugar, our High School Principal, expected me to calm Joe down, and I did try.

I was working for GE in Erie, PA in 1956 and had just been given an assignment back to Schenectady, NY with a nice raise in pay to \$5,000 a year. I was to start the new job July 1<sup>st</sup> and had already made a down payment on a new house. 'Then why the job change? Going home with my family for Easter to our hometown of New Paltz with my wife and two very young children, we looked forward to seeing some of our High School buddies. The local roadhouse, the Log Rail was the usual gathering place, and along with many others, there was Joe Foley.

Joe had had a few drinks and was bragging about all the money he was making selling IBM typewriters, and I challenged him. When I told Joe that he must be kidding, he pulled a pay stub out of his wallet that indicated he had already made over in the first two months of that year. Compared with that, I was making peanuts. I figured if Joe Foley can do that well, I surely can. I joined IBM and never looked back.

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## **NOT HERE YOU DON'T**

My first day reporting to work at the IBM Branch Office in Schenectady, NY was quite a lifestyle change for me. Not versed in IBM I had purchased a nice-looking suit at Bond Clothing Store - you may remember that they advertised "buy a suit and get a free extra pair of trousers". It was a great looking suit, a natty light gray flannel- Boy did I look good when I first met my new IBM boss, Dave Pierce. We shook hands in the lobby, and he immediately invited me into his office and closed the door.

I quickly learned the dress code for IBM back then, and light gray flannel suits were definitely not included. I will never forget his final advice to me that morning — "Go home and burn that suit and come back in a dark blue one". I didn't burn the new suit, but it was never again seen at IBM.

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## **REMEMBRANCE**

In the late 1980's, my wife Elsie and I purchased a machine shop in West Hartford, CT and one of our manufactured products was a precision tweezer called "Uncle Bill's Sliver Gripper". When our country protested Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and started the buildup of troops called Desert Shield, we donated and shipped over several hundred to our troops to use for tick removal, etc. We received a nice "thank you" from (General Schwarzkopf, the U.S. officer in charge, When the shooting started and the conflict became "Desert Storm", we sent many more as gifts, but made two changes. We had the metal "blued" so that the enemy would not see them shine and target our soldiers and engraved "Desert Storm" on one side. Shortly thereafter we received another "thank you" from General Schwarzkopf, and he added on his note that he was also giving a tweezer to whoever his driver was each day as he visited our troops in action and would tell them that it was a gift from back home folks who were appreciative for all their sacrifices. We really treasure the letters.

P.S. A short time after the start of "Desert Storm", a soldier home on leave was shopping at Pfaus Hardware store in West Hartford and saw similar tweezers on display. While in Iraq, he had been the driver for the

General, and had been given a pair of tweezers. He noted that his were not bright and shiny, and that's because we treated them with black oxide so that they would not be seen by an enemy sniper. A small world!

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## **THE NRA**

I'm no longer a member of the National Rifle Association. I used to be proud of my membership, and even had [their emblem decal on my car's window. I dropped my membership years ago when (hey became so political, endorsed gun laws that are far too loose, and in my humble opinion do not understand the intent of the full reading of the Second Amendment in our Constitution.

When I grew up, the NRA taught gun safety lessons, sponsored gun clubs and shooting ranges, and many local shooting events. I remember walking thru town to High School with my .22 caliber target rifle on my shoulder tiff use at the shooting range located in our school basement. As a teenager I would often carty my rifle across my bike's handlebars as I rode out of town to hunt. woodchucks or check my trap line.

Times have changed, but I don't think it's all for the better. Automatic weapons, expanded bullet capacities and bullet calibers far and above what is needed for game hunting, range practice, or personal protection is not what our forefathers intended, and it has led to many abuses of our other rights as citizens.

I will always treasure my memories of the outdoors. There is something about hunting and fishing with one's family and/or friends that cannot be emulated by participating in or watching other types of events like football, baseball, soccer, et cetera. Just ask those who have had that experience.

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## **REALLY OUR PLEASURE**

On May 17, 1998, former President Jimmy Carter was being honored with a Doctorate Degree at Trinity College in Hartford CT. My wife Elsie and I were invited to bring our Aunt Florence to the event because she required a wheelchair. Aunt Florence and her husband Vernon were substantial donors to Trinity, and even after he died, she was often invited to Trinity events such as this- Because of the huge crowd in attendance, we chose to take her in her wheelchair to the large tent where lunch would be served to avoid the crunch of people.

Few people were there yet, but in carne President Carter with his aids to check out the speaking facilities. Now let me digress for a moment When I had read President Carter's book "An Outdoor Journal" a few years earlier, he had written that when he was in the White House, he and his wife Rosalyn would occasionally "sneak out" to fish for trout in New York State by a helicopter at night to avoid the press reporters and get some relaxation. His book told how difficult it was to attach fly fishing lures at night, trying to hold a flashlight under one's arm to see. sent him two hands free headlights, and a couple of Uncle Bill's precision tweezers as gifts and received a nice "thank you".

So off I went to see him, "President Carter", I said, "I am El Harp, and when you were President, I sent you a headlight to help you while trout fishing, and I really appreciated your thank you note". He smiled, shook my hand, and said "I remember that very well. You sent lights and tweezers for both of us, and even engraved our names on the side of the tweezers". Not stopping there, I asked him if I could invite him to meet my wife and Aunt Florence. He followed me to our table and shook hands with them. We were so pleased, and later Elsie said "Imagine, he said it was so nice to meet me, and it was really my pleasure to meet him". A real gentleman.

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## **BOYS WILL BE BOYS**

Being a Boy Scout Leader for an Explorer Troop, boys between the ages of 16 to 18, was often a case of patience, understanding, and discipline. When I was in Schenectady NY after college, I was a member of a church in an area that had many disorganized and poor families. On one weekend camping trip to the

Adirondack Mountains, one of the Scout's "friends" he had invited to join us turned out to be his girlfriend. When we stopped gas halfway there, I saw the guest come out of the Ladies restroom, so back we went 10 take "him" home.

The rest of the camping trip wasn't any better. Two of the boys got a bulldozer started in a vacant lumber camp nearby our campsite and rearranged a pile of logs before I could stop them. Then on the way out on the trail, I waited for several stragglers. Along they came carrying a small outboard motor "that someone must have lost". I explained that the motor was probably left with a boat by hunters and really wasn't lost and went with them to put the motor back on the boat at a lakeside camp, a very interesting camping trip,

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## **SUMMERTIME**

For over 30 years our family has vacationed on Long Beach Island, NJ, and each year it gets to be more fun as our children relate to theirs the fun things they did when they were younger. It's nice to listen, and often learn about how some things really happened to our surprise.

Arrival at our vacation home was usually late morning. The kids would pile out of the station wagon. The girls raced inside to change into bikinis to check out the lifeguards, and the boys would grab their crab traps and head to the bay for crabs.

One of my many memories was a night fishing trip on a charter boat with my middle daughter Melissa. It was her first experience night fishing for bluefish, and it was memorable. "Missy" was about 14 years old, tall, slender, and a good looking blonde. There were about 80 people on board, but Missy got special attention from a high school aged boat helper that turned out to be the captain's son. He was there right away to bait Missy's rented pole and help her throw the line in the water. Now bluefish run about 10 to 14 pounds and can really put up a scrap when hooked. A short time later, a "blue" struck Missy's line so hard she lost the pole overboard. Not to worry — the young helper was there like a flash and soon had a replacement rig in the water. A short time later, there was an audible "Oops!" and another fishing pole was lost. This time a clear loud voice came from the bridge, and the captain roared "DON'T GIVE THAT BLONDE KID ANOTHER POLE!"

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## **HE WHO WAITS - MAY BE RIGHT**

Being a marketing kind of guy, I have read a lot of books about selling. In one of his books, Peter Drucker wrote about IBM and how the company sometimes did not make the best decision, but with their size and revenue resources could overcome questionable things when more information or experience was gathered. I think there is a lesson here and have many times in my life been known as "El, you know - ready, shoot, aim". You know the story about the visitor to an Old West town and noticed circles like targets 011 trees and fences with a bullet hole right in the middle of each one. What a good shot? No, not really - the circle was drawn around the hole after it was made.

Sometimes in life we wait. so long to make a decision - "to get all the facts" - that the opportunity is lost. Life and business have many opportunities tiff decisions and action. I've made some good ones and some not so good, but on balance I don't mind Ready - Shoot - Aim. It has served me well.

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## **HARP TELEPHONE COMPANY**

In January 1973, I was promoted to be Branch Manager of the IBM Office Products Division in Trenton, New Jersey. As was most often the case, we shared the new facility with the Data Processing Division. This was a brand-new location just being renovated. Data Processing was located on the ground floor, and we were on the second. The problem was that we had no phone service on our floor, and the Data Processing Manager assured me we would be set up in a day or two. That assurance was given on Monday, and the following Friday no phone service with no info on when. You can't run a marketing business without phone service, and I was really "ticked off".

Saturday, I returned to the office with about 20 empty cans and a ball of string. I connected the string to strategically located cans and had my "phone service". Monday morning my sales team was hysterical about the new phone system, but not the Data Processing Manager. After a few threats to have me fired, I suggested he let the phone company know of our requirements and he did. The phone service was installed that day, with a few chuckles from the installers.

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## **SHE HADN'T GOT THE WORD**

In High School, my good friend Dave Lent and I were always looking for a way to earn money. Dave lived on a farm, and there was a huge pile of cow manure behind his barn. I was working part time in a service station, and my boss said I could use his truck for \$1 a load plus a gas fill-up when we were finished for the day. So, Dave and I placed an ad in the local newspaper, describing that well-rotted manure could be delivered for \$10 a load.

Business was good, but a few nights later, I learned the value of communication. At home, meals for our family were served around an oval table, and as we were about ready to sit down for dinner, the phone rang. Grandma Roosa was the closest, so she answered it, and after a few seconds, she slammed the phone back on the receiver while uttering a few expletives. When she calmed down, she said the call was from a lady who "wanted to know if my manure was rotted enough that she could work it with her hands." I never did find out who our potential customer was.

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## **NOT A GOOD IDEA**

When Elsie and I started our El Mar Inc. business, she was the President, and I did most of the marketing. Her office was on the second floor of our little machine shop, and I was on the ground floor. The proper thing for any businessperson that has a desk at work to do is put pictures of the family on the desk or counter. I did that. I had a picture of my lovely wife in a nice frame on my desk. My son Chris and I do a lot of deer hunting, and he had sent me a couple or photos of me kneeling beside two nice buck deer I had shot one morning only a couple of hours apart. As any hunter knows, this is a "big deal".

My problem was that I had placed one of the pictures of this outstanding occasion in front of the picture of my wife, certainly not on purpose, but an honest mistake. However, Elsie did notice the placement, and I quickly learned there is a big difference between a picture of DEAR and DEER.

### **WHERE ARE THE PANTS?**

During my tour as Market Planning Manager in IBM's Office Product Division, I was asked to make a presentation to our Division's President and others in our Washington D.C. location, The timing was during a school holiday, so I drove to a nearby location with Elsie and our three youngest children, Missy, T. J., and Carrie. I planned to drop them off to sightsee while I was in the meeting.

We arrived at our hotel the afternoon before the meeting, and before going out to dinner I was taking a shower. Elsie called into the shower and asked where my suit pants were so she could press them for the next day's

important IBM meeting. "Right with the suit jacket", I replied. NO, THEY WERE NOT! I had not noticed this when I packed. What to do? It was late in the day, the children were hungry, so off we drove to find a restaurant. Frankly, my mind was not on food, but how to get through the morning meeting. I know now that prayers are answered.

On the way to find a place to eat, we passed a men's clothing store just turning the lights out to close for the day. I asked if I could look quickly, and there was one IBM kind of dark suit in my size. A quick purchase and that night my dear wife hemmed the pants with one of those little mending kits they used to give out at hotels. The meeting went well, and I have been going to church regularly ever since.

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### **I WISH YOU WOULD BE WITH US**

When I graduated from High School, there were only 52 in our class. Back then (1949), we had "Class Night" on Friday evening, a baccalaureate service in the High School Sunday evening, and graduation Monday night. There were 13 Catholic students in our class, and Father Fagan had instructed them not to attend the Sunday program because he was not giving the main speech. It was customary in New Paltz for four denominations to give each denomination a turn every four years to present the "main speech", but all participated at some point in the program. This really bothered me, so I called and asked to talk with him.

I told Father Fagan that I was President of the Student Council and a member of the graduating class, and that I really wanted my classmates to be at the service. He said "no", and repealed that he would so instruct my Catholic classmates. I called a meeting with my class and asked them all to be there Sunday evening. I reviewed the fun times and sad times we had shared, and my feelings about our final few days together as a class. Sunday night all but one of my classmates attended a great program.

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### **ANOTHER CLOSE CALL**

In the Spring of 1949, I was a Senior in High School, and the United States was just getting involved in a United Nations "police action" in Korea. A recruiter from the Marine Corps made a presentation about a Platoon Leader program for young men in the Marines. My Dad had joined the Army at an early age, so I signed up along with classmates Bill Hoiles and Willie Coutant. They were over 18, but not me, so I needed my parents' approval. Dad said "no", it would be best to continue on to college where I had been accepted and join a reserve training program available at Union. With no choice, that's what I did.

In December of the following year, I learned that Bill and Willie had been killed in North Korea when the Chinese Red army swept over the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel and killed thousands of our troops. A time of deep reflection.

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### **AN AMAZING DOG**

At our fraternity at Union College, the mascot was a beautiful red Irish Setter named "Phi". There were many funny stories about Phi, but two stand out. My college roommate Dave Lent had a Chevy roadster with a "rumble seat". They don't make them anymore, but the car had a seat when you opened it up on the back of the car, and you could squeeze two people into it. On a few Sunday afternoons, I would get "Phi" in the seat next to me, tie a red bandana around her neck, put my arm around him and, with Dave driving, off we would go. Lots of calls and remarks about the beautiful redhead taking a ride until he turned his head so they could see what the "redhead" was. Great fun!

Another thing "Phi" was known for usually followed a fresh snowfall. By putting some methylene blue in his food (a dye used in medicine), each time he lifted his leg for a purpose, he left a remarkable blue stain on the snow. 'The "true blue" mascot of Phi Delta Theta.

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## **HEY, WAIT A MINUTE**

In 1976 I was working for IBM in Lexington, KY and had to go to Dallas for a meeting. Back then, you had to go to Cincinnati, OH to fly to Dallas. The weather was bad in OH, so I rescheduled an early flight the next morning. Of course, a lot of others did also, so the flight was overbooked. The plane was full before takeoff, and the flight attendant announced a \$300 payment to anyone volunteering to be put on a later flight. A very attractive young lady got up, and as she made her way to the doorway exclaimed that she would "do anything" for \$300. A split second later, an eager young man jumped up and called out, "Hey, wait a minute, I just got \$300". You can imagine the many interpretations and comments with laughter from the rest of the passengers. On my return trip out of Dallas, our plane was held for takeoff by a violent rainstorm. After a short time, the pilot announced that we were "cleared to try". The takeoff was horrendous, with pitching and swaying. I was a white-knuckle basket case. I commented to the guy next to me that I knew the pilot wanted to get home safely too. His reply didn't help one bit when he said "I understand when it's my turn, but I don't want to go when it's the pilot's time".

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## **REALLY A SMALL WORLD**

When Elsie and I were at a music festival in the West Hartford Town Hall a few years ago, I struck up a conversation with the gentleman sitting next to me during intermission. Those that know me know that I do that once in a while. His name was Bob Howard, and we chatted about things like family, job, business moves, schools, etc. When he mentioned that he had attended Williams College, I replied that I had attended Union College, and we had both graduated the same year. Bob also mentioned that he had played football at Williams, and that in his Senior year they were playing Union in Schenectady and were leading by four points with only seconds left when their Quarterback had a pass intercepted and some "Union guy" had scored a touchdown that won the game for Union- I wonder if you can figure out who that "Union guy" was?

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## **STORIES TO REMEMBER - 2**

Added February 16, 2017

## **WHY MORE STORIES?**

I recalled and presented a number of remembrances of my life, essentially so that my children, grandchildren, and friends would know a little bit more about "Dad, Grandpa, El" than they have known or had forgotten. The critique I heard most often was that I should have written about a few more things, so here goes....

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## **THE FIRST BUCK**

Most of my hunting was near my hometown of New Paltz, NY. Deer hunting was always the most exciting and challenging, plus venison was always welcome- The farmland surrounding New Paltz was and is a good area to find deer. Dad always hunted with us until an implanted pacemaker for his heart condition forced him to stop

hunting at the early age of 70. However, we continued to buy a deer tag for him each year until he passed away at the age of 96 for two reasons. First, the license only cost \$5, and secondly and more importantly, it gave the member of our hunting group who shot the first buck deer the opportunity to continue hunting. You see, some years ago the hunting rules in New York State would not allow a person who had shot a deer to be in the woods after his/her success with or without a gun to assist other hunters. That law has been changed now, but back then the first buck got tagged with Dad's tag.

It was always Dad's first question when he got home from work after the first day of deer season - What did I get this year?

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## **SHOE SIZE**

My mother was tall and had large feet (so do I), but she would often buy shoes that were too small. Shoe size is a big thing 10t- women, so she would explain that she wore size 11, but "Quad AAAA Narrow", as if the narrow size somehow discounted the length.

We asked Mom and Dad to join us on a trip to Florida one year, and on a shopping trip we stopped at a shoe store. (My Mother never seemed to pass up a shoe store). We sat down and waited to be assisted - When the salesman approached with a 100t measuring device, Mom waved off the measuring device and just told the salesclerk she wore size 11 but they must be the narrow size AAAA. Of course, they were too tight, and "the labeling must have been wrong". As she was trying out the next trial pair with [he same results, I quietly suggested to the salesman that he should next bring out several pairs to try in size 12 medium wide but have them in boxes marked as 11 AAAA. Mom was so pleased and thanked the salesman over and over for finding shoes that fit. She bought 3 pairs!

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## **FIRE ON THE WATER**

When I was about 11 years old, I was given an old wooden rowboat that needed a lot of repairs.

After a lot of caulking and paint it was ready to use for fishing again, and it was great. My Uncle Vernon had a very old 2-horsepower Champion model outboard motor with a leaky gas tank that he gave me, with the suggestion to fill the tank with water and solder the leaking holes, which I did.

With great enthusiasm I installed the motor with the "repaired" gas tank, filled it with gasoline, shoved off from shore and started the motor. Unfortunately, at my age I didn't know about viscosity, and that gasoline will leak out of holes too small for water.

I was so pleased out on the river for a few minutes and didn't notice the gas leaking until the motor exploded and the boat caught fire. Luckily, I was not hurt, but had to swim to shore and then watch the boat burn up. A lesson learned.

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## **A NEW DEER RIFLE**

Some years ago, I went to the Newington Gun Store to purchase some ammunition. While waiting to be helped, I overheard the conversation between a customer who wanted to trade in a gun for a different model, and the store owner whose name was Paul. Their conversation was quite loud, and it was obvious the customer was not pleased with the amount offered for the "trade in". Paul was explaining the problems he would have selling the used gun, low mark-up on new sales, etc., etc. Finally, the customer said OK.

I was pretty good at knowing gun prices and values, and this model with scope and case was certainly worth more than the \$300 offered in trade. I followed Paul to the cash register and told him quietly that I would buy the "trade in" for \$350. He refused of course, but when I suggested that the customer would gladly take my offer, he agreed. So, I left with a Winchester Model 70 rifle, scope and case that would easily cost \$900 back then, and it was really was just like new. A good day!

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### **STOLEN BAND INSTRUMENTS**

When I was in the eighth grade in school, I played the alto saxophone. Not great, but I enjoyed it., and I was good enough to play in the school band. Dr. Hoffman was my instructor at the New Pnit7 Teachers College (now SUNY-New Paltz, NY) where my music instruction was given. One night the "band room" where instruments were stored had a "break in" and several instruments were stolen, including mine. My Dad met with Leonard Newkirk, our local sheriff and they suspected that a student. might be the culprit because the room was part of the college. All pawn shops in the area were alerted, and sure enough a call was received from a store in New York City that a black man had brought in several band instruments tor evaluation and promised to return the next day tor payment. The next day Sheriff Newkirk was waiting and arrested the thief and brought the instruments back. Then the story got interesting.

The person arrested was a young black college student who lived in New Paltz. Dad knew the student and his family, and that he was the first of a very poor family that had the chance for a college education. The band instruments were returned, and Dad paid that expense, as well as getting the college and sheriff to forgive the charges in exchange for some community service work - a real gesture of understanding. P.S. It was "suggested" to me that I should not mention that the student who stole the instruments was black, but that point makes me even more proud of what Dad did at that time in our nation's history.

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### **NOT A BAD EXCHANGE**

In the late 1970's, several U.S. car manufacturers introduced diesel-powered auto models. They offered several advantages over gasoline engines. Diesel fuel should be less costly because it is easier to process than gasoline, produces more "miles per gallon", and is less dangerous from a fire standpoint. The difficulty with diesel engines is that they must be more rugged because the diesel compression ratio is about 20 to 1, versus about 10 to 1 for gasoline models. General Motors and other US companies tried them for a few years but gave up with all the problems associated with diesel engines back then-

Riding to a NY Giant football game with my neighbor Bill Armstrong, he told how he had recently purchased a 1979 Olds 98 car with a diesel engine and was having so much trouble with it that he would 'take anything" for it to get rid of it. "How about \$1,000" I said, and he replied "sold". The car was a beauty, and I went to a used parts location and found a 351 cubic inch gasoline engine with very low mileage that was the same as the GM diesel engine, but gasoline powered. A local garage exchanged the gas engine for diesel, and the whole cost for engine and exchange was \$1700.

I sold the car for \$4,500 the first day it was advertised, and "yes" I did fully explain what had been changed on the car and gave a "buy back" assurance" to the buyer. Both of us were very pleased with the result.

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### **DANCING LESSONS**

My wife Elsie loves to dance. I don't particularly enjoy dancing and that's why I'm not very good at it. Surely lessons would help me enjoy dancing more, she felt and bought tickets for 3 dance lessons us at the local Arthur



Murray Studio. There we were at the studio for our first lesson a week later. Lots of nice people, music, and snacks, and I tried my best to do what I was told by the instructor.

Aller the last dance, the instructor went around the room to and thank the students, and he explained that his grading system would relate to the values of various metals,

(Platinum, gold, silver, etc.). When he got around to visiting us, Elsie asked him how we had done. He looked at her and said with a big smile "gold". Then of course she asked how I had done. He looked at me and said — "not even plastic". I still have the last two lesson tickets.

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## **MY SURPRISE GIFT**

I have a habit of buying "surprise gifts", which are often something not really needed or affordable, just something that would be nice to have. I had thought it would be "nice to have" a bumper pool table when we moved to Upper Saddle River, NJ and ordered one at a "bargain price", but not to be delivered until just before Christmas Day. Surely, I would have time to justify this great need before it arrived.

When I arrived home from work just a few days after I had ordered the pool table that would be delivered at Christmas coming up a few weeks later, I was greeted at home by my wife and several excited children who had a big "surprise" for me. The pool table had been delivered much too early, and Elsie had figured out what I must have done. She had asked the children to help her get it down to the game room and it had been all set up.

She told me that she had heard me mention that sometime "when we could afford it", that it would be nice to have a bumper pool table, and that she had bought one as a surprise for me. When she told me that she had paid far more for it, it was much more than the one "on order". She seemed so happy that they had just made the set up in time to get the packaging materials to the garbage place before the garbage was picked up.

I had a small panic attack before she confessed that she had figured out my purchase and had our children help carry out her scheme. Yes, we still have the "table" I had ordered.

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## **HAS ANYONE SPOKEN TO HIM**

Our family lived in Pennington, NJ for 4 years when I was IBM Branch Manager in nearby Trenton, NJ. We joined the Pennington Presbyterian Church soon after our move, and really enjoyed the church and community. Shortly after joining the church, I was asked to become an Elder in the church and was very pleased. At the first Elder's meeting I attended, the discussion centered around correspondence between the church and a "Mr. Rogers". After several "back and forth" letters were read and discussed, I asked a "newcomer question". Had anyone spoken to Mr. Rogers or had all church contacts been via the mail. After the obvious answer I asked if it would be okay if I met with him as I was a new member and had recently moved to Pennington.

The suggestion was accepted, and I met Mr. Rogers for lunch a few days later, and had a great lime. He was interested in knowing about my family, and I learned of his long involvement in Pennington and our church. He did have several concerns about the church and its direction, which we discussed in quite some detail. We actually had several "chats", and soon after he returned to church and all the letters stopped. There is no way that the written word can replace a "person to person" relationship.

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## **TED WILLIAMS**

The "Splendid Splinter" was a baseball player illuminated by batting skills that were spectacular. Boston Red Sox fans and particularly sports writers were often "turned off" by his attitude toward them, but all marveled at his ability to get a hit — sometimes more than four times in ten at bats.

I traveled from our home in Lexington, KY to Chicago on business quite often when I worked for IBM and was working there in the late 1960's. One evening when I checked into the Water Tower Inn about 6PM, I noticed a tall, lanky person in a lobby chair reading a newspaper. He looked like Ted Williams, and I walked over to see. I excused myself for interrupting him, and asked if he was Ted Williams. He started to get up, but I said "please don't, I have always admired your baseball ability, and it's a pleasure to meet you". I went to my room, hung up the things in my suitcase and washed up. About 20 minutes later I was walking thru the lobby again on my way to find some food, and when I glanced over to where Ted had been sitting, he was still there and waving me over. I looked around to see if he was motioning to someone else, but no, it was me. He asked if I was going for food and if he could join me. He was a sponsor for outdoor hunting and fishing equipment for Sears Roebuck at the time and had been waiting for the Sears rep to have dinner. He explained that he must have gotten the date screwed up since the rep never appeared. (The Sears headquarters is in Chicago).

We went to a nearby steakhouse, and I had a most memorable evening. Back then, I had a great ability to remember details, names, and statistics. He was pleased to talk about baseball and added lots of stories to our conversation. I remember telling him that I had seen a player make 3 errors on one play when my dad had taken me to a NY Giant game. He laughed when I told him the Giant shortstop let a grounder go thru his legs as was trying to start a double play, then dropped the return throw from the leftfielder to get the batter at second base and completed the triple error by overthrowing the catcher at home plate trying to get the player who had been on first base at the beginning. He was terrific at talking about his life and dreams and I will always remember that great evening.

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## **CONSERVATIVE ENOUGH?**

I grew up in New Paltz, NY, a small town in a farming community. People helped and shared with each other. The village churches and local Grange helped people in need. For instance, if a local farmer lost a barn in a fire, neighbors would gather to rebuild, etc. My Dad was an attorney, and was often paid for his services with farm products, and often we would have several turkeys for Thanksgiving as "payment" from different clients, etc. Far different from [the way things are done today.

Dad was as "conservative" as you could imagine. When asked about his thoughts on government and politics, his favorite reply was that he would like the government to do only two things for him. First would be to protect him and our country in time of war, and secondly, deliver his mail. Then he would add "and I'm not so sure about the mail".

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## **FOR PETE'S SAKE**

During World War II, my hometown of New Paltz was close to a new airport, Stewart Air Force Base, in Newburgh, NY utilized for pilot training. Often in training, accidents will happen, and on several occasions, planes did collide while practicing maneuvers. Usually, the pilots were able to bail out.

On one occasion, two planes collided very near our town, and Dad (Peter Harp), being a volunteer fireman, got a ride to the crash site by Gordon Pine, the local undertaker. Parked at a farm near the crash site, Dad and Gordon were running to help when Dad

"disappeared". Actually, he had fallen through rotted boards covering the farm cesspool and was really a stinky mess. He rode home standing on the running board of Mr. Pine's care and discarded his clothing in our garage. The headline in our local paper, "The Independence" read: —  
"FOR PETE'S SAKE, WE HOPE THERE ARE NO MORE PLANE CRASHES".

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### **WOULD HAVE THOUGHT**

Being parents to children is always beset with interesting situations. I remember one evening while living in Upper Saddle River, NJ, I decided to make a cocktail for Elsie and me. Back then, a couple of our children really liked to party, so I had installed a padlock on the liquor cabinet as a deterrent to any unapproved use. Preparing the drink, I realized that the vodka bottle was half full, but with water. What was happening was that the hinges of the cabinet door were being removed and replaced with the door after the liquor was being "shared." Interesting?

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### **A VERY SCARY EVENT**

Martin Luther King was shot on the afternoon of April 4, 1968. A really tragic event that each of us living then remembers. I surely do. I was in Miami, FL for an IBM sales celebration. I, along with Jack Pramuk, a marketing associate of mine with our wives, had rented a car to dine at the Penguin Restaurant a few miles out of town.

Driving back to our hotel after dinner, the car radio was telling us of the tragedy and of all the rioting and problems that followed. People were rightfully upset, particularly blacks who had lost their great advocate. Suddenly my car was sideswiped by a car with four young black men. They shouted at us to stop, and repeatedly banged this side of our car to make us stop. You can imagine how frightened we were, particularly our wives.

The next short period of time was a nightmare. I wouldn't stop and was finally able to cross a median and make it back to our hotel with a very "banged up" rental car. We were very blessed that we had escaped from who knows what.

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### **NOT A BAD PRICE**

When our daughter Missy attended Ealing College, near London, England for one year, our daughter Carrie, Elsie's mother, my mom and dad, Elsie and I went over for a visit. The Broadway play "Starlight Express" had just opened in London, and I purchased tickets. The show was great and we had a good time

A couple of days later, Dad asked me how much the tickets had cost, and I told him they were \$57 dollars. "Not bad for all seven of us" he said. I didn't say a word.

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### **BLUE JAYS**

I'm not a fan of blue jays. Oh yes, they are beautiful, but they are very aggressive and often rob other birds' nests. And perhaps my opinion is shaped by an event while I was attending college, I enjoyed hunting, and when I was at Union in my senior year, I would frequently go hunting with a fraternity brother before late morning classes. The pheasants and rabbits we shot were field dressed and our fraternity house cook would add them to our "menus." One morning, Dick shot several times at blue jays flying near, but kept missing. He explained that he also tied imitation flies for trout fishing and needed some blue jay feathers for a particular

pattern. Soon after, a blue jay flew near me, so I shot it for Dick's use and put in my game pocket along with a couple of pheasants we had shot.

Leaving the field to go back to school, we met a man walking a dog. When he asked if we had any luck, we told him about the pheasants, and Dick exclaimed what a great shot I had made on a blue jay with my small .410-gauge shotgun. You guessed it, he was a Game Warden, and blue jays were considered songbirds and protected. I was given a summons to visit a Justice of the Peace that next Friday evening.

My Dad was a lawyer and I called him hoping he would call and see if I could "get off".

When I mentioned the name of the person I was to see, he told me that not only did he know the person, but he had been his classmate at Albany Law School. Dad's answer was a big "NO". I had broken the law and should face up to it. So that Friday evening, I along with poachers and others were called in one-by-one for our hearing. I was fined \$17.50 and paid it. Of course, when the lawbreakers were listed in the Schenectady (Gazette newspaper the next day, I got a lot of unwanted publicity on campus. The lesson learned was twofold. Never shoot a blue jay and take your medicine when deserved. Thanks, Dad, for the good lesson learned-  
**WHAT WOULD YOU DO?**

Many times, in my life I have had to convince someone to help me solve a problem or help make a decision. One example comes to mind that was very helpful. My wife Elsie and I were on our honeymoon in Hawaii, and we needed to rent a car for a few days and went to Hertz Rental to get one. Oh, my goodness! When we arrived at the Hertz location there was a long line waiting for a rental car, but apparently very few were available. Even people with reservations were turned away with obvious anguish. It didn't make much sense to stay in line, but I did.

At last, it was my turn at the reservation desk, and I explained that I had no reservation, and that in my work my secretary always handled my travel details and I had goofed. I looked him right in the eye and asked the big question - "If you were on your honeymoon and had forgot to make reservations, what would you do." The agent looked at me for a full minute, then reached under the desk and handed me keys to a rental car and the rental agreement to sign.

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### **THE FIRST ALONE - My thoughts the year after Dad died**

It's a strange feeling this Father's Day. One looks forward to sharing with Dad on this special day, but after 64 years being my dad, he has gone to his Heavenly Reward. After all, 96 years of age is more than one can ask for - or expect. But that thought doesn't help me one little bit.

Dad was more to me than a father might be. He was my friend, my advisor, my cheering section, and most of all my inspiration.

Last week I tossed a pebble into the water at our favorite fishing hole, and watched the ripples spread. When I walked the farmland where we spent so much time together hunting in the Fall, a buck deer bounded across the field, his new antler growth just showing above his ears. It seemed so appropriate for the mood I was in.

The next stop was the cemetery where he was laid to rest. Sitting there reflecting on our times together, I thought how wonderful it would be if my children would think as much of me as I do of you. **HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!**

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### **ALMOST THE END**

I hope you have enjoyed these "snip-its" about my "snip-its" and I encourage you to do the same thing. What is really fun is; That thinking back is not nearly as difficult as other things we used to and could do, can't as we get on in years. So give it a try!

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## STORIES TO REMEMBER 3

October 3, 2023

Additional Stories and Reflections on existing stories — New Paltz Years... Dictated 10 my daughter Missy during visits 2022-2023.

### **HERE WE GO AGAIN! –**

#### **WORLD WAR YEARS THE DAY BEFORE THE "DAY OF INFAMY"**

I remember this moment so clearly, as crisp as that cold winter day...

December 7, 1941, at 2:30pm - I was sitting in my dad's new Ford Coupe (he always had a Ford model) in the driveway listening to the New York Giants and Brooklyn Dodgers Football game being broadcast from Polo Ground in New York (as I remember the final score was Dodgers winning 21-7).

I was listening in the car because the new car's radio could reach New York City radio stations and the radio in our house could only receive signals from Poughkeepsie and Kingston stations.

When the Sports Announcer began to share the world news about Pearl Harbor, I was in shock and disbelief. I ran into the house to get my parents and older brother Bob. We all sat in the car and listened to the start of World War II.

(US had cut off oil supply to Japan...) Of course, we were concerned with the actions of Germany and responded with aid to Great Britain with the "Lend/Lease" program of 50 US Naval Ships and other supplies.

I was in school the next day, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1941, when we listened to President Roosevelt's live broadcast asking Congress to declare war against Japan and Germany. Forever known as the "Day of Infamy" Address.

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#### **"HARD DECISIONS"**

My dad Peter H. Harp was born on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1899. As soon as he turned 18, he enlisted in the Army. The War ended shortly after. When WWII started, he was not eligible for the draft because of his age and children but served in a civilian role as Ulster County Selective Service Manager.

This was a most difficult job as he had to select who was to serve by order of the draft laws. As an attorney in the area, he knew many families and had to choose from members of a family which son would go to war, and which son would stay home to work the farm and support the family.

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#### **CANNONS AND TOOTHPASTE TUBES**

Everything changed so quickly...

Rationing was set up for both food and fuel. Stamp books were issued. Gasoline was limited to 5 gallons a week, or more if your vehicle was used for essential and delivery service. Food items like sugar, flour, meats, etc. were severely rationed i.e., oleo was rationed at one quarter pound per week. Butter was not available at all. Tires and batteries and other car essentials were limited because of military supply demands, new cars were not available at all.

Scrap Metal was collected and recycled for manufacturing war materials including the WWI Memorial Cannon mounted at the local school. There was an ongoing collection of used toothpaste tubes (made of soft recyclable metal), cardboard, paper, and other materials were "donated" to the war effort. Even the village dump was scavenged for recyclable materials, used tires, and cans.

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### **GRANDMA ROOSA "WHAT DID YOU REALLY BRING ME?"**

During the war years I was 10-14 years old. My maternal grandparents lived with us on Wurts Ave. In my "spare time", I would hunt, fish and trap with a good degree of success. Grandma Roosa gladly accepted my offerings in her role as cook for the family.

Most days after school, I loved to go fishing, hunting, and trapping at nearby farms. I would also glean unharvested potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, and apples for our family dinner table. When I returned from hunting, I'd present Grandma with the vegetables to which she would reply with "What did you really bring me?" and I would reach into my game bag and retrieve the catch of the day - pheasant, rabbit, squirrel. She would clean and prepare the catch for our dinner.

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### **A CAN FULL OF WORMS**

We ate a lot of fish. I used "nightcrawlers" as bait. We harvested the worms at night using a flashlight on our lawn. We also placed 25 worms in a Campbell® Soup Can and sold the worms for 25 cents a can.

In Springtime, I fished in the Wallkill River and speared "Suckers" in the nearby Plattekill Creek. (Suckers are a very boney fish, but good eating.) On the Wallkill Car Bridge, I fished at night baiting several hooks on a strong, weighted fishing line with a sinker on the end. I tied the line to the bridge and left it overnight- Getting up early before school I would check the line for "Bullheads" (catfish) which were most active at night. Other fish species I caught were Sunfish and Perch, Pickerel, Bass and Carp- (More to come about the Carp)

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### **LIVE CARP AND RELIGION**

Two Jewish doctors lived in town, Dr. Rost and Dr. Boetzel. They liked to eat Carp and would pay me \$.50 per fish (weighing between 5-10 and sometimes as much as 25lbs). For religious tradition reasons they required the fish to be alive. I would deliver them in my wagon and place the live carp in their water-filled bathtubs.

My dad was a very involved leader and member of the Dutch Reformed Church. When the church leadership decided these "Jewish" doctors (of Christian faith) were not permitted to worship in the church, my father told the congregation that he would not attend church if they would not accept them because they were not representatives of the crazy man in Germany (Hitler). They were welcomed.

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### **GRANDPA ROOSA**

My maternal grandfather, Frank Roosa had various jobs. He had a job delivering food for "Sutton's Market" and raised chickens and pigeons. He increased the number of chickens he raised in our 2 barns in an effort to meet increasing demand for food during the war years. He delivered milk and I remember going out to the truck to pick out "our" milk in the deposit return glass milk bottles. For each clean returned bottle, we would get 5 cents.

The government put price controls on food and fuel because of scarcity and controlled by use of rationing coupons,

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## **"VICTORY GARDEN SEED SALESMAN"**

My older brother Robert (13) and I (10) were too young for service but remember vividly selling garden seeds for Victory Gardens to anyone who had space to grow food. I remember winning many "sales awards" for doing this.

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## **WHEELS UP HELLICAT LANDING**

I remember the day three Navy Hellicat planes got lost in the fog and found an opening at New Paltz and were trying to land on Route 299 leading west. out. of town (1/2 mile from our house). Mrs. Atherson was driving her car back and forth on the road watching in fascination but interfering with the pilot's landing. The first plane skidded to a landing in the wheel field adjacent to the road, with wheels up; the second pilot attempted a landing with wheels down, got stuck in the mud and flipped over; the third pilot also made a skid landing with wheels up.

Many people raced to rescue the pilot of the flipped plane and were successful in digging that pilot out. I remember my father telling us that he had to caution workers to "put out your cigarettes" due to the explosive dangers from the leaking gas from the planes.

All three pilots survived and took refuge at our home where they were welcomed with a meal and lodging for the night. They were so thankful for our help and hospitality. I had a newspaper delivery job at the time and being caught up in all the excitement no papers were delivered that night.

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## **VALUE OF MONEY LESSON...**

Many young men were away serving in WWII. Because of the shortage of manpower, I got job at age 11 at "Wesley's Mobil Gas Station" in New Paltz. My job duties entailed pumping gas, checking oil, washing windshield, and checking tire pressure for every customer.

Gas was scarce and fuel ration stamps were issued based on job vehicle requirements. Some people were reluctant to give up their fuel ration stamps and used tricks to avoid this... "I left them at home" or driving away without paying for the gas. All of this had to be reported by noting license plate numbers.

Working at Wesley's was a very profitable job. I worked from 7am-7pm, seven days a week in the summer and earned \$4/day. My father often reminded me of the reality of my job compared to those serving in the war. Our young Private Class service men initial pay was \$21 a month.

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## **MORE GAS STATION REFLECTIONS**

One of the jobs at Wesley's Station in the winter was to change the tire chains necessary for driving on ice and snow. "Monkey Links" were particularly difficult to install on the broken cross links on the tire chains due to the ice and snow on the tires still on the car.

Changing truck tires was precarious because the tires were mounted with a retaining ring and if not placed properly, the tire would come off with explosive force and could break your arm if you were careless. One time, a rim did come off and made a hole in the service station ceiling to remind me of this danger. WOW!

Repairing flat tires posed working dangers too. Because of scarcity, tires were made of synthetic rubber and the inner tubes (used back then) required a special glue to hold the repair patches. You had to light the adhesive and apply the patch quickly. This was difficult because of the caustic procedure and the precision of timing required.

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## **GOLD STAR ON FRONT DOOR**

Life was difficult for everyone during the War years, but especially for those who lost family members. A Gold Star on the front door reminded all of their loss and sorrow.

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## **OVER "THE HUMPS"**

When service men came home for a brief leave, they would often come over to our home to tell us about war on the front lines and how they were doing.

One pilot shared about his missions flying C-47 cargo planes "over The Hump" in Asia (eastern part of the Himalayan Mountain range) to supply food and war materials to our US Troops. The C-47 plane had top speed of 195 mph and the headwinds they faced were often greater than 150 mph. With little to no headway he would frequently have to return to base because he was running out of fuel, due to these strong headwind conditions. A Merchant Marine serving on an oil tanker shared about being on one of the 3 out of 17 tankers that survived torpedo attacks in the Atlantic off the coast of Africa. This was very agonizing for my father who had to make service selections... trying to leave one son home to care for the family and farm.

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## **GOOD BEHAVIOR AND SATURDAY HUNTING WITH DAD**

Dad liked hunting and either my older brother Robert Q! I could go with him on Saturdays. He would decide between the two of us based on whomever was "best behaved" that week. You may find this hard to believe but I was most often chosen for those Saturday hunting forays. I had to follow behind him and was instructed to lay on the ground when the birds were flushed. Dad was a good shot. We hunted mostly for pheasant, woodcock, and partridge. Deer were very scarce and we were not allowed to go hunting for deer because of higher danger from rifle shots. If someone in town did shoot a deer their name would be listed in the local newspaper.

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## **"ONCE IN A WHILE 1 MISS"**

Woodchucks posed a hazard to cattle farmers due to the danger of the holes they made in the pasture fields (possibility of cattle stepping in and breaking a leg). Farmers would pay 25 cents bounty per woodchuck. I was riding my bike home one day after woodchuck hunting when a flock of crows landed in a field adjacent to the roadway. I loaded my Remington Bolt Action 22 rifle while riding my bike hoping to get a shot at the crows on the ground. When I stopped my bike to shoot, the crows flushed but I shot anyhow, and one crow fell. An approaching driver stopped to remark about my marksmanship. My response to his awe, "Once in a while I miss."

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## **MUSKRAT PELTS AND MR. POLYKOFF**

During WWII muskrat pelts were in big demand. In the winter I trapped animals to sell their fur. Mr. Polykoff was a local fur trader and came to our house to make an offer on the pelts I had. He was making a deal with me in our cellar when my dad came in to shine his shoes. The legal price limit was capped at \$2.50 a pelt due to pricing laws during WWII. After my dad left the room, Mr. Polykoff paid me \$4.50 per pelt and made me promise not to tell.



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## **HIGH SCHOOL WALK OUT**

In my junior year of high school, our principal, Mr. Cunningham, was fired by the school board for not doing an adequate job. He was very popular with the students, so a student-led walk-out was arranged for the Friday after his termination. My father was the attorney for the school board, and he cautioned me not to be part of the protest. When Friday came, all the students but me walked out of the school. I was the Junior Class president. It was a difficult day for my classmates and me. I was dating Nancy at the time and the class elected me as Prom King and ...my cousin Peggy (not Nancy) as Prom Queen. Many in the class were jealous of Nancy and mad at me for refusing to participate in the protest.

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## **MR. BUGAR AND THE RIFLE RANGE - CARRYING A 22 TO SCHOOL**

In my senior year, I was Student Body President. Mr. Bugar had just arrived as our new principal. He asked me to assist him with projects to calm down and build relations with the students. I suggested two things: a rifle range in the basement of the school and a game room with a ping pong table. Both these ideas he acted on with great success and enthusiasm by the students.

We started the 1<sup>st</sup> Rifle Club that year. In those days, we walked to school carrying our rifles through town to school as we would often go hunting after school.

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## **ALWAYS READY FOR A RUMMAGE SALE - STORIES ABOUT MY MOTHER STELLA**

My mother was very involved in our Dutch Reformed Church and headed up the Rummage Sales many, many years. When she passed, we found 32 suitcases filled and ready with items for the next Rummage Sale!

When she had appointments, she would often take me to Mrs. Dressers home for care. I didn't like to leave home and would hide in the vegetable barrel filled with leaves used to store our vegetable produce.

My mother volunteered during the war by packaging bandages and other needed supplies to be sent to our Troops.

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## **SINGING FOR MOVIE TICKETS - CHURCH CHOIR MEMORIES**

All the kids at church were encouraged to be part of the church junior choir. If we attended five rehearsals, we were awarded a pass to the local movie house. Back then, tickets for Saturday Matinees were 15 cents. I was paid early in life to enjoy myself.

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## **VISITS FROM MRS. ROOSEVELT**

My Aunt Dee was good friends with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and an important part of our lives during WWII, Roosevelt's home in Hyde Park was about 12 miles from our home. Mrs. Roosevelt would visit often. (Because of her husband's early indiscretions Mrs. Roosevelt remained his wife but at a distance, literally.) Mrs. Roosevelt and her State Trooper driver would stop at Wesley's Service Station where I worked so I got frequent visit opportunities.

## **AUNT DEE LETTERS FROM HOME**

Aunt Dee (Delia Shaw) was my dad's older sister. She would faithfully write 'weekly' letters to each of our local soldiers with news from home.

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## **4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE - MRS. WADSWORTH'S MOLESKIN JACKET AND PURPLE COW**

Mrs. Wadsworth, my 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, wanted a moleskin coat made and would pay us 10 cents per moleskin we caught. She was widowed and lived in the mountains toward Mohonk. I remember a class project of making a puppet with paper mâché. I made it to look like my grandfather, Elting Harp. Mrs. Wadsworth commented that my grandfather had a cleft chin and had me remake the puppet to her satisfaction.

I had a singing solo in our annual class production, singing "Down in the Valley."

One of Mrs. Wadsworth's weekly assignments was to memorize a poem and recite it in class.

She said we could do the same one over and over which I did. My poem was the Purple Cow.

*"I never saw a purple cow, I never hope to see one, but this I would say anyhow,  
I'd rather see than be one."*

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## **HADDON'S CAMP AND OSCAR'S BEACH HOUSE - FISHING WITH DAD**

One of my biggest joys in my early years was spending time with my dad. He was an avid outdoorsman, when he wasn't busy with his law practice, he would take my brother Bob and I fishing. We would go fishing at Oscar's Beach Camp on Heddon's Lake or swimming in the Wallkill River that ran through Oscar Heddon's property. I preferred fishing over swimming.

On Friday nights after work, we would tie Dad's 15' cane pole to the top of his white, 1941 Ford Coupe. We fished from 7pm-9:30pm for "pan" fish catching sunfish, pickerel, and bullheads.

I remember walking to the nearby Heddon's Corner Store for an ice cream cone or sandwich. We would tie our poles to the dock so they would not be dragged away. Inevitably we would have fish on the line when we returned.

My job was to clean the fish. The Bullheads, having skin not scales, were hard to peel. I would use the pot stove in our basement and using long-handled pliers place the fish in boiling water for one minute and then I could rub off the fish skin.

The pot stove was also used by Grandma Roosa and mom to wash clothes in with the ringer washing machine.

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## **LEO SPYES AND THE PEBBLE**

One summer evening, standing on the sidewalk in front of my friend and neighbor Leo Spye's house, we each flipped a pebble at a passing car. One of those pebbles hit the car. The car screeched to a stop and four young men got out. They were enraged.

Leo and I ran in different directions. Leo ran into his house, and I ran toward my house nearby. I ran into our backyard and jumped over our small in ground, concrete fish pool (sized 8 x 5 feet). My pursuers didn't know the pool was there and fell in. I ran down to safety at the New Paltz lumber yard and hid under a pile of lumber.

No repercussions for me, but not for Leo. Leo's mother was a hairdresser, and the pursuers stole her business sign.

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## **WONDERFUL PARENTS**

Dad was a country lawyer. He prepared deeds and wills for ten dollars and property surveyance services for five dollars. When clients were unable to pay his fees, he accepted alternate forms of payment depending on what the farmers raised or produced - trees, cheese, eggs. We often had more than one Christmas tree delivered and on Thanksgiving, live turkeys were delivered. On one occasion we received several guinea hens and one escaped when I was dispatching them. It landed on the roof of the nearby lumber yard, and I had to get my rifle to retrieve it for our dinner.

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## **DAD**

One job working for my weekly allowance was to clean his law office. This included four rooms and stairs for 25 cents. I cleaned the bathroom, carpet, windows, and dusted. I thought this was a great allowance.

I went with dad to visit his clients. One Saturday we visited an elderly woman's home so he could prepare her will. I remained on the back porch waiting. Driving home, I jokingly asked why she had so many small, tied bundles of branches and twigs. While I found that strange, my dad explained that since she lived alone this is how she heated her home with her wood stove and to never made fun of what people have to do.

Dad was very involved in setting up the Huguenot Historical Society and directed the buy back of the original Huguenot homes from the original families. Many needed major renovations and repairs to return to original condition.

Dad has purchased three acres of land in the middle of New Paltz for eleven thousand dollars. Years later, the town wished to acquire the property for a new firehouse and meeting rooms. It was appraised at \$250,000 but dad wanted it returned to the town and accepted the original \$11,000 as compensation.

When asked at his 65<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, how do you stay together so long he responded, "It's not finding the right partner, it's being the right partner."

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## **MORE IBM REFLECTIONS**

### **AN "OFFICE JOB" WAS NOT FOR ME**

About two months after my promotion to Product Planning, Gordon Moodie, President of IBM Office Products Division visited Lexington and spoke with me. He knew me because I had been a high achiever in sales for five years. I told him I like the people I work with and Lexington, KY is a nice place to live. But an "office job" was not for me. He offered me a new venue.

He suggested I take six months and go out and meet with customers and prospects and see what they really wanted a typewriter to do and get back to him with "my findings". This I did and was asked to head up the department and "get it done." I did what he asked and stayed very, very busy. Some of my work is reflected in other stories.

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## **WHO WOULD SUSPECT**

Heading up product planning, part of my job was field testing new models and or improvements. I often chose Hartford, CT because both Royal and Underwood manufactured typewriters there and who would suspect. IBM around. Traveler's, AETNA, and Heublein Liquor Company were companies chosen to test new equipment. A benefit of choosing Hartford was the proximity to my Uncle Vernon Roosa who lived in West Hartford. His son Peter and I loved to fish in Woodridge and Woodpond Lakes in the evenings. I had a chance to visit and spend the night at the Roosa's home... which is now our present home.

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## **SWITCH PITCH AND THE LAB**

The IBM Selectric® Typewriter used a round typing element available with a variety of font styles. However, a customer would have to choose which spacing he wanted. For example, Pica (10 characters per horizontal inch), or Elite Pitch (12 characters per horizontal inch). This meant that a typewriter would have to be chosen based on which pitch the customer preferred. My vision was to have the ability to change the pitch to better reflect the spacing of font types chosen. Our engineering development lab worked very hard to achieve this. A few weeks later I received a call from an excited engineer, Peter DeJeorgc, the Lab Manager, "They had it! Hurry over!" The invention looked great, but not good enough. The customer would still have to choose a primary type spacing because "tabs" could only be set at half inch intervals of one spacing type. When I told them this was not good enough, Peter suggested I not visit the lab anymore. While I was thrown out of the lab, I persevered and worked with Lee Palmer, one of the engineers, at his home on this project. At midnight one evening, he called me to come over. With a few simple adjustments he worked out how to have adjustable spacing, margin, and tab settings on the same machine! For a little extra cost to build, IBM now had an even better typewriter. I was told I could visit the lab again.

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## **THE IMPORTANCE OF NAMES**

The IBM Selectric® was a great name for the United States model, but the word Selectric® was close to the word for guillotine in German, so in Europe it was called the "IBM Model 72." An even bigger discovery was the name we had chosen for a compact, portable electric typewriter IBM had developed for the "home" market. I travelled to Paris to show this product to top management in Europe. When I uncovered my first flip chart page, a collective gasp went up. The name "MINET" (miniature electric typewriter) which we thought would be good name to reflect the home model typewriter was similar to the French word for an exotic sex position. We changed the name.

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## **WHO WOULD SELL IT?**

The compacted typewriter I just spoke about was good but had limitations. For instance, it had a small paper capacity. IBM didn't want its sales force selling a less expensive machine in place of the office models for profitability reasons. My job was to find an alternate sales outlet. I interviewed several companies such as Sears Roebuck, Electrolux, Fuller Brush, and Montgomery Ward and several others as possible sales outlets. It was ultimately decided to stick with office equipment only. A good decision.

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## ALMOST THE END

I have enjoyed putting these thoughts together, and often think of my parents and how they shared so much. Little things like Saturday afternoons when Dad would stop for a pint of Hershey ice cream on the way home from work. It was 15 cents a pint back then. Mom would put a towel on my lap and my older brother Bob's, the ice cream in the middle of the table and a spoon for each of the four.

I had such wonderful parents, and when I wrote a remembrance of my dad for his Memorial Service, I wasn't strong enough to read it. My wife Elsie read it, and it still brings tears to my eyes. I want to share it with you, and thank you for letting me share some of my memory treasures. GOD BLESS ALL OF YOU!

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## THE FINAL CHAPTER

November H, 1995

Dear Dad,

It was about a year ago that you asked if your book "Horse and Buggy Days" published in 1969 could be updated with articles you have written since then. It was done, and you were pleased with it when it was ready a few weeks later, just before your stroke, I hope you are happy with this part too,

Your life spanned 19 Presidents of the United States, two World Wars and numerous "police" or United Nations actions, women's right to vote, a major depression, and too many other things to list or remember. You enlisted in the Army in World War I on your 18 [h birthday, served as the youngest Mayor of New Paltz and lately became the oldest member of the New Paltz Reformed Church. When you were 94 years old you were the oldest practicing attorney in New York State.

All great things, but I remember you best as being my dad. Showing me how to hit a baseball, to play third base, to catch a football, and cheering me on in games; helping me catch hellgrammites to fish, walking with me early in the morning to check my muskrat traps, suggesting I get a job delivering newspapers to earn money, and learn about business and people. I always wondered why you put me at the best fishing spot, or on a deer stand while you pushed thru the brush to send the deer my way. You said that I would understand when I had children, and ...you were right.

I remember when you told me to always do my job a little better than expected. To work a little longer or harder, and to leave things better than they were left for me. This I have really tried to do.

Dad, you were often asked to give a message at memorial services, and would tell a "ditty" that your mother used to say to you and your seven siblings:

*"If you could see your ancestors all standing in a row, there might be some you wouldn't care to know.*

*Now for another view:*

*If you were standing in that line,*

*Would your family be proud of you?"*

The answer Dad, is an emphatic "YES!"

There's an old saying in India:

*"When you were born, you cried. and the world rejoiced. Live your life in such a way*

*That when you die, the world cries*

*And you rejoice."*

You lived such a life, and although we cry today, you are rejoicing! And so, the final chapter of this book is done and dedicated to your wife of 68 years, and our wonderful mother.

I know you would want it this way.

Your loving son,

Elwyn

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## **SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT**

The following are two reprinted articles that are very meaningful to me, and I have tried to relate to them in my life. I do not know who prepared the carpenter's reflection, but do know that Michael Josephson was a YMCA executive who lived in California. Enjoy!

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### **A CARPENTER'S STORY**

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife enjoying his extended family. He would miss the paycheck, but he needed to retire. They could get by.

The contractor was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favor. The carpenter said yes, but in time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career.

When the carpenter finished his work, the employer came to inspect the house. He handed the front-door key to the carpenter. "This is your house." He said, "my gift to you."

The carpenter was shocked! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently.

So, it is with us. We build our lives, a day at a time, often putting less than our best into the building. Then with shock, we realize we have to live in the house we have built. If we could do it over, we'd do it much differently. But we cannot go back.

You are the carpenter. Each day you hammer a nail, place a board, or erect a wall. "Life is a do-it-yourself project," someone has said. Your attitudes and the choices you make today, build the "house" you live in tomorrow.

Build wisely!

---

### **“What will Matter” by Michael Josephson**

Ready or not, some day it will all come to an end.

There will be no more sunrises, no minutes, hours, or days.

All the things you collected, whether treasured or forgotten will pass to someone else.

Your wealth, fame and temporal power will shrivel to irrelevance.

It will not matter what you owned or what you were owed.

Your grudges, resentments, frustrations, and jealousies will finally disappear.

So too, your hopes, ambitions, plans and to-do lists will expire.

The wins and losses that once seemed so important will fade away.

It won't matter where you came from or what side of the tracks you lived on at the end.

It won't matter whether you were beautiful or brilliant. Even your gender and skin color will be irrelevant.

So, what will matter?

How will the value of your days be measured?

What will matter is not what you bought but what you built, not what you got but what you gave.

What will matter is not your success but your significance.

What will matter is not what you learned but what you taught.

What will matter is every act of integrity, compassion, courage, or sacrifice that enriched, empowered, or encouraged others to emulate your example.

What will matter is not your competence but your character-

What will matter is not how many people you knew, but how many will feel a lasting loss when you are gone

What will matter is how long you will be remembered, by whom and for what.

Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident. It's not a matter of circumstance but by choice.

Choose to live a life: that matters.

In Memory of Elwin Harp 2024

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