

Daniel E. Fraga Memoir, Part 2

College, Marriage and Beyond

I'll start here with my time in college. Some of this period was covered in Part 1 and I won't cover that part here. After successfully completing my Plane Geometry requirement in night school while I was living in Carmen's home with her family, I was able to enter the Aeronautical Engineering program at Wayne State University so I enrolled in September of 1957. During the time prior to this I had a nice white collar job at Chrysler Marketing Analysis and I had saved enough money to pay for tuition and books. During my freshman year I was still living with Carmen and I commuted to college. While I was working I had paid Carmen, I believe, \$50 a month, which was a pretty good bargain for room & board. I don't remember whether I continued to pay her after I started college, but I think she told me not to. The \$110 monthly GI Bill checks began arriving about a month after enrollment.

On Most of the weekends I would drive about 50 miles back to the family farm, primarily so I could see and go out with Helen Tank, my bride to be. Sometime in the spring of 1958 we decided to get married and we set August 30, 1958 as our wedding date. That summer after school, I got a job working on an orchard farm near Almont. That farm belonged to Gilbert Bristol, the husband to be of Helen's best friend Joanne Milan, who was the person responsible for bringing us together. I lived in our Norman Rd family farm during the summer so I had no real expenses and I was able to save enough money for our wedding and to pay my College expenses until the monthly GI Bill checks started arriving. When we got married we had about a week before my classes started for my sophomore year. So our "Honeymoon" was to move in to the basement apartment that we had rented which was a couple of blocks from the WSU campus. We spent the week going to places like the Zoo and the State Fair. It was also where we experienced a cultural clash. One of the first meals that Helen prepared for us was a casserole. My Mother's meals generally included several side dishes, so when Helen brought the casserole to the table my response was, "is that all there is?"

Dean, our first born, arrived in April of 1959. I was attending classes at WSU in Detroit. When Helen's due date neared, I took her to stay with her Grandmother in Almont. A couple of weeks later when her contractions began, she called me and I came from Detroit and drove her to the Lapeer County Hospital where she went through several long hours enduring the pain of labor before Dean was delivered. I stayed with her until she had to go to the delivery room. After the delivery the Doctor came to the waiting room and told me the delivery was successful, but he wanted my wife to tell me whether it was a boy or a girl. It was quite a suspenseful half hour or so before I got to see Helen and find out that we had a son. I had to leave her and go back to my classes in college so they kept her in the hospital for only a couple of days, which was considered quite short in those days, on the condition that she stayed with her mother in Almont. She and the baby stayed there for a week or so until I came back to get them. Before going back to our apartment we had a final appointment with our Doctor. When we arrived at the Doctor's office, we were given a note from Dr. Williams that said that we wouldn't be charged for the delivery, just the office call. He indicated that he knew how difficult it was to be in college. We had no insurance so we were really

grateful for that. In later years that Doctor ended up living in the same community as my brother Joe and when he saw Joe he would occasionally ask him how we were doing.

That summer, after the end of the semester, we stayed with Helen's parents and Helen's dad, Earl Tank, got me a job working for the city of Almont for the summer doing maintenance and construction work. It was a good job with some interesting experiences. When I went back to college for my junior year, we were able to get an apartment in a Housing Project which was part of a subsidized city apartment complex where the city had made one of the buildings available for student families. The rent was charged at sliding rates based on income. So we paid at the lowest possible rate, which I think was 29 dollars a month. Our apartment was on the top floor (I think it was the 12th floor) and there were 7 apartments on each floor. We had an interesting mixture of occupants living on our floor. There was a Black couple, a mixed Race couple, a Hippie couple, one that was working on a PhD in economics, and 2 other couples. Some of us did a fair amount of socializing on our floor in our apartments and, for that period of time, it was a unique opportunity to discuss racial issues first hand.

We had a memorable problem waiting for our first GI Bill check that year that I covered in Part 1 so I won't repeat it here. Another significant event in my junior year was that I was on the WSU football team part of that year. I've also covered that in Part 1.

For the summer after my Junior year I got a job as a student assistant at the University, so we didn't have to move from our apartment. It was quite an interesting job. I no longer remember the name of the professor I worked for, but he was one of the pioneers in doing Biomechanic research. This was before they had Crash Test Dummies, so he used cadavers. One of my jobs was to help prepare some of the cadavers for the tests with various instrumentations. This took a little getting use to since I had never really seen any dead people before. One of the tests was to compare injuries incurred in a crash with using tempered versus laminated glass in automobiles. To conduct these tests we had to secure a cadaver with the necessary instrumentation in its head and body for its test in an elevator. It was then raised to different heights to simulate different speeds and it was dropped on a section of a car with a windshield and we would get data regarding concussions, fractures and any other types of potential injuries. It was an interesting summer.

When my senior year began I thought it would all be smooth sailing to graduation. However, part way through I found that I was failing a course in Electrical Engineering, which was somewhat ironic, since I had 4 brothers at that time that were electricians. If I failed this course I wouldn't have enough credits to graduate and get my Bachelor of Science Degree in Aeronautical Engineering. Which meant I would have to go to college another semester with no GI Bill money. Luckily, I was eventually very happy to get a D for that course.

One other memorable event during this time was the birth of our daughter Susan on November 29, 1960. I had been out of the apartment and when I returned Helen was packed and she told me it was time to go, so we got in the car and drove to Almont and dropped Dean off with Helen's parents. We then headed for the Lapeer County Hospital again. However, after she got checked in I had to leave and go back to the College because I had to take an end of semester test. After Susan's birth, Helen spent a little time at her parents place and then I came back and collected my family we went back to our apartment so I could finish out my senior year and get my Degree and graduate.

One of the important things that I failed to mention was the interviews that we had for a job after graduation. At that time, most of the jobs for Aeronautical Engineers were either on the East or West coast. I was very reluctant to move that far away from our families, so luckily, the Air Force Research and Development Center at Wright Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton Ohio was recruiting and as soon as I got their offer I was happy and took it. It so happened that much of the technical work force for this Center was from pre WWII and many were retiring and this opened up recruitment for hiring a lot of new graduates at this time.

This might be a good time to talk about my most memorable class mate. His name was Neal Loving. He was about 20 years older than me and he had spent most of his years building, working with and flying gliders and airplanes. What was especially remarkable was that he was Black, when Black's in this field were quite rare and not very welcome. In addition, he was a double amputee. He had lost both of his legs below the knee in a glider accident in 1944 when he was 28 years old. That didn't stop him. Six years later, in 1950, he built a midget one-seater racing plane he called Loving's Love, which he raced with and it is now on permanent display at the Experimental Aircraft Museum in Oshkosh Wisconsin. At the age of 40, in 1956 he enrolled in the Aeronautical Engineering program at Wayne State University and that's where I met him after I enrolled in 1957. I was 21 when I enrolled. I don't remember what my senior project was, but Neal's senior project was to build a roadable plane in the WSU shop. The objective of roadable planes was to design and build a plane that you could fold the wings and drive on the road and be able to park in your garage and then roll them out and drive them to where you could unfold your wings and take off. It was supposed to be the next big thing but it never caught on. Neal and I graduated in the same year and we both got jobs at WPAFB. His wife was from Jamaica and her name was Clare. After graduation they found a place to live in Yellow Springs. We found a place on the West side of Dayton. We didn't see a lot of each other, but we did stay in touch. Eventually Neal scrapped his senior project design and designed and built a new roadable plane in his garage and then parked it there until he wanted to fly it. I got to see it but not fly in it. This design had foldable wings that allowed him to haul it behind his car to a nearby airport and fly it. Neal wrote a book called "Loving's Love" in 1994 which is about his life and his planes. It was published by The Smithsonian and is very good. I proudly own an autographed copy of it. If anybody wants to learn more about Neal Loving, just look him up in Wikipedia. Neal died of cancer in 1998 at the age of 82. I've spent a lot of time here on Neal because I felt so fortunate to have known someone like him and be able to call him a friend.

I've covered Paul's help when we moved to Dayton in Part 1, so I won't repeat it here. I graduated and we moved to Dayton in June 1961. As I mentioned above, our first home was in the west side of Dayton on 333 Roxbury St. It was a mixed Race community which is why we could rent such a nice place at such a reasonable cost and there was a nice park (Residence Park) at the end of our street where we took our kids to play. In addition, we had a very interesting Black neighbor a few houses away. His name was David Albritton. He had won the Silver medal in the High Jump in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, The same year that Jesse Owens broke a bunch of Olympic track records and upset Hitler. He also served in the Ohio House of Representatives. He was also a high school teacher and coach. He was a very personable and nice guy.

When we lived at this place, Helen had a job at Grandview hospital as a nurse's aid. We had a neighbor across the street that was our babysitter for Dean & Susan. Helen's job came to an end shortly before Sep 30th, 1962 when she gave birth to our son Greg. A sad event happened later when our baby sitter was killed by her nephew who lived with them. He was what is called "a disturbed kid". We lived here for a little over 2 years and then we were able to use another GI Bill benefit to help us buy our first house. It was a bi-level in a housing development called Park Layne. The address was 746 Hedwick St., New Carlisle, OH. The story concerning our next home, the one we've been living in for over 5 decades I'll cover later.

I think that this might be a good place to start discussing my career at WPAFB and some of the people that I worked with and, in some cases, we became lifelong friends. One thing to remember, as I mentioned before, was that a large percentage of us were recent college graduates and around the same age so many of us were learning together and bonding as well. My first job was as an Aerospace Engineer in the Performance Branch (ASD/ENFTA) of the Flight Technology Division of the Aeronautical Systems Division (ASD) in the Air Force R & D Center at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB). We had the technical responsibility for monitoring development contracts and evaluating system capabilities of helicopters that were under development, some of them for the Army. This included the UH-1 series (The Huey), the Ch-47B (The Chinook) and the HH-43B and CH-3C. In addition, we evaluated some V/STOL (Vertical/Short Take Off and Landing) aircraft XC-142 and the X-19 that were under development. One of our responsibilities was to determine the mission capabilities of these vehicles. The takeoff performance of these vehicles was very sensitive to take off altitude and temperature conditions for determining such things as payload and range. I worked in this Branch from June of 1962 to January of 1967. I started as a GS-5 with a yearly starting salary \$5,335, which was a pretty decent salary for it's time. The starting salary with the Government was less than the aerospace companies were paying, but the good news was that we basically got an automatic promotion after our first 6 months and then each year after that with around a \$1,000 increase in salary each year that so that after 4 years I was a GS-12 making \$10,250. This was a very good salary for it's time (Median yearly income in 1965 was around \$6,000 to \$7,000). It was at this point that I finally felt that we didn't have to budget every dollar and that we could go out for dinner whenever we felt like it.

My first boss was Skit Dunham and during our lunch breaks we would all play a card game (Hearts) in his office. For lunch most of us were either brown baggers, or we would buy a sandwich from the cafeteria and join in the card game. My first coworker was Dave Norman who had been hired the year before so he was my instructor. Dave was a graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in Rhode Island and a dyed in the wool Conservative Republican who subscribed to the National Review (which I had never heard of) and was a fan of William Buckley. This, of course, led to a lot of discussions and disagreements, but they weren't acrimonious like they are today. They were philosophical and intellectual in nature and you really had to be up to speed on the news and the facts. As time went on in this Branch and Division there were more and more of our fellow workers joining in on these discussions and we eventually realized that this couldn't continue this at work, so it was suggested that we should get together after work at the Airway Inn, a local Bar/Restaurant. I came up with a name for this group as the Society Of Drinking, Singing and Philosophizing (SODSAP). The singing was in our title because

everybody knew some of the folk songs that were popular at that time, as well as some good bawdy drinking songs and we would occasionally break into song with everybody joining in. Some one else changed part of our name to replace the word “Of” with “Omphaloskeptic”. This group liked to play word games and sometimes scour the dictionary in search of new words. We fell in love with the word Omphaloskepsis, which means “Meditation while gazing at ones navel”. We even used it for the name of our bowling team.

The SODSAP meetings typically came about when somebody thought we needed one. This was the 1960s when there was a lot of controversy and social unrest. Our “meetings” would probably include 6 to 8 people and we would get a back room at the Airway Inn where we could all gather around a table and express ourselves without disturbing the other customers. We would address whatever we thought was important or controversial at the time so it was often about Race, Religion or Politics. Nothing was sacred and although we were quite often loud and passionate, about our opinions, we didn’t get angry with one another, and you got points for being clever or funny as well. One point that I want to make is that initially I thought that once we engaged in these conversations that I would be able to convince some of them of the validity of my point of view by the strength of my argument. Unfortunately so did they. What I think we did learn was how to understand each others point of view without necessarily agreeing with them. It became evident to me that our points of view and differences were often the result of, and shaped by, our different life experiences and different cultures and, therefore, we were all convinced of the validity of our point of view.

Some of these people became lifelong friends. These included Tim Sweeney and Bill Eder who also joined me in some of my post retirement endeavors, which I will address later. Some of the others that came a little later were Paul Fruge, Dave LeMaster and Al Friedman, and Don Jorgensen. Paul Fruge was a Cajun from Louisiana and through the years we spent a lot of time together on sports teams and after retirement on some trips that we took. Dave was also on a lot of our sports teams, of which I will cover later. Al was a little unique in that when he arrived with his wife Bobbie they had 3 kids around our kid’s age, so we ended up socializing with them quite a bit. However, they later divorced, but we stayed connected with both of them. Al eventually remarried and moved away, but Al and I still stay in touch through E-Mail. Bobbi also remarried and we became great friends with her and her husband Paul Markley with whom we shared some of our most memorable trips. This included a long road trip in 1984 in their van to some of the iconic sites of the South West. Sites like Mesa Verde, The Grand Canyon, and Mt Rushmore. In addition we went to Las Vegas and we also visited Doc Eversole who had retired and moved to Idaho (I’ll talk more about Doc Eversole in my section on New Carlisle). Some of the other memorable trips that we had with Paul & Bobbi, which I will cover later, were a couple of sailboat trips of some of the Greek Islands. Another late friendship entry was Wayne Thor who played the guitar and sang with and without the rest of us at some of our parties. We introduced Wayne to our sometime baby sitter Nancy (?) who he married. They also divorced, but we remained friends with Nancy and she traveled with us in some of our later years trips. I’ll cover the rest of my career at Wright-Patt later.

During this period in time we had moved to our home in Park Layne, near New Carlisle. Helen, who always liked to have pets, had a dog or two and eventually she got a horse. As a result of this we got to be quite acquainted with the local Veterinarian, Doc

Eversole. He and his wife Ethel had a nice little farm a little ways out of New Carlisle where we were sometimes invited to join them and where Helen eventually boarded her horse and where she could ride it in one of their large open fields. Doc also had an above ground swimming pool that our kids got to enjoy. He was a bit older than us but we became good friends. He eventually retired and they moved to Idaho. Doc also helped us when we had our house built on Dayton Brandt Rd, where we now live. He helped us construct our concrete sidewalk, our concrete patio and the steps for our little deck. After the concrete was poured, he was responsible for the finished product. One other activity that I had during this time was that I managed a Little League baseball team for a few years.

This might be a good place to talk about our home for the last 50 plus years. Around 1967 we were thinking of buying some property and having a new home built. Helen would periodically find some property for sale that we would check out and not be that keen on. Eventually this owner on Dayton Brandt Rd was selling a portion of his property. It was 3.352 acres that was wooded and hilly. We bought it in early 1968 for \$3,000. I had to cash in a life insurance policy that I had bought while I was still in college. We then spent about a year trying to find a floor plan that we liked and to sell our Park Layne house so we could pay off it's remaining mortgage and use what ever money we made to help pay for building our new house. We initially made the mistake of letting someone in our neighborhood who asked us if we would let him sell our house. This turned out to be a big mistake. After a couple of early showings he provided no action at all. I finally, went to his realtor boss and said that I needed to get another realtor. I was informed that they had the sole contract to sell our house until May of 1969, but they would let me sell it by myself if I wanted to. Soon after that I contacted another realtor and they confirmed that they would buy it from me when it was available. This was fine, except for the fact that later I was having a hard time actually finalizing the sale and getting the money from the realtor. At the same time, the local building contractor that we hired said he would have our house built by a certain date, but as that date was approaching, the work on our house was not only not done, but much of the finish work was slowing down as he was concentrating on one of his other projects. I figured I needed to do something to make all of these parts come together so I told the realtor that I would need the money from our home to pay the contractor at a specific date. At the same time I told our contractor that our Park Layne home was going to be sold and we needed to be able to move into our new home at that same specific date. So it all finally came together. Our Park Layne house sold for \$15,000 which covered the remaining mortgage and left us with a profit of around \$3,000 that we were able to use towards our new house. We moved into our new home in May 1969. Don't remember exactly how this was done, but we opened a loan form the Monroe Bank in Tipp City in Oct 1968 where we were able to draw money from it periodically to pay our contractor when certain milestones were reached. When our house was completed, we had a mortgage of \$24,500 starting in June of 1969 which we paid off in June of 1989. However, we spent around another \$5,000 or more in my completing the bottom floor and a lot of the finish work on the house as well as additional money spent on adding a sidewalk, patio, driveway and landscaping.

One thing I need to cover here is how we found the right floor plan and what arrangements I made with our contractor. We were going to various model home shows and weren't finding anything especially interesting. We then came to this one that just looked like one of the ordinary ranch type houses that were quite prevalent at that time.

However, As soon as we walked into the foyer and I saw the cathedral ceiling and the steps leading to another floor. I became quite interested. My memory is a little foggy here but I think we paid something like \$100 for the plans. I would go to our property and pace off where we wanted the house to be built and determined that this split level home was ideal for our lot. We made a few design changes, like moving the closets in the master bedroom from an outside wall to an inside wall so we could put a window on that wall, we added a small deck off the master bedroom with a sliding glass door(around 25 years later I designed and built the deck that we have today). I almost forgot one of the best changes I made had to do with the size of the garage. I told the builder that I wanted to increase the size of the garage by (I think) 6ft. I didn't realize that he thought I had meant wider until he had framed it in. What I was really trying to do was to extend the back of the garage so the back wall matched with house back wall. When I asked him what it would cost to now add that additional garage space to the back he said it would cost an additional \$150. That was the easiest decision to make, so that's how we ended up with such a nice sized garage.

We hired a local builder that we knew to build our house and we also knew the electrical subcontractor. I was able to make an arrangement with our builder that I would do some of the finish work to save us some money. The biggest arrangement was that for the bottom floor he would install the plumbing and the electrical and frame in the rooms and I would finish the walls, doors, etc and the floor. However, I made one change on that floor plan that Helen has never let me forget, and that was to make the laundry room a little smaller to increase the size of the family room. I thought that at some point we might want to put a pool table in there, which we never did. One of my key embellishments in finishing this construction was to add the half brick wall. I liked the looks that some fireplaces had, but had no desire to actually have a fireplace. When I selected the bricks for the exterior, I had them provide enough for this wall and I became a brick layer. I also finished the walls, the floor and the doors. I eventually also changed the railings in the house from wrought iron to wood. I also finished the floors in our bathrooms and foyer and eventually installed much nicer vanities. One of the benefits we got from me doing the work on the bottom floor was that when the local tax appraiser came to appraise our house he didn't include the floor area of that bottom floor because it wasn't finished and he considered a basement. They have never corrected that, so we've had this nice property tax benefit all these years.

When we first moved into our new home, our kids were a little restless and unhappy because they didn't know anybody here and didn't have anyone to play with. When I would drive into New Carlisle, I noticed this house around the corner had all these kids playing there, so one day I stopped and knocked on the front door. I introduced myself and then asked if our kids could come over and play with their kids and that's how we got to be friends with the Wholihans. There were 6 boys and one girl and their ages meshed well with our kids. So that's how our long term friendship with the Wholihans began, plus the kids also got acquainted with the rest of the kids in the neighborhood. In addition to the kids playing their games, we also started playing touch football games for many years and I was able to participate with them. In later years when our kids and their kids would come visit us for Thanksgiving, we would challenge the Wholihans to a touch football game in their back yard. Another neighborhood family that we got familiar with was the Baechtels. They had 2 boys and a girl that were around our kid's age and their father, Donald, also worked at Wright-Patt but in a different Area and organization. He worked in the Foreign

Technology Division (FTD). Don and family eventually moved away, but I remain in contact with him on Facebook.

Moving to our new address also enabled us to establish several new friendships from the area. One thing that helped was the nearby private lake that we joined. It's called Silver Lake and it was one of the places where we were able to get acquainted with a lot of local people and where the kids could enjoy themselves. Silver Lake had a paddle ball court, a basketball court and a volleyball court so there were a lot of activities and on summer weekends we would often have a picnic lunch there as well. The lake would probably have just been considered a big pond in Michigan, but it was about as good as it got in this area. I need to provide a little background here. When we were in our first home in Dayton and had first arrived in this area, we decided one summer weekend that we should gather up the kids and find a nearby lake to go to. In Michigan this would have been easy, but we found out things were quite different here. We stopped at a nearby gas station and asked where the nearest lake was and they kind of scratched their heads and started mentioning a few that were many miles away. The nearest things locally were some community pools that you had to pay to get in. We tried one and soon decided that this was too crowded and that it wasn't very satisfying. For a few years after that we tried out all of the States lakes that were within a reasonable driving distance away, not much more than an hour's drive. We found these to also not be very satisfying and the final blow came when I was trying to teach Dean how to use a facemask and snorkel and a lifeguard came and told me that that wasn't permitted here. When I asked him where someone is supposed to learn this stuff, he said in a swimming pool. So I asked what are lakes for, just to bathe in? After that we didn't go to anymore of these lakes, so in a way Silver Lake was a godsend. Our move to our new home opened up a whole new circle of friends from the New Carlisle area, which I will cover later.

One of the wonderful things about moving into our new home in this new area was what a wonderful place this was for our kids to grow up in. When they went out to play, it was either gathering at one of our neighbors house or they would all meet at our house. Once in a while we were also encouraged to join in their games. In addition, in the summers, and sometimes on the weekends, there were so many great places to explore with our kids. There were several parks and hiking trails within a reasonable driving distance, in addition to museums and historical sites. We sometimes went a little far a field like going to the Mammoth Caves in Kentucky and also traveling to our Nations Capitol, Washington D.C., where we took in many of the museums and other attractions.

But many of our early family vacations, as well as holidays and special events, were spent driving up to Michigan where we spent time with our parents and our kids not only got to spend some time with their Grand Parents, but also with several of their Aunts, Uncles and Cousins. Much of this driving to Michigan was done before Interstate 75 was finished so there was a lot more time spent on the road to get there and back. For a period of time when the kids were younger, we had a Chevy Station Wagon where the seats in back would fold down and we would put the kids back there with a bunch of toys to play with or would later play sign games with them to pass the time. This was before cars had seat belts and other safety items that they have today.

The other great thing of living in our new area was the good friends that we made there and many of who we partied with and sometimes traveled with. One of the key sources of establishing our new local friendships was Helen. Helen started working with

Doc Eversole, our veterinarian, as a dog groomer. And she later continued to do this at home on her own and this led to a friendship with Lynn and Gerry Office. Lynn was a model and Gerry was the president & CEO of the Ponderosa restaurant chain. In addition, He built the first nice Mexican restaurant in our area. It was called "Casa Lupita" and we often ate there. We were invited to some great parties at their place and we took a couple of trips with them and others. We had a couple of houseboat trips, one on Norris Lake and another on Cumberland Lake in Kentucky. One of the nice things that Gerry did was to invite us and 2 other couples to a weekend in Chicago. We were flown there in their private plane and stayed at a hotel at their expense. Another great thing that Gerry did was to invite several of us men in 1981 to the AFC Championship football game that was played in Cincinnati on the Bengals way to the Super Bowl. He provided the tickets, a bus and bus driver to take us to the game in Cincinnati. The Bengals won that game, but we didn't get to go to Detroit for their Super Bowl loss there. Gerry and Lynn eventually divorced, sold their businesses and moved away. I still have an occasional email from Gerry.

Someone else we got to know was Lowell McGlothin who was also a model. He had a farm across the road from Doc Eversole, but he commuted to New York where he worked as a model. He eventually quit modeling and built a restaurant a couple of miles outside of New Carlisle called Faces. He built it out of the town of New Carlisle because it was a "Dry" town. They didn't allow alcoholic beverages to be sold there. "Faces" was the place to be and it was very popular for a significant period of time, but, eventually, probably due to apparent mismanagement, it eventually dried up and died. The building no longer exists. Lowell has gone on to have a local insurance company and become a successful local politician. We don't keep in touch.

Helen was the instigator on acquiring another group of friends. Her hair dresser was Edie Poland who was also a neighbor for a while. Edie divorced her husband and move into New Carlisle and Helen continued to go to her shop. After a period of time Edie married Larry Campbell, someone with a small machinery business in New Carlisle. They bought a place on Stevens Circle in a little community, just outside the New Carlisle city limits. They had a swimming pool, to which we were often invited to. Some one else that we got to know in this community were John and Sheri Williams. They also had a swimming pool and they often had pool parties. In addition to the parties, we were often invited to use their pool with our kids as well. John had an insurance business and we switched our home and auto insurance to him. We became close friends with John and Sherry for awhile. We took some nice trips with them. I might add that we were also hosting parties at our house where all of these people and others were invited. A couple of very notable people that were also part of this social group were Larry & Carol Leffler and the brothers John and Jim Bobo and their wives. The Bobo brother's father owned a little shopping center in New Carlisle and it had a popular local restaurant there with his name where all of the early morning locals would hang out. If I remember correctly Larry worked for DP&L, but what he was known for was his well chiseled body and his personality. He was sometimes called the Mayor because he seemed to know everybody in New Carlisle and was not shy about talking with them. He was a lot of fun and a good friend for a very long time, but he and Carol also divorced and Larry got remarried and they moved to California. We've stayed in touch for years and when he periodically used to come back to this area to visit family we would get together. He and his present wife recently moved to the East coast near her mother.

One thing that happened in this time frame was that I decided to take up Scuba diving. I took lessons and was certified around 1973. However, I didn't find diving in our local rock quarries or gravel pits very worthwhile. Typically you only had 3 to 4 feet of visibility and there was nothing to see there but more dirt anyway. However, the local Scuba club that I belonged to had arranged a trip to Montego Bay in Jamaica in 1974 to do some diving so I signed on. Our kids were in their teens so Helen's mother came to stay with them and maybe keep them out of trouble. This was our first vacation without our kids and where we didn't just go to visit family in Michigan. Initially I was concerned about how much this trip was going to cost us for just one week. It didn't take me long to, not only start enjoying it, but to begin to worry that we hadn't brought enough money to do all that we wanted to do. Credit cards were in their infancy but luckily we had one that would work so we were free to enjoy the opportunity. It also set in my mind that I would never again question whether a vacation trip was worthwhile.

While there we met a great Jamaican that was one of our servers at our hotel restaurant. One day when Helen and I were waiting for the bus to take us to the town, I was getting impatient with the bus being late. Our server (I forgot his name) was there waiting as well and he said (sorry I can't duplicate the Jamaican accent but it was something like...) "He mon. don't worry, you on Jamaica time". He was great. We started talking and he was on the bus with us into Montego Bay where I invited him to have drink with us. He was our regular server back at the hotel and we made a point of leaving him a substantial tip.

Getting back to the purpose of our trip, the scuba diving was phenomenal. Our group got on a bus that took us to Negril Beach where we did our diving. We were taken by boat with a dive master to a coral reef. The water was crystal clear with outstanding visibility. I think it was around 30 to 40 ft, maybe more. And there were these beautiful coral reefs to explore. It was also where I spotted a king helmet shell on the bottom and that I still have, along with other shells. I paid a local to clean out the critter that lived in there, but there was some residue still in the shell. I wrapped it and put it in my suitcase for our trip back home where we had to go through customs, which was kind of rigorous in those days. When the agent opened my suitcase, he took one whiff and quickly closed my suitcase and waved me through. We fell in love with Jamaica which led to 3 more trips, with some additional interesting stories.

Although we've had a lot of wonderful trips both before and after retirement, I'll cover those later in a separate chapter, but now I want to get back to describing the rest of my working career. One of the aspects that I didn't mention was that I got to travel quite a bit as part of my job. When you worked for the Government these trips were called TDY (Temporary Duty), and while most of the time you're working and not sight seeing on these trips. Most of the TDYs were to the west coast (LA and Seattle), but also to St Louis and the Dallas-Ft Worth area, occasionally the Pentagon in Washington D.C. and a few other spots. I was lucky enough to have the opportunity for some very interesting TDYs. Probably the best one was when I had only been working in my new job in the Performance Branch for about a year. The Air Force was contemplating a joint US/NATO endeavor to develop a V/STOL transport plane. I was the junior member of an Air Force team that was selected to go to Paris (NATO headquarters at the time) to set up the technical ground rules for an expected source selection among several international aircraft companies to select a contractor to build a V/STOL transport vehicle. Our job was to be the short term one of a

week or so. The actual source selection would be the job of the more senior workers and would probably take a few weeks. However, when we were only about half way through our meetings, sometime in the middle of the week, Washington and NATO decided to cancel this project. Our boss on this trip then told us that we were now on our own and as long as we showed up for work on Monday morning we were free to stay in Paris until then if we wanted to. This was unbelievable. I got to see all of the main attractions, the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, Notre Dame and several others, and in those days there were no long lines to wait in. The only disappointment that I had was that the Jazz Club that I had found when I had visited Paris in 1956 when I was in the Army that was in this medieval cavern, with an unbelievable atmosphere, and had been used as a bomb shelter in WWII, and then later had been converted into a bar where Jazz bands played, was no longer there. I remembered talking to one of the Black musicians at the bar and he expressed how great it was to play in France where they didn't have to face the Racism they had back in the States.

But to get back to my jobs, I competed for a GS-13 promotion as Project Engineer in the V/STOL Technology division in the Air Force Flight Dynamics Laboratory (AFFDL). I was selected and I worked in this organization from January 1967 to June of 1981. Over this period of time my duties varied considerably. One of my early major efforts from 1967 to June 1971 was the responsibility of monitoring \$2 million dollar group of contracts of design studies, wind tunnel tests, flight simulations and effectiveness analysis of V/STOL concepts for a Light Intratheater Transport (LIT) and for an Advanced Rescue and Recovery System (ARRS). There was a great deal of interest in these years to determine just how effective various V/STOL concepts could be.

From June 1971 to June 1973 I was the Program Manager for the Tactical Airlift Technology (TAT) Advanced Development Program Office (ADPO). This was a program of diverse parts that concentrated on the development of STOL and V/STOL transport technology. This included the responsibility for the management and supervision of the personnel and the resources of this autonomous project group. The activities of this group included the preparation of work statements, evaluation of proposals, guidance to contractors, an assessment of contractor performance and the evaluation of program goals and milestones and the dissemination of the results. This included the management of \$9 Million spread over several separate contracted efforts as well as support for related in-house efforts. This effort led to another great TDY. This one was to Brussels, Belgium, where NATO headquarters had moved to. There's some interesting history associated with this trip. One of my bosses at the time was a nice old timer called Bernie Lindenbaum. He told me he thought we should co-author a paper for an AGARD (Advisory Group for Aerospace Research and Development) symposium on Military Applications of V/STOL Aircraft that would be presented at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. He indicated that he would decide later who would present the paper there. In the back of my mind I was thinking, like I know who it will be and it won't be me. But lo and behold, we co-authored the paper titled "A Review of the U.S. Tri-Service V/STOL Program" and when the time came Bernie told me that he was too busy and that I was going to have to be the one to take the trip and present the paper, I was totally surprised. An added benefit of this trip to Brussels was that I got to visit my nephew Bobby Valdez who was in the Air Force and was based nearby.

The thrust of our AGARD paper was to describe the effort of the Air Force to develop a V/STOL aircraft that could be used by all three services (Army, Navy, and Air

Force). However one of the conclusions of our paper was that the design requirements and operational philosophies of the three services were sufficiently different that they imposed major compromises in the aircraft design which could result in an aircraft that was not satisfactory to any of the services.

This might be a good place to discuss V/STOL aircraft in general and why they never became as important as we thought they might. Some of the initial motivation was that a V/STOL vehicle would not need large runways that would have to be built and protected from being bombed. In addition, in wars like Vietnam, in which we were engaged at the time, each unit could have its air support with them, rather than having to request it. Of course in this case it was eventually realized that these high value targets would have to be protected, no matter where they were. The eventual conclusion was that while all of the concepts were capable of flight, their significantly increased costs and in some cases limited performance made them not cost effective in most roles. However, they were useful in some limited roles like rescue and recovery.

Around 1973, with the reduced interest in V/STOL aircraft, our division was reorganized and our V/STOL Technology division became the Prototype Division where some of our responsibilities were to evaluate the design, development, and flight validation of advanced aircraft technologies and their mission effectiveness. In a few years this eventually evolved that around 1975 we were beginning to review and investigate the effectiveness of reduced aircraft observable signatures and the trade offs, designs and effectiveness of these reductions. This was known as stealth technology. These signatures were the radar cross section (RCS), the Infrared radiation (IR), and the visual signature (including contrails), which led to some radical new aircraft designs. I was the AFFDL representative to the AFWAL AD Hoc Stealth Committee and as the Stealth Team Leader in the Air to Surface (ATS) Technology Evaluation and Integration Study. This was a major, comprehensive and extensive design and tradeoff study conducted with six major aircraft contractors. I initially was not aware of a "Skunk Works" Top Secret, Special Access Required (SAR) program where they were actually developing a stealth prototype fighter aircraft. A representative from that program contacted me and arranged a meeting to find out what we were doing. I was provided limited access to their program and was told to continue what we were doing, because it might draw attention to us rather than to what they were doing.

In Sep 1977 to Sep 1978 I took part in an Engineering Interchange Program. I spent one year co-located from AFFDL to the F-15 SPO (Special Program Office). It wasn't too memorable. When I came back to AFFDL I resumed work on Low Observables and this included working as a liaison with ASD/XR on their Advance Cruise Missile Technology (ACMT) program.

In June 1981 I transferred to the B-1B program as a System Integration Engineer. My good friend Paul Markley was Chief Engineer and he requested that I join them with the prime responsibility of overseeing the development and integration of the low observables features of the redesigned B-1 that became the B-1B. Since the basic air frame of the B-1 was already designed, the modifications to improve the B-1B observables were very limited. The primary benefit came from the redesign of the engine inlets. This provided a significant improvement in the RCS signature, but not enough to make it survivable from radar tracking weapons by itself. What it did provide was a significant improvement in its ECM (Electronic Counter Measures) effectiveness because of its

reduced RCS. One of my unforgettable TDYs associated with this program was that the RCS tests were done in a classified facility called RATSCAT that was in the Holloman Air Force base in New Mexico. This was near Alamogordo and the White Sands National Park. There was also a Native American reservation and one of the huge celestial telescopes in this region. But the biggest enjoyment was the RATSCAT facility itself. It was like something out of a James Bond movie. It was a huge underground facility with large overhead doors that would slide open. The purpose of all this was to keep the Russians from being able to see what was being tested from their satellites. The model to be tested was on a massive device that they could raise and lower. So when they determined that there was no Russian satellite overhead, they would open these huge massive doors and then raise the test subject outside so it could be tested.

I worked in the B-1B SPO from June 1981 to October 1985. Made some good friends there one of which was Fred Schwartz and his wife (I forgot her name) who we lost touch with when they move to Washington DC. The B-1B was an interesting and good assignment but after its development it was time to move on. I went to work in the Aeronautical Systems Division (ASD) as a Systems Development Engineer for Low Observables from October 1985 until January 1987. My primary responsibility was to lead the low observables support for the Advance Tactical Fighter (ATF), which became the F-22. I was the lead low observables engineer for the ATF source selection. Some of my other tasks were the coordination of other related L.O. efforts by ASD and the laboratories (AFWAL).

In January 1987 to June 1992 I worked in the B-2 SPO as lead engineer for the Engineering Integration Branch of the Systems Engineering Division. This was what was called a "Black" program, meaning that it was Top Secret, Special Access Required (SAR). It had been in development for some time before I joined it, but most people were unaware of this program. If you happened to run into someone you knew in the airport on some TDY you had to be rather evasive if they asked you where you were going or what you were working on. I forget when it was made public but it was before I retired from there in June of 1992. The details of the program remained classified, but the B-2s existence was made public after it was rolled out for flight testing.

One of the people that I reunited with in the B-2 was Tim Sweeney. He was my direct boss. However, he was also our neighbor living about a country mile from us, but we had also remained in touch through our participation in the various sports leagues that were available at Wright-Patt. Many of the friends that I had mentioned earlier, plus new ones from my other assorted jobs were also part of our teams. Some of those that played on our teams that were not mentioned before were: Garland Oates, Randy Lowry, Russ Osborn, Rod Clark, Mike Nichols, John Griffin and more that I can't remember now. We had teams in the following sports: Slow Pitch Softball, Basketball and Volleyball. Volleyball was the best and the one that I played in the longest, even for a few years after retirement. It also had the best name and T-shirts, which I still have. Our name was the "Half-Fast All-stars" and in case you didn't get the joke, our t-shirts had a drawing of the head of a Jack-ass. We had a good team and we won some volleyball trophies which I still have. We also had the bowling team that I mentioned earlier that we called "The Omphaloskeptics". One other activity was that a group of us from the Flight Dynamics Laboratory took turns having a poker game at our house every so often in the winter months.

Something that I failed to blend into this narrative was that during the '70s, when there was a great deal of social unrest, I was getting interested in doing some kind of effort in this area. One of those efforts was a program with the Dayton Juvenile court system called the Apathy Program. It was responsible for several volunteer programs for helping juveniles that had gotten in some sort of minor trouble. I chose to help as a Volunteer Probation Worker (VPW) to aid kids that had gotten in some minor trouble with the law. Typically these weren't any kinds of major crimes, but more along the lines of shoplifting or truancy. The first and most memorable was a Black kid named Davel "Tony" Chinn. I have a separate paper I've written about him. We are still in touch, but the bad news is that he is in prison on death row. There was also a memorable White kid whose name is Tommy Kettelhake. The reason I remember him was that sometime after he had reached adult hood he showed up at our house one day to let us know that he turned out all right. He had a job at the University of Dayton and I would see him there at the yearly Water Festival that I participated in as part of SunWatch. However, later when we got connected on Facebook during the Obama administration he started posting some right wing critical comments. When I challenged him on some of the things that he posted he unfriended me, so that was the end of that friendship. There were a couple other kids that I briefly worked with but I perceived that their problems were with their home environment and there was not much I could do about that so I eventually bowed out of that program.

One other thing that I did in this era was to participate in an on base organization on Hispanic heritage called the Mexico Club. They were responsible for putting on a yearly base Fiesta. They also participated in the yearly Dayton International World Affair held in the convention center and a Hispanic street festival that was held outdoors in Dayton each summer. After a few years there was a controversy that emerged about the possible miss use of funds and this organization fell apart.

This is a good spot to discuss my various activities after my retirement in June 1992. I was 56 years old with a nice comfortable Department of Defense pension. My first memorable endeavor in that first year was to join with my brother Martin and my nephew/godson Lenny on a trip to Texas and Mexico that August. Lenny was just beginning his efforts to document and video tape our parent's journey from Mexico. For the first part of our trip we drove to Laredo, Texas to the Mexican border where we explored possible locations where our parents may have crossed the Rio Grande River. Lenny had brought a video camera which was very large and cumbersome, as most of them were in that time. He also had a tripod so that we could all get in some of the videos. Lenny videotaped some of these possible locations. We then tracked their journey through the towns in Texas they traveled through on their journey to the San Antonio Train Depot. This information came from our parent's recollections that were recorded by me, Martin and Martin's son Eddie on separate occasions in the 1970s. Lenny's plan was to get some footage that he could use in his ambitious plan to make a video documentary of our Parents journey from Michoacan to Michigan. As time proved, Lenny was hugely successful in his endeavor to develop this epic documentary "Michoacan to Michigan" about our parent's journey. I was also motivated to write my own narrative about this journey based on those previously mentioned audio recordings.

For the second part of our trip we went to the Dallas-Ft Worth area where a relative of Martin's wife Marilyn lived and from there we caught a flight to Mexico City. We caught a bus from Mexico City to Morelia where our relatives Arturo and Elvira met us and

took us to their home. We stayed with them and Arturo drove us to visit several of our relatives there. Most of them were the children of my Dad's sister Zenaida who had married Samuel Chavez. Lenny videotaped many interviews with the Chavez family as well as a few other relatives that we had there. There was a long one with our Cousin Onofre Chavez, who was one of our Aunt Zenida sons. We also spent time with the Samuel Chavez family, also a son of our Aunt Zenida. Unfortunately my memory has dimmed on all of the relatives that we visited on that trip. From the Chavez family we also visited with Aurora & Elvira as well as with Daniel. Maruka was one that threw a party for us that Lenny recorded and I would have to watch it to try to name all of the relatives that attended. This was a wonderful trip and I never realized then that we would never have another one like it.

One of my other efforts in the year that I retired was to volunteer in the Presidential election campaign of 1992. I volunteered for the Bill Clinton and Al Gore campaign against George H.W. Bush and Dan Quayle. There was also a serious third party candidate named Ross Perot. I did a lot of the usual stuff of phone calls and some door to door, but the most memorable thing that I did was when Al Gore came to Dayton to give a campaign speech at Sinclair College. I volunteered to be one of the drivers of a van for the press corps that was following Gore. We started at the airport where they all landed and we had to drive to the middle of Dayton to Sinclair College. It was partly through the Interstate and what I didn't realize initially was that we would be part of a motorcade driving flat out with a police escort. Even with the police escort we still had to weave in and out of traffic. At first I was a little hesitant but I finally got into it and I received applause from my passengers for my aggressive driving in order to not lose contact with the motorcade. I also ended up with a picture of me and Al Gore.

When I finally got around to my day to day activities after my retirement, I was finally free to do all of the "job jar" efforts that I had collected. These were the jobs that when I was working I would be put off until I had the time to do them. The time had finally come and it took me about two years to completely empty the "job jar". Some of my major accomplishments during this period were the design and construction of our large two tier deck. This was done about 99% on my own. One other significant job was tearing out the outdoor carpet on our patio and replacing it with tile. I also did a lot of landscaping with railroad ties. This included a garden spot for Helen.

One of the memorable tasks that I volunteered for around 1996 to 1998 was the tutoring of some migrant Mexican kids to help them get a High School diploma and in a couple cases, the necessary information to pass a test for US citizenship. They performed seasonal work with their families for Scarff Nursery. Some lived in communal housing that was provided by Scarff's and other families rented homes. I don't remember now who approached me to do this, (I think it was Joyce White's daughter) but since I had never been a teacher I was a little apprehensive but willing to give it a try. In the meantime I contacted Tim Sweeney who had recently joined me at SunWatch after his retirement and thankfully he agreed to help. We would drive to the back of Scarff's Nursery where some of the families that were working there lived in the housing provided by Scarff's. I don't remember now, but I think we had about 6 kids to teach. One of them was Anali (now known as Anna Lee) Garza. We still stay in touch and she's now a mother with 3 children. She and her sister Gabriela became US citizens and Tim and I were there for the ceremony. As they got older, they remained in this area when their parents would move back to their

home near the border after the crop harvest. In addition to our tutoring, we also sometimes entertained the kids. I had them and their families over for a cook out at our place and another time I got permission to use Edie and Larry's swimming pool with them. When our High School tutoring was done I was asked if I would teach some of the other family members English. Again, something I'd never done before, but thought it was worth a try. I had to teach these folks in the early evening after they were done working. I only did this for a couple of years. I think it was because they would go back to their homes in Texas or Mexico for the winter months and they all didn't necessarily return to the same spot.

But now I need to talk about my most prolonged, interesting and enjoyable volunteer efforts. It was with the SunWatch Indian Village/Archaeological Park. This was a subset of the Boonshoft Museum of Natural History. Archaeologists and volunteers spent several years in the 1960s and 1970s excavating the site. They were led by J. Heilman who was the Curator of Anthropology at Boonshoft and the first site Manager of SunWatch. We became friends after I had been volunteering at SunWatch a few years. SunWatch is an Native American archaeological site that was occupied around 800 years ago by what was referred to as the Fort Ancient culture. This village was occupied from around 1200 to 1300 A.D, long before the Europeans arrived here. They were this area's first farmers. After the Archaeologists had excavated this village, they then recreated part of the village and had a museum built. This was all opened to the public in 1988. I had always had an interest in Archaeology and Anthropology so I was an early visitor when it became open to the public. Sometime later (1990/1991) Dean was visiting us and I suggested that he go visit this site. He visited SunWatch and since he knew that I was planning to retire soon, he asked if they needed volunteers. When he returned he had some material and a phone number for me to call. So, after I retired, I called SunWatch and in January 1993 I began what would be 27 years of volunteering there.

There were quite a few people working at SunWatch in the early years. SunWatch was a subset of the Boonshoft Museum of Natural History and there were a handful of hired workers from Boonshoft and several volunteers for tours and to maintain and add to the reconstructed village. Initially in the summer there were a lot of volunteers from local colleges and High Schools. The use of some of these young volunteers was eventually ended due to legal concerns about liability. Some of our early tasks were to go to prairie grass sites in the area and cut and make the prairie grass bundles that were necessary for maintaining and reconstructing some of the houses.

At SunWatch, my main job was as a tour guide. These tours started with a 13 minute video and then the tour guide would take them through the museum and then for a tour of the partially reconstructed village. We were given some material that we had to present, but we could also provide any additional relevant factual material. This tour typically took about an hour and a half. In the early years we often had large crowds where we would have to split them into multiple tours at the same time which meant that we would have 3 or 4 different tour guides at the same time. Occasionally one of the other tour guides would create a log jam by taking too long at one of the locations and the rest of us would have to improvise. The tours were primarily school kids, typically 3rd or 4th graders, but sometimes a little older and a little younger kids. There were also a fair amount of adult groups, typically from senior citizen centers, that visited as well. In the early years we often had to do 2 or 3 tours a day. In addition, I helped with the maintenance of the reconstructed houses and the reconstruction of additional houses and the ceremonial center.

For a period of time we also did off site lectures about SunWatch at schools and senior centers.

Early on I established that I would work there one day a week, on Thursdays, and also for other special occasions such as weekend events like Summerfest. One of the events conducted at Sunwatch in the summer was the Summerfest. This was a weekend event at SunWatch where Native Americans from around the country would perform some of their ceremonies and some traditional dances. There was also an event with the gathering of flute players. These events include many vendors as well. One reason that I established what day I would work was that a couple of my retired friends from work had started playing golf on Tuesdays and had asked me to join them. This started out with just Paul Markley, Sam Auditore and me, but it wasn't long before Tim Sweeney joined us and then Paul Fruge and Dave LeMaster, George Seibert, Bill Klotzback, Steve Stumpfl, John Griffin and several others and it kept growing until we had well over 12 different players. Part of this group would drive to Myrtle Head Beach, North Carolina in the early spring for 2 or 3 days of golf before the season would begin locally.

SunWatch went through some significant variations over time and that included the change of Site Managers. There were 6 different Site Managers during my time there, but I'll just cover a couple of the more significant ones. The first one that I had some significant interaction with was Rob Cook who was Site Manager from 1995 to 1999. A key element that Rob Cook had to address was the deterioration of the theater orientation presentation. I forgot to mention that the first theater presentation that was used to orient the general public on the SunWatch past and was also used for the group tours was, initially, a professionally produced slide show with three slide carousels synchronized with a professional audio presentation and this was projected on the front wall. Unfortunately, over time the carousels started failing, so the solution at that time was to make a video tape on what was shown on the front wall. This video was then shown on a TV that was set up front. There was a philanthropic group associated with Boonshoft that saw this and asked Rob Cook what it would take to provide something better, something more professional. This was probably around 1996 when more sophisticated computers and their applications were in their infancy and rather expensive. Luckily Tim Sweeney had retired in 1995 and had joined us and he was up to date on the latest in computer technology. Rob asked us if he got the necessary equipment could we create a better show. At the time, I didn't have a clue, but Tim told him that we could do it. Rob then asked the philanthropists for something like \$15,000 for a state of the art computer with the necessary applications, a good projector, a scanner and other accessories. SunWatch closed in the winter months, so Tim and I spent those months mostly on our own transferring the slides into our new computer, adding the necessary transitions from the pictures and merging them with the existing professional audio. To me this was all new stuff but Tim knew what he was doing so I just did what he told me to and he helped me become somewhat computer literate. These early computer capabilities were so limited that one of our more time consuming problems was that when we were trying to match the pictures and the transitions with the audio that each time we made a change to make sure it matched the audio we would have to watch it from the start. We also had to create some new pictures. We were successful in making something that we could show from the computer through a projector on the wall again. We also had a by product that was the ability to make video tape copies to sell in the gift shop.

With computers rapidly changing, this wasn't the last of our endeavors. Sandy Yee followed Rob Cook as Site Manager from 1999 to 2002. Her husband and son also spent some time volunteering with us. Sometime after Sandy joined us, Tim temporarily left us to work for a local Aerospace company as a consultant. However, our good friend Bill Eder retired in 1999 and he joined us at SunWatch. During this time frame Sandy made room for us volunteers in her office just off of the theater. We also were provided with a used computer from Boonshoft. This came in handy because the computer technology was moving so rapidly that we had to readdress our show in the theater. Sandy was able to get a grant for more up to date applications and some new equipment and one of the items that she got was a camcorder. One of the uses of this camcorder was that we prepared promotional videos that were presented on local news programs. Additionally in this time frame we were digitizing the show so we were now able to put it on a DVD. We had to use our digital cameras in some instances to recreate several pictures that were shown to make them compatible with the new system. These DVDs were also made available for the gift shop to sell. There was an additional iteration of this show and the computer technology had gone so far, that I took the material home and made the necessary changes in a couple of hours. One of our other tasks at this time was to scan the volumes of SunWatch photos that had been collected over the years into the computer. One other short lived addition that I believe happened during this time frame was the use of one of the reconstructed huts to describe different types of medicine and the healing practices of the Native Americans. Initially I wasn't very comfortable with this because we were provided with very little material for our presentation. Because of this, I decided to do my own research on this subject and this led to a paper I prepared on "Indian Healing". This was then used as a basis for the presentation at what was called the medicine hut. I don't remember when or why this part of the tour was eventually discontinued.

There's a long controversial story that goes along with Sandy Yee being fired by Boonshoft that I won't go into here, other than it set the stage for our next Site Manager. The SunWatch volunteers were not happy with how Sandy was treated and since our voice wasn't being heard we all threatened to quit. Jean Copas, who was the person temporarily running SunWatch at the time, indicated the she couldn't do her job without the volunteers. We didn't want to be responsible for shutting SunWatch down so we decided to stay, but there was quite a hostile environment for her successor to face.

That successor turned out to be Andrew Sawyer. Andy got his BA in Anthropology from Miami University and then went to University of Denver to get his Masters and to work there for a while. He wasn't aware of the atmosphere that he was entering. He was initially greeted with a little coolness by some of the volunteers, but it didn't take him long to win us all over. Andy was the Site Manager from 2002 until 2019, when he quit because of how poorly he was treated by a new Boonshoft administration. Andy was a great Site Manager and he turned out to be a great friend as well. One of the major changes that occurred to SunWatch during this period was a major reconstruction of the museum itself. A second story was added to the building and the construction was done in 2005 thru 2006. During this period a huge Army tent was erected near the village entrance for the theater portion of the tour. Once the second story of the museum was completed, it opened up the opportunity to provide more programs for the children to participate in. One of those was an upgrade of a program on the prehistoric cultures that populated the continent. It had been presented in the basement of the old museum using images that had been painted on

the walls. With the new large meeting room and the ability to use a projector, we were tasked to use pictures to tell a more comprehensive story for the kids. This led to my writing another paper on the populating of the continent that went with the projected pictures that I also added. Andy had a strong impact during his years at SunWatch that I could write about, but the important thing to me was that we became quite good friends. We shared our musical tastes which led to attending some concerts together and there was an infamous exchange of LPs.

There's a lot more I could write about SunWatch but it began to lose some of its charm for me, first when Bill & Pat Eder moved to Chicago sometime around 2010 to be near their daughter and their two new grandchildren. It became even lonelier after Tim died in 2013 after battling cancer for around a year. Part of the charm remained for a while, not only with Andy being there, but with long time SunWatch employees Jean Copas, who was in charge of education, and Janet Williams who was responsible for the gift shop. I haven't written about them but they were a lot of fun to work with. They were part of SunWatch for quite an extended period of time, but then they were squeezed out by Boonshoft due to budget issues. The final blow came when Andy Sawyer quit in 2019 because of the new Boonshoft administration. Bill and I still stay in touch with his great Face book postings and an occasional phone call. Andy and I have kept in touch with an occasional lunch and an occasional Facetime during the pandemic. I'm looking forward to more lunches after we get through this pandemic.

One part that I haven't adequately covered was the achievements of our three kids. I won't provide too much information here, because they are still around to fill in the details and make any corrections that will probably be needed. I just want to indicate my pride in their individual accomplishments with very little input from us. Dean decided to go to the University of Cincinnati and major in Biology. My sage advice to him was that he better really like Biology because he wouldn't make a lot of money in that field. He went on to get his Doctorate in Molecular Biology from the University of Wisconsin in Madison, where he also met his bride to be, Tea Meulia who was an exchange student from Italy also working on her Doctorate in the same field. Dean and Tea got married in June 1993 and both got jobs in Wooster Ohio. Dean has had a wonderful career as a professor in Molecular Biology at the College of Wooster and Tea has worked for a nearby research facility for the Ohio State University. But more importantly, they have provided us with two wonderful grandchildren, Martina, who was born in September 1993, and Stefan who was born May of 1995, They have also gone on to get their Degrees and begin their wonderful careers.

Susan took a different route. We tried to interest her to go to college but she wasn't interested. However, she did take a short course for a job as a travel agent. She got married and moved to Shelbyville Indiana but the marriage didn't last. However, from this marriage she had a wonderful son, Eric who provided us with much entertainment through the years with his marvelous and various performances. However, Susan had to raise Eric on her own and she did it magnificently. After her divorce Susan started her own career working for an international company called Knauf Insulation. She eventually worked her way to a very prestigious job in Human Resources where she received awards and recognition for her work.

And then there was our youngest, Greg. He tried a semester of college but decided that wasn't for him. He decided, totally on his own, to join the Air Force for six years. If

he had asked me I would have counseled him against it, and yet, that turned out to be a great decision for him. Greg got picked to go to Russian language school and when that was finished he was stationed in Berlin to monitor the Russian radio traffic. In 1985 Helen and I and Dean met up with Greg for a memorable road trip in Germany. In Greg's Russian language assignment he met Tavi Lambeth from California who was also in the Air Force. They got married in early 1986. They provided us with Nicole, our first grandchild in December 1986, who has gone on to work as a Radiology technician and then our third grandchild Alexandria in May 1989, who has gone on to get her Doctorate at OSU. Susan's son Eric came between them in April 1988. Greg can fill in the details of his assignments in the Air Force, but the bottom line is that he eventually switched to Air Traffic Control in the Air Force and then took advantage of an early out opportunity and then he went to the civilian Air Traffic Control school and after finishing that he got a job in the Indianapolis area so that he was only a couple of hours away from us.

An important change in Greg's life was when he and Tavi got divorced. However, Tavi remained an integral part of our family, as she remains today. Tavi has gone on to work as a much respected Court Recorder. However, Greg brought another wonderful person into our family when he married Jennifer DiPaulo in Sep 1995. She was also an Air traffic Controller. Greg and Jen provided us with our final two grandchildren; Rosa in September 1996 and John in July 1998.

The reason I think that Greg made a great decision was that when he went to work for the federal government as an air traffic controller, the time he spent in the Air Force counted towards his Civil Service retirement so that at the age of 50 Greg was able to retire with a full Government Pension. Jennifer soon joined him with her retirement.

One final quick recounting of this era was the fact that Greg and Jennifer and Tavi all were living in Zionsville, Indiana during this period and Susan was living not too far away in Shelbyville, Indiana. So we made an arrangement around the time that I retired in 1992 that in addition to Greg & Susan visiting us with their kids, that we would meet one of them halfway at a Dairy Queen off of Interstate 70 to get our three oldest grandkids, Nicole, Eric and Allie to spend some time with us. Sometimes for a week or so in the summer and also for their birthdays and assorted other times. This was a wonderful opportunity for us to spend a lot of quality time with them as they grew up. To a limited degree we did the same with the younger grandkids (Martina, Stefan, Rosa and John) but for several reasons we didn't get to spend as much time with them, although in most cases, we did have them for their birthday.

Some of the things that we did with them were bonfires out back to roast hot dogs and marshmallows, we bought a backyard swing set with a slide and monkey bars, and we took them to trails like Charleston Falls, and Carriage Hills farm which had an old country store where they could buy a bunch of penny candy and we would provide them with a bunch of pennies that the store didn't always appreciate. In addition, we can't forget the Snack food trays their grandma would fix for them in the evening when they settled in to watch a movie on TV, or the productions that Nicole would organize to entertain us. The most ambitious may have been "The Three Little Pigs". And then, of course, we can't forget the Christmas celebrations. There is so much more to tell, but that will be up to the grand children to provide sometime.

My final input will be a listing of all of the memorable trips that we've made. I'm going to merely list some of them and provide an occasional story that goes with some others.

Our Trips

1. Jamaica:

1974 Montego Bay. I already covered some of this as our first real vacation and some scuba diving.

1981 Our return to Jamaica to Negril Beach with Edie and Larry. I also did some scuba diving and got to know our Jamaican Dive Master, named Henry, which becomes significant on our return trip. During our stay here we became friends with a couple from New York who were staying at the other end of Negril Beach in an all inclusive location.

1982 We returned to Negril Beach with Edie and Larry and John and Sherry. We had contacted the NY couple but they had already made plans to visit there before us. Upon checking into our motel we had a message from the New York couple who had been there the previous week, it instructed us to go to one of the Jamaican vendors on the beach. When we found him, he gave us a lunch size paper bag full of ganja. John and Sherry were in hog heaven. Edie & Larry joined us in a related ganja experience with our Dive Master, Henry from our previous trip. Henry asked us if we wanted to visit his "farm" where he was growing "the Herbs". Edie and Larry joined us on what was a quite memorable trip. It turns out that his "farm" was on government land that was being used by several other "farmers" as well. Henry drove us to his home and from there he took us to a small canoe that we used to cross a small river to an overgrown landscape of trees and brush. As we walked to his "garden" spot we would see an occasional Jamaican pop up from the vegetation, typically with a machete. Henry showed us his little plot of land with many plants of ganja. It started to sprinkle when we were there so he took us to this make shift lean-to tent where there were a few Jamaicans were gathered there smoking a few joints. It struck me at what an amazing sight this must looked like, these four middle aged Midwesterners sitting in a lean-to tent passing some joints around. My best guess as to why we were offered all of this hospitality was that Henry might have heard that Larry had a pilot's license and they thought that they might convince him to transport some of their product. Larry, of course, said there was no way. For whatever reason, it was quite an adventure.

1991 We went back to Negril one more time, but the magic was gone. It had become over commercialized with vendors everywhere, even in a cave that we used to snorkel into. In addition, the criminal element had taken over the marijuana business and when we finally located Henry he had fallen on hard times. It was all kind of sad.

2. Grand Bahama Island – 1977. We traveled to Grand Bahama with Edie and we crossed paths with Doc Eversole who was vacationing there at the same time. The memorable thing that happened here was that we became friends with a couple from Texas from the Dallas/Ft Worth area. It turned out that this guy had sold his business and bought a nice yacht and he and his girl friend and another couple were taking a year to just sail and explore the Caribbean. One day when we visited them where they were docked they invited us to join them in a cruise. This was fantastic. We sailed out a ways and then we anchored. We did some diving and picked up some marine life like lobsters and starfish. They prepared the lobsters for us to eat. I still have one of the starfish that I found. When we prepared to leave we encountered a little problem which foreshadowed an experience I would have several years later on a sailboat in the Greek Islands. The problem was that they couldn't raise the anchor. I dove to check it out and was able to unhook it so it could be raised. We kept in touch with this couple and a couple of years later when I was on a TDY to the Dallas Ft Worth area, Helen came with me and we visited them in there new night club called Popsicle Toes.
3. Florida – 1978. With Edie and friend (Jack?). We got to use a house and car of Jerry Hopkins, a Chevrolet dealer from New Carlisle that we had become friends with.
4. Norris Lake – 1979. Rented a houseboat with Larry & Carol Leffler and Pam & Arnie, a couple from Canada that we shared a lot of short trips with. They divorced and we lost touch with them. I think that John and Sherry were also on this trip. We had a very memorable experience on this trip that's too convoluted to go into now.
5. Manitoulin Island, Canada -1980. This trip was with Larry & Carol, Pam & Arnie and John & Sherry. Lovely trip. We drove to Canada where we took a Ferry boat to the island. Had a great hiking trail called the Cup & Saucer.

6. Whitewater Rafting – 1981. Great experience on the New River in West Virginia. Went with Paul & Bobbie Markley. Made this trip a couple years later with Dean and some guys,
7. Windjammer – 1984. A great trip with Paul & Bobbie to explore some of the Caribbean islands in a large, three mast sailboat. I forgot how many passengers but I think around 40. Our “job” on the ship was to raise and lower the sails. There was a lot of entertainment on the ship.
8. Greece – 1984. Our first trip to Greece. My niece Camille and her husband (?) Jones had moved to Athens because of his job. We took advantage of this and used their place as a headquarters as we planned a wonderful 5 day or so bus tour of many of Greece’s mainland highlights. In addition, we took a short flight to the Island of Mykonos. Loved it all and we had a very memorable experience in Mykonos. The bus from the airport dropped us off in the middle of the town of Mykonos and there were several people trying to get us to use their hotel. We finally selected one and when he took us to our room it had twin beds. When we commented that we would like a double bed, he shoved the twin beds together and basically said, problem solved. We decided to stay and one of the significant things that came into play many years later was that they had a son with Down syndrome that was our main server for breakfast. He would insist that we should do some things in a certain way and we complied. In a later trip I will come back to this experience.
9. Germany – 1985. In 1985 Greg was in the Air Force stationed in Berlin, Germany. I believe Dean was still working on his Doctorate in Madison, Wisconsin, so I don’t remember what the catalyst was, but we all decided to meet in Germany for a road trip. I had a friend in Germany, Berndt Bau, who I had met when he spent some time working at Wright-Patt in an exchange program. He met us in Munich and drove us to his home which was an hour or two away. I forgot the name of the town. I rented a car and we met the boys at the local train station and then we embarked on our adventure with many photo (ops) opportunities. See the photo album.
10. Hocking Hills – The 80s. Our longtime friend Bobbie Markley worked for a school in Huber Heights and a group of the teachers there had started a yearly event to rent a couple of cabins for a couple days and spend the Presidents Day long weekend at Hocking Hills. We were invited to join them and at the time I had no idea what Hocking Hills was and envisioned

it as nothing more than a big woods to walk through. I was completely blown away by it on our first trip and became a big fan. Over the years we have had several family visits there.

11. The West – 1986. Vans had become a big thing at this time and Paul & Bobbie Markley had bought one. They suggested that we take a trip together out west to visit a retired Colonel (I forgot his name) that we both knew that had retired and moved to Colorado. We initially thought we would do some camping out along the way, but after trying it one night early in our trip, with Paul and me using the tent while Helen and Bobbi slept in the van, it was enough to convince us to stay in motels. One thing that we learned as we traveled west was that it became very scarcely populated in some places and sometimes it was very difficult to find a motel, let alone one with a vacancy. Once we were lucky just to find one room that we could share. Sometimes we had to plan ahead to where we thought we would be and call ahead and make reservations. However, the trip was a great success. Some of the places that we got to visit were; Mesa Verde, the Grand Canyon, parts of the Yellowstone and Las Vegas. We also visited Doc Eversole who had moved to Idaho and we got in Mount Rushmore and the Badlands as well.
12. Cancun – 1987. We went to Cancun with Edie & Larry. The highlight was our excursion to Chichen Itza and the Mayan ruins.
13. England -1988. We traveled with Edie, Joyce and her husband (forgot his name) and another person from New Carlisle who was a very unpleasant person to travel with and I've forgotten her name. We rented a car and that was an adventure learning to drive on the other side of the road. We traveled to the town of Bath and some other places in the area looking for gravestones and records of some of Helen's ancestors. She had some success so that was good. I dinged up the car going through a town roundabout but I had insurance so the rental company just waved us through. However, as soon as we got into London I got rid of the car. However, upon arriving in London and trying to find our lodging, I used a map to get to what I thought was the right address, but we couldn't find the address for our lodging. I finally had to ask for help. I don't remember the exact words but it was something like this is "such and such" street, you're looking for "such and such" avenue which was miles away from there in another part of town.

14. Texas and Mexico – 1992. This was the trip that Martin, Lenny and I made that I already covered.
15. Portugal – 1993. One our first post retirement trips and one of my favorites. I hadn't really thought about Portugal but Helen was instrumental in gathering information for this trip. There were so many highlights with regard to our discovery of so many wonderful places to see. At the top of the list were two of the best castles we've ever seen and there were very few visitors, so we were free to roam around them to our hearts content. But our most memorable experience was the discovery of Bar 53 in Lagos in the Algarve. It was a kind of a neighborhood bar/restaurant hang out that was run by a retired couple from England named Bill and Marge Start. We got to become good friends with them and their regular clientele and we made it a point to end up there every night we were in the area. On our last night there, they closed the bar and threw a party for us.
16. Greek Islands by Sailboat – 1994. Our first Sailboat trip was in 1994 and came about because Helen & Edie did some research and found that renting a sailboat and Captain when split 3 ways was not that expensive. So we planned a trip to visit some of the Greek Islands with Larry & Edie, Paul & Bobbi and me and Helen. It turned out to be our best trip ever. To get the best description please read an excellent account of it written by Bobbi Markley. Wish I had done something like what Bobbi did on all of our trips. We rented a 42 ft yacht and had a great captain named Ari Calothis who we remained in contact with for a quite a while and exchanged a few interesting letters. He not only took us to several very picturesque islands that, typically, were not full of tourists, but he used us as his crew, which meant raising and lowering the sails and securing the boat when we anchored or docked. He also insisted that we all took turns at the helm. At some of the islands he would find us some neat little mom & pop restaurants that we would go to for dinner and it was a great experience. For the other meals the women would typically go to the local markets and get us something they could prepare for us to eat. One of our biggest problems was getting ice for our beer cooler. We had to improvise, once we went to a seller of slushy cones and we paid an outrage price for some of his ice. Another time we went to a large warehouse (I think it was a slaughter house) where they sold large blocks of ice that we had to haul to our sailboat and then cut to some usable sizes. We started the sailing portion of this trip by quickly visiting the 3 islands near Athens that get a lot of tourists. Those were Aegina, Poros and Idra. We then got more adventuress and visited Serifos, Sifnos, Kimolos, and Folegandros. These were very picturesque islands with few to no tourists. However the most picturesque island came next, that would be Santorini and there's a whole

chapter I could write about our few days here and about, but I won't. From there we visited the islands of Ios, Antiparos and Paros. From Paros we had to sail to the island of Mykonos where we would catch a flight from there to get home. However. Ari informed us that the weather was turning bad and we would face high headwinds and some rough sea and he asked us if we wanted to continue on this last leg or wait it out. We asked him if it was dangerous and he told us no, you couldn't capsize these yachts. However he did tell us that we would face a sea state 6 and that if it rose to a sea state 7, the yacht company wouldn't advise us to go, but he said he thought the chances were that it would probably go down, so we said OK. Well it didn't go down, it went up to 7. We had to tack into a high wind, as high as 40 knots, and our ship was at a very severe angle with waves crashing over the bow. Because we were sailing/tacking into this high wind we did not make a lot of progress so what normally be about a 4 and a half hour trip, after 7 hours we were still a long ways out and it was getting dark. Ari decided that we should pull into this isolated, apparently uninhabited, cove for the night. It was quieter there and because of it's isolation we had a wonderful view of the stars that night. The next morning the weather was still bad but less severe and we made the short remaining journey into Mykonos. To get a more detailed description of this you must read Bobbi's account.

17. Portugal 2nd trip – 1996. We loved Portugal so much that we made a second trip there this time with Edie & Larry. It was a good trip, but not as memorable as our first trip there. However, we were still able to visit Bar 53 in Lagos and our friends from England. They also had a local assistant called Fernando that was a lot of fun.
18. Greek Islands by sailboat #2 – 1997. We had Paul Fruge and his wife Mary join those of us that took the first trip in 1994, that was Paul & Bobbi Markley, Larry & Edie Campbell and me & Helen. While this was a good trip with a lot if interesting developments, it wasn't near memorable as our first trip. This was partly because of the bad weather that we ran into and because of how lousy our Captain was. A huge difference from our first Captain Aris Calothis. We had tried to request Ari but were unsuccessful. For a full account you need to read Bobbi's account of this trip as well. We did have an interesting encounter with a wonderful and interesting couple that had a beautiful old gaff-rigged schooner that they had bought 10 years ago and had spent the last 3 years redesigning and refurbishing it. It had been built in 1945. He invited us on board and showed us around. It was very impressive. One other memorable event was when we were trying to leave Paros and pull up our anchor it was stuck. You may remember that I had encountered a similar problem several years earlier in the Bahamas. I volunteered to free dive and check it out. The visibility was nowhere as good as in the

Bahamas, but I was able to see that the anchor was caught in some kind of underwater cable. I surfaced a couple of times to give the Captain directions and we were able to unsnag the anchor. People from the dock were heckling our Captain for using one of his passengers to do this, and to save face he told them not to worry that I was a diver for one of the oil rigs. However, what stands out the most for me on this trip was how lousy our Captain was. It started in the first couple of days with him poking along at a very slow speed with his ship so he could fish from it. We were anxious to get to our next island before the sun went down. The low point might have been when we were sailing near the shore line of an island and we started hearing explosions. He told us not to worry about it, that the Navy used that island for practice. We could see Navy ships that were apparently firing their guns over us. Not too long after that a helicopter showed up overhead and they were waving at us to get the hell out of there and then, as they left, the downwash from the helicopter almost capsized us. In addition, he wouldn't have dinner with us like Ari did, but we still had provide him the money for his meal. And finally, when we were in Idra on the last couple days of our trip we had an important part failure on the ship. You'll have to read Bobbi's account for the whole story, but what happened was he ordered the part and it would take about a day for the part to arrive. But in the meantime, out of the blue, he shows dressed up and with his baggage and tells us he needs to catch the ferry and leave us because of a court case he was involved in with his ex wife I think. However, he had a new guy come in to be our Captain. He was with us for a couple of days and when we got the boat fixed he took us to Aegina. He turned out to be very good and we were sorry he hadn't been our Captain for the whole trip. Our old Captain returned to take us on the final lap to Athens where we would catch our flight back home. His incompetence wasn't over. Because of our early flight we had to get a taxi around 3:30 in the morning. He left us on the boat that evening and went home, but he told us he would come back in the morning and have a taxi for us. Needless to say he didn't come back and there was no taxi. We eventually went up on the street carrying our luggage and we were finally able to get two taxis to take us to the airport. At the time we thought we would make this trip again with a different Captain, but fate proved otherwise. In about a year after we got back, both Paul Fruge's wife Mary and Paul Markley, Bobbi's husband died from cancer. We had shared a lot of wonderful trips with Paul Markley and we really felt his loss.

19. Copper Canyon, GCT – Fall of 1999. This was our first “packaged” trip with the Grand Circle Travel Company (GCT). Here again, it was Helen's research that found us this company. Bobbi Markley and Paul Fruge made this trip with us. It was a good trip that had about 40 people on it. There were a lot of interesting spots and different entertainment provide by the locals at various locations. The trip started in Tucson Arizona; from there we were transported on a bus. We crossed the border at Nogales and then stopped at a couple of different spots in Mexico along the Pacific coast. We then traveled inland and then from a location that I don't remember, we took a train to a hotel overlooking part of the Copper Canyon. It is larger than our Grand Canyon, but not as dramatically picturesque. It was still well worth seeing. We had an interesting hike in a part of it. This was the beginning of several trips we were to take with GCT and its close companion OAT (Overseas Adventure Travel). These were well run trips

and they have been enjoyable. Unfortunately they no longer offer this trip. We do miss the sense of discovery and the unexpected but memorable experience that came with our self organized trips that we had taken in the past. However, we still had a few of those left to take.

20. Italy – May 1999. Dean and Tea and their family (Martina, who was around 6 years old, and Stefan, who was around 4 years old) planned a trip to Italy to spend some time with Tea's family in Trieste and we thought it would be nice to join them and spend a little time with Tea's family as well. However, Helen & I started out by ourselves for the first part. We landed in Rome and rented a car. We visited Montalcino, Sienna, Bologna and Venice before arriving in a wonderful hotel near Trieste that was on the Adriatic coast that Tea's sister Silva had reserved for us. We visited Tea's family and spent a couple of days sight seeing in Trieste. We then traveled with Dean, Tea, Martina and Stefan to Northern Italy to the village of Brunico. We spent a couple days there and the weather wasn't that good for checking out the mountains so we decided to drive to Bolzano to see the Iceman. The Iceman was this couple of thousand years old body that had recently been found in the Alps. It was quite an impressive museum. We went back to Trieste and dropped off Dean and family and Helen and I continued to sight see on our way to Rome. We stopped in Perugia for a couple of days and then went to Rome. We visited the Vatican museum with its incredible art work and also the Sistine chapel to see the famous ceiling mural of God & Adam. We also got a tour of the Coliseum. We had checked in our rental car and traveled primarily by subway which led to an interesting experience. We had heard about the notorious pick pockets in Rome and I had been advised to keep my wallet in my front pocket, which I did. One day when we were waiting for our subway I noticed, in general, this woman that was also waiting that was pregnant and was dressed like a Gypsy. I didn't pay much attention to her, but when the subway train arrived, it was pretty full and I was one of the last to get on. As I was stepping thru the door I felt some movement on my front pocket and instinctively slapped my hand down on it. I said something like "Hey, what's going on" and turned to look and almost simultaneously the door was closing and that woman I mentioned was quickly walking away. I had to admire her timing but, needless to say, I remained super alert after that.

21. Spain, Costa Del Sol (GCT) -2005. This was our second "packaged" trip with GCT. Paul Fruge and Helen's High School friend Joanne Milan, joined us on this trip. Joanne was the person responsible for Helen and I getting married. This was a nice trip that GCT no longer offers. For a large part of it we had a nice hotel overlooking a wonderful beach. One of the nice features of this trip was that for some of our dinners that were paid for, we could go on our own, but we had to select from a group of restaurants from a list. These were typically good for one bottle of wine per couple. However, we found a restaurant that didn't seem to impose that limit, so that's the one we used the most. There was the nearby city of Malaga that was easily accessible by a local train and we were lucky one day to be visiting there when they had their annual Easter parade, which is a religious one with several Catholic inspired floats. In addition, we took side trips to the Alhambra and to Rhonda as well as taking a ferry boat over to Morocco where we had a nice dinner in the home of a wonderful young Muslim family. This was not too long after the 9/11 terrorist attack and they told us that they were doing this so

that Americans didn't think that all Muslims were terrorist. We had one other side trip that we chose ourselves to the Charro Gorge. Very dramatic scenery.

22. Spain/Basque Country – 2006. We made this trip with Paul Fruge and his new companion Linda Parish. This was another trip instigated by Helen to explore the Basque region of Spain and, to a limited degree, a small portion of France. But our first stop was in Segovia with its large Roman aqueduct. When we left here, we passed through Burgos, the home of “El Cid”. From there we traveled into Basque country. A unique feature of this portion of our trip was that for a significant part of it we were going to stay in a couple of places that were part of a group of accommodations called “Agrotourismo”. That was because they were, in a sense, working farms that were subsidized by the government. The first one was called Carpe Diam located in the village of Navaridas. It was a building from 1744 that had been converted into a hotel that was run by a young couple that also had a winery. One of the features of their hotel was that they had an unlocked cabinet containing several of their wines. We were welcome to use them but we were on the honor system when we checked out as to how many we had used. The ancient building we were living in was very interesting and unique and so was the village it was a part of. I might add that this area wasn't heavily touristed which made it pleasant but also presented a small problem. Most of the people in this area did not speak English, they only spoke Spanish and Basque, which meant that my traveling companions had to rely on my limited ability to speak Spanish to tell them what people were telling us. Unfortunately, I often had to fake it. One other feature of this non touristed region was that they pretty much used Siesta time which meant that just about everything shut down from, I believe it was from 3 to 6 in the afternoon and did not open for dinner until 8 PM. This meant that we had to modify our eating habits. We used our location in Navaridas as our focal point as we visited other small villages that were within easy driving distance. One of our first opportunities was that we had the good luck to be there when there was a wine festival going on nearby that our young couple told us about. The wine festival was located in the village Moreda De Alava and it was to celebrate the wines of Rioja Alavesa. It was a wonderful experience, untouched by foreign involvement.

The other Agrotourismo place that we stayed in was called Maddiola and it was located a couple of miles outside of San Sebastian. It was a beautiful modern hotel with an outstanding location. It sat on a large hill overlooking the Mediterranean and we had a walk out patio from our rooms that gave us a wonderful view of the sea and the sunsets. What made this place a “working farm” was that our proprietress had some goats that were fenced in next to the hotel. The bad thing was that one of the main dishes of our included breakfast was her homemade yogurt. I was not able to acquire a taste for it. San Sebastian is a nice picturesque town with a beautiful beach and dramatic scenery. It also is very close to the French border that was also part of the Basque culture. We visited several small towns on our way to the French Pyrenees. There is so much more to tell about this trip, but I'll just have to summarize the rest of it. When we left San Sebastian we traveled through Pamplona on the way to Zarragosa. While at Zarragosa we took a side trip to explore the village by the name of Fraga. Great name, however, the village was not very distinct. It does bring up an interesting side story though. Earlier in our trip I was talking with a local

and I mentioned that my name was Fraga and I was planning to visit the village of Fraga. He told me that's not where most of the Fraga's live. He said they were located in Galicia which is in Northwest Spain. Then he told me, "They're Irish". My reaction was "what?" And he said yes just look at a map. When I did, I noticed that if you sailed directly south from Ireland, the first land you would come to would be Galicia in Spain. However, back to our trip, we finished it in Madrid where we visited the Prado Art museum where we saw a lot of masterpieces. This was the last of our self planned trips. The rest of these are packaged tours that, while nice, did not have the same sense of adventure and discovery that our others had. For the full effect watch my DVD.

23. Croatia/Slovenia Trip – 2008. This was another GCT trip that covered some nice places in Croatia and parts of Serbia. Some of the scenery was outstanding. It was interesting, colorful and in some cases beautiful. The Standouts were Dubrovnik and its great old wall, Opatija, the Dalmatian coast, the Istrian Peninsula and several others. The Postojino Caves were quite impressive. The most beautiful scenery was at and around Lake Bled. We had a wonderful hike around the lake. This was a wonderful trip, but what was missing, was the memorable events, discoveries and encounters that we had on our self organized trips. This was offset some by having everything taken care of.
24. Egypt GCT – Spring 2010. We had planned to take this trip that Paul Fruge and his girl friend Linda Parish had selected and it had been planned and paid for when Paul died unexpectedly in his sleep a couple of months before the trip. We talked it over with Linda and decided to go ahead with it. In addition, a couple from Canada they had made friends with on one of their previous trips, the Downies, also joined us. They were not a good fit. The trip was fantastic with regard to the various amazing sights. The Pyramids of Giza, the sphinx, countless fantastic temples and archaeological sites that dated back to 1500 BC, and in addition, a several day cruise on the Nile River. You'll have to watch my DVD to get the full appreciation. With regard to the people however, it was a different story. A prime example was when I toured Cairo by myself. Helen and the rest of our party took an optional tour to Alexandria. I decided that I wanted to take the time to explore Cairo a little deeper. My interaction with the locals was disappointing. Typically their only interest was to find a way to take advantage of you. I felt so strongly disappointed that I wrote about my experience that day as soon as I got back to our hotel. It is available and, in my humble opinion, worth a read.
25. Italy, Tuscany & the Amalfi Coast GCT – March 2011. This was a nice trip with a lot of beautiful scenery. We met a wonderful couple from Kansas City, named David and Vicki Dieckman that we still stay in touch through Facebook. Some of the highlights of the trip were the beautiful and sometimes dramatic landscapes. We also visited Florence where there were also some fantastic museums with classical sculptures like Michelangelo's David and much impressive Cathedral art. One of my favorite museums was one that had Davinci's recreated inventions and some of this art. Pompeii and Naples were also outstanding, as well as the wonderfully scenic Amalfi coast. One other treat on this trip were the wonderful street musicians, many playing classical music. To get a full appreciation of all of this you need to watch my DVD.

26. Great River Cruises of Europe GCT – 2012. This cruise was from Vienna to Amsterdam on the rivers Danube, Main & Rhein. It was a wonderful cruise ship with fun lounge entertainment. A very pleasant cruise on the river with beautiful scenery and nice atmosphere. We had to go through several very interesting locks. Although very pleasant, with nice friendly fellow passengers, there was not a lot of time to explore the various villages and cities that we docked at. Some of those cities were Vienna, Passau, Regensburg, the Danube Gorge, and Nuremberg. I interrupt here to indicate that in Nuremberg I was able to visit some of the locations that I visited here in 1955 when I was stationed here for a few months. If you watch the DVD you will see photos from both eras. After Nuremberg, we visited Bamberg, Wurzburg, Heidelberg, Mainz (and the Gutenberg museum), Rudesheim, Koblenz, Frankfurt (very briefly), and of course Amsterdam with its legal “pot” and its commercial red light district. All in all, a nice trip with no memorable moments.
27. Cruising Burgundy and Provence GCT – 2014. We took this trip with Nancy Thor. It was a great trip with a nice mixture of bus tours and river cruises. We made several good friends on this trip that I’ve totally forgotten. The trip started with a few days in Paris that started with a cruise on the river Seine around Paris. We got a lot of wonderful photos of the Eiffel tower and we also had a bus tour of Paris and around the Arch de Triumph and the Louvre. We didn’t go in the Louvre (Lines were too long), but we did get to visit the museum D’Orsay on our own which had a lot of more great modern artists. I got to take a few photos of paintings by Van Gogh and Toulouse Latrec before I was told that taking photos wasn’t allowed. Check the DVD. We also got to see a lot of the outside of the Notre Dame and we even waited in huge long lines to actually get to go inside. A more impressive sight was the stained glass windows in the Sainte Chapelle (again, watch the DVD). We also got to see the Rodin museum with its great sculptures, especially “The Thinker”. We then had a bus tour to Burgundy where we boarded our cruise ship for a cruise on the river Saone to Lyon. We then cruised to river Rohn. We took a bus tour to the Beaujolais region where we visited an outstanding winery. We went back to the cruise ship and we went through a 75 ft Lock, which was pretty impressive. We continued on to Tavenon & Viviers and then Avignon. We traveled to Provence where we got to see Carrieris de Luminaires which is an outstanding multimedia show inside a rock quarry where they show the art of Gustav Klimt and his contemporaries. Unfortunately it took me a while before I started photographing it, but it’s still worth watching it on the DVD. From here we went to Arles, where Van Gogh had spent time painting and we were shown the locations along with a picture of the various paintings. From here we also visited a bull farm where we got to see bulls and some French cowboys. We went on our final leg to Nice. Along the way we did stop to honor an American cemetery from WWII soldiers. When we arrived in Nice, we found Nice to be nice. We parted company with some of our fellow travelers here. We had made plans to stay an extra 3 days on our own here. One nice thing that happened was that we encountered our trips tour director, Eric, who was guiding those that extended their stay through GCT. He told us if we were at the hotel the next day by a certain time that we could join the group he was taking by bus on a day long tour to Monaco, Cannes and the Antibes. We took advantage of his offer and even though he didn’t charge us anything I gave him a sizable tip in gratitude. We

got to see many incredible yachts at Cannes as well as the theater where the yearly movie competition is held. Also the Monte Carlo Casino and an Olive farm.

28. Spain Cultural Capitals (Madrid, Valencia & Barcelona) GCT – 2015. Another nice trip that we took with Nancy Thor. Madrid had many interesting sights like the Prado Art museum, bullfighting demonstrations in the Plaza de Toros, a Flamenco street dancer, and marvelous street performers (watch the DVD). Valencia had a complex of fantastic modernistic designed buildings. Barcelona also had unique modern designs of a different nature. They were the Gaudi designed homes, apartments, a park and the fantastic Sagrada Familia Basilica. There were also several side trips to places like Segovia with its wonderful El Al Cozar castle and the huge Roman built aqueduct. Cuenca was fantastic with its dramatic cliff side buildings. The trip to Montserrat with its mountain Abbey and a funicular ride to the top of the mountain were entertaining. And then there was Gerona, a picturesque town built around a river. In addition it had this wonderful surprise, a Cinema museum that had exhibits of the earliest equipment and techniques for the development of moving pictures. I did not have enough time there to satisfy my interest in it. There were a couple of other museums that were unusual and quite entertaining. One was a Paper Mache museum in Valencia that was quite interesting and, in some cases, quite funny. It was part of a long history of competition. Another unusual, unique and very enjoyable museum was the Salvador Dali Museum in Figuera. To get the full benefit watch my DVD. We also made some nice friendships with some of our fellow travelers that I have totally forgotten.

29. Turkey & Greek islands and Greek mainland GCT – 2016. We took this trip with Nancy Thor. Because of stormy weather some of the Greek islands that we were supposed to visit on this trip had to be changed. We visited a couple of substitute islands until we could cross the Mediterranean on some very rough seas at night. We were still able to hit the two major ones of Santorini and Mykonos. In Mykonos we had a memorable experience. I was trying to find the hotel we had stayed at on our visit to this island in 1984. The streets are like a maze and I wasn't having any luck. Helen and Nancy were shopping in a jewelry store and I was hanging out in front. I struck up a conversation with the next door shop keeper and mentioned my inability to find the hotel. He questioned me for the name of the hotel or the street or the name of the people. I told him that the only thing I remembered was that they had a kid with Down syndrome. He knew immediately who they were, but that the kid had died. He did tell us how to find the hotel so Helen and I went and visited it. The couple that had owned it had also died, but the person that was now running the hotel was their niece. She was real sweet. We took some pictures and had a couple of drinks there. We also made a couple of nice friends on this trip. Their names are Carol George and Naomi Foust and they live in Erie Pennsylvania. However, Carol was born in Puerto Rico and she taught Spanish in this country. Our trip ended in Athens and we had extended our stay there for 3 days. We rented an excellent AirBnB with a walkout to a rooftop that provided us with a great view of the Acropolis, especially in the evening when it would light up. One other good fortune that we had was our land trip portion tour guide. She offered to include us with her group on a tour of the Acropolis with which we could by pass the long crowds to enter. I tried to give her some money at the end of our tour and

she wouldn't take it. We covered so much territory on this trip that I put it on 3 different DVDs. If you're interested please watch them.

30. Rhine and Mosel River Cruise GCT – September 2017 Nancy traveled with us again and we had a 3 day pre-trip on our own in Lucerne, Switzerland. We went up Mt Pilatus for some beautiful scenery. It was a nice little excursion. Watch the DVD. The river cruise portion was on a beautiful cruise ship where we saw a lot of very pleasant scenery and a lot of dramatic castle settings, some of which we visited. We visited a lot of picturesque villages and we were fortunate to encounter some entertaining festivals with live musical groups performing. The only negative experience was that a couple that we became friends with early turned out to be Trump supporters. This was 2017, early in his presidency so I don't know if they remained his supporters.
31. Northern Spain & Portugal GCT – September 2018. Just me and Helen on another GCT trip. Our trip began in Bilboa where one of its main attractions is the Guggenheim museum designed by Frank Gherry. It has huge unique exhibits. We visited Guernica, noted for the Nazi aerial bombing in 1937 and the famous Picasso painting reflecting it. We went to Pamplona and followed the trail the bulls travel once a year. Spent some time in San Sebastian where we were lucky to catch various celebrations that were going on, with the highlight being a large marching band dressed in Napoleon era uniforms. Much novel street entertainers and we got to pose with Hemingway and some bulls (watch the video). Another significant part of this trip was walking segments of the pilgrims trail to the Santiago de Compestela. Got to tour a great Templar castle at Pontferrada. We had a great fishing boat excursion with a funny and crazy captain and we got to see some shellfish aquaculture. Found out that Northern Spain is quite different from the rest of Spain. One example is the use of bagpipes. The first part of our bus trip in Northern Portugal was the Duoro valley, with it's beautiful terraced farms along the Duoro River. We stopped in a neat little town of Pinhao and stayed in a hotel with a beautiful view and location on the Duoro River. We had a nice river cruise and visited an interesting Port wine farm. We took a side trip to Braga and visited Bom Jesus do Monte. Took funicular to the top and spent time in a beautiful park and then took the amazing steps down. We finished our trip enjoying the city of Porto.
32. Italian West Coast, Sicily & Malta – June 2019.
33. Puerto Vallarta – February 2020.
34. Alpine Trip – September 2021