Introduction

Often, when I was growing up over the years, I wished I knew more about my grandparents, great grandparents, and even those who came before them.

What did they think?

What kind of problems and challenges did they have to deal with?

How did they respond to them and why?

I was fortunate to know both of my grandmothers and one of my grandfathers. They were good to me. And, I think they set good examples for me.

But I was young and did not understand a lot about them. I saw how they lived their lives. But I did not know enough to talk with them about serious and personal topics that I would confront in my own life as a I grew up. Because, frankly, I had no idea what those would be.

Now, as I enter into whatever time I have left on this planet, I wanted to put on paper something that my grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great, great-grandchildren as well as my many nieces and nephews, and grand nieces, and grand nephews, etc., etc. might find interesting and be helpful to them as they face the challenges that they will surely encounter as we all do during our lifetimes.

I am not writing this book because I think I am someone special. I'm not.

This book is just the story of one guy who did his best to live a good life for himself and make the world a better place for all of us.

I hope whoever reads this book will find it helpful to understand:

- Who and what they are as a unique human being living in their own times.
- Recognize that there are some things about us as human beings that are universal and not time-bound.
- There are other things about us which are unique to us.
- That we are all impacted, positively and negatively, by the broader and changing world in which we live.
- That we can all make a positive difference in our ever-changing world.

To whomever reads this book, enjoy your lifetime journey! I am grateful that my journey has been as interesting as it has been. And who knows what lies ahead for both me and for you?

Keep doing good things.

Love to all, always!

Chapter One

The 1940's - Growing Up Polish in Chicago

The first thing I remember in my life is waking up with my eyes encrusted in gunk and trying to get them open.

I was probably 3 or 4 years old. It was 1945 or '46.

I don't recall for sure who did it, probably either Mom or Dad. She or he got a warm washcloth and held it over my eyes until the gunk softened up and I could open my eyes.

My other first memories also involve allergy related attacks and symptoms. I remember Aunt Sophie and Busia (Grandma in Polish) and Mom warming up a cup of milk with butter in it for me to sip to ease the coughing from the congestion in my chest. The warmth of the milk was supposed to loosen up the phlegm and the butter was to make everything less scratchy.

I remember sitting up for hours at night while everyone else slept until my sinuses and chest cleared up enough so I could get back to sleep. Little did I know at the time that I would have a lifetime of fun with hay fever and other allergies. The good news is that I think that experience of very severe allergies and dealing with them taught me something about patience and learning to live with some limitations in life, though I certainly did not have to deal with the more difficult limitations that others had to adjust to who had more serious and long-lasting illnesses.

I am the second oldest of 10 children. I also remember early on that there were always many people around. There were many adults – Mom, Dad, Aunt Sophie, Uncle Ed, Busia Bieszczat, Busia Liss, two Grandpas (less distinct in memory than the Busias, both of whom were formidable women), and assorted Aunts and Uncles and cousins, particularly my cousin Edwin. He was my equivalent of a big brother. And my big sister Rosemary. I don't really remember my younger brothers, Tony and Frank, when I was 3 or 4. But I do remember them when I was 5 and going to kindergarten. Then I remember the rest of them as they came one by one. We were always excited about another one coming.



Rosemary, me, and our Mom and Dad, Christmas, 1942

The next thing that really sticks out in my memory is going to kindergarten. It was not an idea or experience I was looking forward too. I was having too much of a good time playing with my brothers and sister and cousins to want to go to some strange place. I remember hiding under the table in the classroom the first day, figuring if maybe they didn't see me, I could sneak out and not have to continue with this weird experience.

They found me. We did things that I thought were strange, including making music together. They gave me a stick and a block of wood to pound on. I think that was the highlight of my musical instrument career.

I also remember going to Church early on. I remember vaguely that there was a funeral with a draped casket toward the front of the Church. I think one of the priests had died and there was a special wake in the Church.

My whole early life really revolved around my family (very extended), school, the Church, and playing games of all kinds. My older sister was Rosemary who was born on May 26 of 1940. I was born April 16 of 1942. Tony was born on July 27 of 1943, and Frank was born on May 26 of 1945, exactly five years after Rosemary was born. There was then a four-year break in new children joining the family. We used to kid our parents that weren't the first four of us good enough that you had to have six more children. Margaret was born on July 14 of 1949, and exactly two years later, Carolyn was born on July 14, 1951. Elizabeth was born on November 19, 1952; Mary Catherine on December 14, 1954; Matthew on December 15, 1956; and Lucia on January 8, 1958.

The extended family included my Mom and Dad and my brothers and sisters. It also included my Aunt Sophie and Uncle Ed who lived downstairs with my two older cousins, Edwin and Theresa. It also included my Busia and her second husband, Jan Palucki, who lived in the basement apartment in the same two-story frame house.



ıe, Chicago, IL

ss, my Mom's parents. Living with Busia
ere my Uncle Vince and Aunt Clara and
ısia and Grandpa and sometimes my Uncle
, my Uncle Joe and Uncle Vic also lived
l when I was probably 5 or 6. I still
by in cars with funny sounding horns –

ıcle Frank and their three children, Mary

We interacted with most of these people every day and the others, several times a week.

I just remember that they were always good to be with. Sometimes the Busias could be scary. They would threaten us with bodily harm or other catastrophes if we didn't listen to them or our parents or our aunts and uncles, etc. Nobody was ever mean or abusive to us. But physical punishment was part of the scene. You didn't take it personally like someone wanted to hurt you out of meanness. It just was that if you did something wrong, you got punished. Usually it was swift and direct. Not enough to kill you, but memorable so you thought about it before you did the same thing again.

I remember that we played all the time. Outside if we could. There were more possibilities if we could go outside. In those days, there were still some vacant lots in the neighborhood. They presented all kinds of opportunities for war games and cowboy and Indian battles, and ambushes of the other side, whoever they were. They were also opportunities to play sports. Alleys were also popular play areas. We played baseball, touch football, basketball and hockey in the alley, plus lots of other games of "It" and tag, and buck-buck, and pinner.

Because our home was just three doors down from the parish church and school, both were the center of many of our activities.

One of my earliest Church memories, besides the funeral mentioned above, was getting shanghaied by the nuns one Friday afternoon to carry a candle around the Church for a Novena. There used to be Novenas to the Sorrowful Mother every Friday during the afternoon and the evening. The afternoon one was in Polish. The evening one was in English. They always needed three altar boys for the Novena. One carried the cross around the Church to each of the seven stations of the Sorrowful Mother's life. They also needed two candle holders to flank the Crucifix as it was carried around the Church.

Well, one Friday afternoon around 3:15, the nuns did not have three altar boys, so they came out in the alley behind the Church where we were playing ball and said that I should come in and be an altar boy. Usually you had to have some training to do this correctly. Also, I think I was only 6 or 7 and maybe starting second grade at the time. You usually didn't start serving until you were in 4th or 5th grade. However, the nuns were desperate, so they told me to come into the sacristy. They cleaned me up a little and then adjusted a cassock and surplice so that it would fit me, and then they sent me out with the instructions to do the same as the other candle holder.



I did it. I didn't make any mistakes. It was cool. I was doing it before anyone else my age. The smell of incense was great. A memorable experience for me.

I saw my Aunt Sophie and some of the other Polish speaking ladies from the neighborhood in Church at the Novena. By the time I got home for dinner later that afternoon, everyone knew about my early start as an altar boy. Word spread fast in the neighborhood. Good or bad followed you home. And if it was bad, Dad would let you have it. If Dad wasn't home and Mom heard about something bad we did first, we would try to talk her out of telling Dad. Sometimes it worked. Sometimes, particularly if we had also made trouble at home, Mom would not serve as a buffer and we'd pay the price.

After my negative start in kindergarten, things started to get better in school. I found out early on that I succeeded in school. I learned fast and I was thought well of by my parents and teachers because of that. I also liked school, because I met new and interesting people. My family was great and plentiful, but it was interesting to see different people from different families. I started to make friends and I noticed that other kids would look to me for ideas and things to do, and though I wasn't aware of it at the time, other kids expected me to lead and decide.

One of my other memories of learning about things when I was growing up was learning from all of my extended family. My Busia Bieszczat was one person I learned a lot from. Not so much from an academic standpoint, but from a practical, how you should live your life standpoint. My Busia Bieszczat was the leader of the family. She was the final say in just about everything affecting the larger family.

So, before I continue my own story, a little history on my Busia Bieszczat. She was born in Poland around 1875. Her name was Mary Niemiec. Her mother died fairly early in Busia's life.

Her father remarried and had more children with his second wife. One morning, when Busia was about 16 years old, her stepmother told her that she would have to leave the household because they did not have enough food to feed all of them. At the time, Busia was working as a maid in a local nobleman's household. So Busia, who knew she had some cousins who had already migrated to Chicago in the US, got on a boat, got off in New York, took a train to Chicago, met one of her cousins, and started her life here.

Mary Niemiec married Anton Bieszczat when she was about 20 years old. They had five children. The youngest of the five children was my dad, Frank, who was born in 1913. Like many immigrant families of the day, Mary and Anton aspired to own their own home. And like many immigrants, that meant buying an apartment building where several family units could contribute to purchasing the building. They worked hard as did their older children who all chipped in to buy a six-flat apartment building on the northwest side of Chicago at the corner of Christiana and Grace Streets. Unfortunately, when the Great Depression hit in the late 1920's and early 1930's, they lost the apartment building. But they all worked and stayed together and by the late 1930's they were able to buy a two-flat in the same neighborhood on Spaulding Avenue. During that time, my grandfather died. My grandmother remarried. My Dad, who was a union carpenter and union machinist at the time, finished off part of the basement as an apartment. He lived there and eventually met and married my mother, Lucy Liss. They had met in the choir at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in the school hall just across the street from the two-flat on Spaulding. My mom and dad lived in the basement apartment for the first few years of their married life. My sister Rosemary was born in May of 1940. I arrived in April of 1942. Because the basement apartment was too small for our growing family, my Busia and her husband moved into the basement apartment and my mom, dad, Rosemary and I moved into the second-floor apartment.

Getting back to the story of my earliest years, as I mentioned a little earlier, I learned a lot from my Busia Bieszczat as well as the rest of my extended family. One of the things my sister and brothers and cousins that lived nearby would often do after school when we were 6 to 10 years old was come after school and sit in Aunt Sophie's kitchen on the first floor of the two-flat and talk with Busia. She would usually have coffee (with lots of milk in it) and bread (often Polish rye bread with some sugar sprinkled on it) and we would talk about all kinds of things. Busia always wanted to know what we learned in school that day. One of the good things about that practice of hers was that we learned to listen to each other and learn from each other. In addition, she would often tell us stories about herself when she was a little girl and when she came over to America. To this day, I am very impressed that a 16-year-old could leave her home, cross the ocean and half a continent, and start her life in America.

Another way I learned a lot from my family was at big family parties. When the adults talked, we kids would listen in as much as possible. We learned about the highs and lows of everyone's lives. We learned what challenges they faced at work or school or in their families or in their community and how they dealt with them. We listened extra hard when the adults lowered their voices because we then knew that they were talking about really important things which they thought we were too young to understand. We probably were too young to understand some things. But what I learned is that all of these people who were different in many ways all found ways to deal with difficulties and challenges. They also often got good advice from each other and encouragement

from each other. And when necessary, different members of the family would pitch in to help the person who was struggling with one matter or another. I learned a lot of practical morality and ethics that way too. Be honest. Work hard. Listen to people. Study hard. Life can be tough, but you have a better chance of making a success of something if you have the help of other people, particularly your family. One of my favorites was the quote "You'll have a lot of friends in your life, but when times are difficult, the people you can count on and who will help you out are your family."

Though I don't remember anything about World War II, I do remember a lot about its aftermath in the US. I remember my Uncle Joe and Uncle Victor and Uncle Ed coming home from the war in uniform. Everyone was happy to see them. I remember, too, at least one post war parade in the neighborhood with all kinds of guys dressed up in uniform. There was also some military equipment (trucks, armored vehicles, etc.) in the parade. I also remember the veterans shooting into the sky at the end of the parade and all of us kids scrambling to get a shell casing. I remember this overall sense that our country had done something good. We had beaten the bad guys and the world would now be at peace.

I remember fighting a lot as a kid. It was a much more physical world in those days. If you disagreed with another kid, you often duked it out. Usually it was a lot of harmless pushing and shoving and taunting… "come on and make me…just try it…bock, bock, bock (like a chicken noise)." Sometimes we would end up throwing punches. I was a pretty good puncher. When we were growing up, we always had boxing gloves and would box regularly. I learned to give and take a punch. It just seemed the natural way to do things. I was generally respected as someone you didn't take lightly if it came to a potential fight, even by some of the older kids one or two classes above me.

However, I stopped fighting when I was probably 10 or 11 years old. A kid from down the block who was older than me started a fight on the way home for lunch from school. I don't know what exactly started the fight (I think he said something bad about my sister Rosemary), but I remember being really mad and just flinging myself at him. I knocked him down and started punching him in the face. I was going to pick up his head and bash it on the sidewalk when I finally realized I might really hurt this kid. I don't think I ever fought after that, except boxing and maybe to defend myself by pushing someone away. I kind of scared myself of what I was capable of doing when I really got mad. I didn't want to do that again.

As I went through grammar school, the Catholic school and church were the center of our lives in addition to my extended family.

We went to Mass every Sunday. During the school year, we went to Mass every day as well. There were many religious holidays and festivals and processions that took place not only in the Church but in the neighborhood. Social events were almost all tied to the school and Church. First Communions, Confirmation, Baptisms, graduations from kindergarten…everything was an event. It was done in a Church context. It was important. It was fun. It was another party where the whole extended family got together. If it was your First Communion or Confirmation, you got money gifts mainly. We usually didn't have a lot of money to spend, so getting a total of $40 or

$50 was big bucks in those days. You could then plan on buying something like a bike, or new baseball glove, or a new football, etc.

I guess religion was a lot of do's and don'ts at the time. But just as importantly, if not more importantly, the Church and the school were the context for all the fun things we did from picnics to plays to singing and processions to pageants to sports, to just about everything we did.

I had a happy childhood. Outside of my allergy related sicknesses, I was never really sick or injured. We did all kinds of fun things together as brothers and sisters, as a family, and with an extended family.

My folks had a cottage in Wisconsin when I was very small. It was at Lake Como in Wisconsin. My Dad made a sign for the front of the cottage. It was called the Busy Bees. It was probably pretty primitive by today's standards. There was no refrigerator. When we got up there on a Friday night, my Dad would stop and get a block of ice to put in the icebox. That kept the food cool all weekend.

Every time we went up to Lake Como, it seemed like we never went just by ourselves…Mom, Dad, Rosemary, me, and Tony, I think. If Frank was along, he was probably a baby. Aunt Sophie, Uncle Ed, Edwin, Theresa, and Busia Bieszczat also usually came along. We usually went in one car. Ten people in a car. Usually Mom and Dad and one other person between them in the front seat and Mom holding the latest baby. Then 4 people sat across the back seat and two or three kids sat on their lap.

It took about 2 hours to get there. There were no expressways in those days (late 40's). We usually got there on Friday night when it was already dark. There was no indoor plumbing, so we had to go to the outhouse. That was pretty scary, going out in the dark to this smelly place. As a boy, it was all right if you just had to pee. You didn't have to sit over this hole with God knows what underneath you. Hopefully, something would not come up and grab your butt. If you had to take a poop, you were quick about it.

I don't know how many rooms there were, but there were beds and couches that you could sleep on everywhere. With 10 or more people usually there, places to sleep were important.

Sleeping in the country was fun and very different than the City. There were different noises. Crickets and frogs and different bird calls. There was usually a train that you could hear in the distance. It was on the far side of the lake, but in the middle of the night, you could hear it go clickety-clack. You could also hear the train whistle. It was exciting. It was different. It seemed so full of possibilities.

We could hardly wait to get up in the morning. The train whistle probably sounded around 6 AM. We couldn't get up till Mom and Dad got up. I remember laying there just hoping they would get up soon so that we could start doing all of the country things.

After a hearty breakfast of bacon and eggs and toast, we would run outside. We loved to explore. There were creeks and woods we would just love to be in. We'd chase each other around and play cowboys and Indians and hide and seek. When it warmed up a little and Mom got the baby ready, we would go down to the lake to swim.

Usually my Dad would be working on something around the cottage. He'd try to get Uncle Ed to help, but Uncle Ed was good at getting lost. We were too young to be of any help, so except for raking leaves and grass, I don't remember doing too much work. Dad was always working on something. Occasionally he would come down to the lake with us. He taught me how to skip stones on the lake. But just like in later years, when Dad was out in the country, there was always work to do. The older you got, the more you were expected to help.

I learned to swim from my sister Rosemary. I don't think I learned to swim at Lake Como. I think I was only 5 or 6 when we sold the cottage. But even after we sold the cottage, we would still go up to a lake regularly on a Sunday. Sometimes the lake was in Wisconsin and sometimes it was in northern Illinois. On one of those outings, Rosemary taught me how to swim. A few years later, she taught me how to dive off a raft at Druce Lake. I can still remember standing on the raft and Rosemary showing me how to stand and push off so I wouldn't do a belly flop. It was kind of scary, but Rosemary said I could do it and she could do it, so I did it.

Whether at Lake Como or at the other lakes, we seldom went alone. In addition to our family, Aunt Sophie and her family, Aunt Julia and her family, and Busia Bieszczat often came along. We would all get up for 6 AM or 7 AM Mass. We would come home for a big breakfast which my Dad usually cooked. Sunday was my Mother's day off from cooking, especially as we got older. Dad would make breakfast and Rosemary and I would often make Sunday dinner which was at about 12:30 PM. Supper was ham sandwiches around 5:30 PM while we listened to the radio. The Jack Benny Show was on. Also, the Amos n' Andy Show.

A lot of times our Sunday dinner and supper included other family from the neighborhood as well as my Uncle Matt and Uncle John and their families. They would come to visit their Mom (Busia Bieszczat) and then stay for dinner. Again, it was a good time. Our cousins that we didn't see as regularly as those who lived in the neighborhood would come with their Dads and Moms and we would just have a bigger play group.

All of this was before television. So, we played games indoors and out depending on the weather. We played sports and tag and anything else we could think of. We also played a lot of board games and card games. We never had soda pop in the house unless we had family over, which of course was pretty regularly. So, when they were over, we enjoyed the soda. We made black cows with root beer and ice cream. And we popped a lot of popcorn. Huge bowls of it. With 10 to 20 people around, you had to make a lot.

All of the above sounds idyllic, and in many ways, it was. We didn't have much money, but we always had enough to eat and clothes that were clean. We slept two to a bed and two or three to a bedroom, but I never minded. We always had fun things to do. And even though Dad was pretty strict as were the rest of the adults around us, I just took it as that's the way it is. Behave yourself

or you'll get punished. Usually physically. There was no grounding or taking away of an allowance. We didn't get an allowance. If you wanted money, you got a job. There was no discussion about why you did something and maybe you didn't think it was wrong, or maybe you had a reason for your actions. It didn't make any difference. If you broke the rules, you got punished. After a while, you learned what the rules were and if you wanted to break one, you knew there was a good chance you'd get smacked if you got caught.

I really didn't like the corporeal punishment. But I didn't take it as meanness. I just took it as the adults, usually my father, enforcing the rules. As I got older, I realized that I really disliked being hit and not being able to discuss anything about the situation. In fact, I pretty much made up my mind somewhere along the line that I would not hit my children when I had them. I guess as I look back, I think hitting someone else to get them to obey or follow what you think is correct behavior really is detrimental to having an affectionate relationship with the hitter. I always respected my father and tried to meet his behavioral expectations; but I never felt close to him. He was doing his job as he saw it. But I resented being hit, especially for things I didn't think were wrong, like not wanting to eat certain foods that made me literally want to throw up. I just resolved that I wouldn't treat my kids that way.

Chapter Two

The 1950's - Experiencing a Broader World

The "age of reason." That was supposed to happen to you when you were 7 years old or thereabouts. When you reached the age of reason, you could know right from wrong. You could receive Holy Communion because you knew the significance of what you were doing. You were old enough to commit sins, though at that age the range of sinful possibilities was pretty limited.

I reached the age of reason when I turned 7 in April of 1949. But I associate the reality of it with 1950, because that is when I made my first Holy Communion and went to Confession for the first time.

It is interesting looking back that maybe there was something to that concept of reaching the age of reason at 7 years old. Prior to that time, my life was kind of a blur, learning and experiencing things, but not really conscious of what I was doing in a self-reflective kind of way that we generally associate with grownups. Somewhere around 7, I started knowing that I know. I started thinking and planning things rather than just being swept along by my parents' decisions. I began to make some conscious choices about a whole lot of things. Certainly, at that age, the choices are not life altering or life determining. But I remember thinking and understanding that I was smart. I was good at school. If I did some things, like pay attention in class and do my homework, I did even better. And I remember seeing how my older sister, Rosemary, succeeded in school.

Doing well in school was a big plus in my mind. First of all, it was fun to do well. I liked getting 100% on my spelling and other tests. I liked being the last one standing in a spelling bee. My teachers liked me. My parents thought I did well. So did the rest of my extended family. Other kids in school expected me to know the answer.

I remember my first sense of competition was in school. There were a couple of boys and several girls who also did well. I wanted to get scores on tests as high or higher than them. I often did and usually had the best marks or tied for the best marks. I liked that.

I remember getting ready for my First Communion. That was really a big event. It was a big deal in School, Church, and at home. We prepared for it a long time. Most of second grade, from September until the next May, focused on preparing for the sacraments of Penance (Confession) and Communion. It had religious significance and it was a sign of growing up. I now could do what grownups could do in Church. I was a full-fledged member of the Church.

Also, it was a big social and family event. I remember my older sister's First Communion. I was probably 5 at the time. I remember her getting a special white dress and veil. I remember the big party after the Mass and Communion. When it came time for my First Communion, I was taken to Robert Hall, a clothier up at Six Corners, a bigger shopping area

than in the neighborhood. I got a blue suit and blue suede shoes (they were big then, even before Elvis and others sang about them 5 years later).

The day of making your First Communion was exciting to anticipate. But there was one big worry, so you didn't blow the day. That was to not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before you went to Communion. In those days, the Church rules were that anybody, adult or child, could not properly receive Communion if they ate or drank anything after midnight, including water. That was the tough part. Because drinking water was a natural a thing to do as walking or breathing. If you had broken the pre-Communion fast and then received Communion anyway, you had committed a sin. Consequently, everyone at home made sure you did not eat or drink anything. The eating wasn't a problem, because nobody was eating anything until after Mass anyway. I still remember the water fountains at school being wrapped up in rags so one of us did not accidentally take a drink of water. If we did or if we were seen taking a drink, we would be held out of the ceremony and have to wait until the following day. The big family celebration would be for nothing.

Well, I made it through to the Church without eating or drinking anything. The Mass went along, and then it was time to receive Communion. We all marched up in procession to receive Communion. I still remember the feel of the host in my mouth and chewing and swallowing it. I tried to concentrate on the act of receiving the Body of Christ. It was quite an experience.

When we came out of Mass, everyone congratulated all of us. Everyone knew everyone and we all visited outside of Church before heading home for breakfast…and a drink of water!

After breakfast, we all started getting ready for the party. Since my cousin Johnny Lazowski was the same age as me, he also made his First Communion that day. Consequently, we had a joint party at our home on Spaulding. Usually our home was the place for big parties since it was a two flat with a partially finished basement for my Busia and Grandpa and an attic, which though not finished at the time, had some space for us kids to play and hang out. The big parties where at our house also, because Busia lived there. It was expected that big events would be at Busia's.

These big parties involved a lot of people. When I made my First Communion in 1950, our immediate family consisted of my Mom and Dad, Rosemary, me, Tony, Frank and Margaret. My Dad was one of five children. At the time, there were 28 people from his side who showed up regularly at each other's homes depending on the events being celebrated.

My Mom was one of nine children, but they were more scattered and didn't show up at events as regularly as the Bieszczats. My Busia Liss and Grandpa from down the block usually came. Frequently, my mother's sister Mary, her husband and five kids also came. Other Aunts, Uncles and cousins from the Liss side of the family came sometimes, but they were not regular fixtures at family get-togethers and celebrations. In any case, between the 28 Bieszczats and maybe 5 to 10 Lisses, there were always somewhere between 30 and 40 people at most events.



Five dollars was the usual gift from each family. My Uncle Matt, who was starting to be pretty powerful in the Democratic Party in Chicago and Cook County, was often good for $10, especially since he was my godfather. My recollection was that I probably received about $50 in gifts that day. That was the most money I ever had. It was enough to open a savings account at the Irving Savings and Loan. Mom took me there to open the account. She was a cosigner on withdrawals till sometime when I got a little older. From then on, after birthdays, Confirmation (the next big religious day, but not as big as First Communion) and graduation from grammar school, most of what I got went into the savings account. They only paid interest quarterly at the time, so we would never withdraw money until interest was posted after a quarter ended.

We really never had much cash as kids. In order to add to my disposable income, I got a little job at Aunt Sophie's and Uncle Ed's meat market and grocery store. I was probably 9 years old. I would help them clean up the store on Saturdays and sometimes an afternoon in the week. I would stack some shelves, flatten boxes or save them in the back for deliveries. I would fill up the potato bins with red and white potatoes from 100-pound sacks in the back of the store. Same with the onions. I would also wash the big white, porcelain platters on which meat was shown in the glass fronted refrigerated display cases in the store. We would wash the old, dried blood off of them with a combination of ammonia and soap and stack them up for use the next week. (Stores were all closed on Sundays). We also swept up the sawdust from the floor and carried all the garbage out back, including big piles of bones from which Uncle Ed had cut the meat that he sold.

We loved going into the big meat locker. There was very little air-conditioning in those days, so a short stay in the meat locker was cool, in all meanings of the term. My cousin Edwin had a bike with a big basket in which he would deliver groceries in the neighborhood. There was also another kid about Edwin's age who also delivered groceries. I think I got paid 25 cents per week

for my work. That was neat. But it was also just fun to do and to be with my Aunt, Uncle, and cousin Edwin in the exciting world (to me) of a meat market and grocery store.

Unfortunately, small butcher shops and food stores were on the way out. Supermarkets started to appear all over the place. First a National Food Store supermarket opened about a block and a half from my Aunt and Uncle's store. Then a Mayflower Food Store Supermarket opened nearby over the next year or two. People still came to the smaller store, but shopping habits were changing. People wanted the convenience and variety of a larger store. Aunt Sophie and Uncle Ed closed the store because they could not compete with the larger stores.

One of the neat things about the store was that a lot of people we didn't usually run into in the immediate neighborhood and church came to the store. There were actually Protestants who went to other churches and their kids went to public schools! This was very different for a kid like me. There actually was a world out there beyond Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish and School.

One of the women who shopped at the store worked for Mr. Wirtz, who owned the Chicago Blackhawks. This was in the early 50's when hockey was not that big of a spectator sport in Chicago. She would get us free tickets for the games. Often, the seats were at the mezzanine level, which was pretty close to the ice. Most of the times we sat in the second balcony. I would go to the games with my Dad and Aunt Sophie and my cousin Edwin. When I got a little older (10 or 11), I would just go with Edwin. Sometimes the woman would bring in a puck. Once, she got me a hockey stick autographed by a number of the players: Bill Mosienko, Sid Abel, and one of the Conacher brothers who were then playing for the Hawks. I had that hockey stick hanging on the wall over my bed for many years.

I can still remember one of the first times I went to the Chicago Stadium. I think it was the City Championship basketball game between Tilden Tech from the Public League and St. Mel from the Catholic League. Edwin took me. He was in High School at the time, so I was probably 9 or 10 years old. It was just amazing to me to walk into this arena with 17,000 people and all the excitement. I could picture the whole place in my mind, looking down on the basketball court from the second balcony. It was just something I had never seen or imagined before. I loved it. I used to recall that picture many times when I had a hard time falling asleep at night. I would just think how much I enjoyed that moment and it would make me feel good.

It was kind of ironic many years later when I was City Manager in Rolling Meadows, Illinois, that one of the players in that game for Tilden Tech was Don Rose, the City Attorney for Rolling Meadows. Johnny "Red" Kerr was the big star of the Tilden team. But Don also played. He went on to play at De Paul University. "Red" Kerr went on to play for the University of Illinois and then the pros. Eventually, he coached the new Bulls team that was created in the mid-60's.

It was at this time, the early 50's, when I really started to become aware of and enjoy sports. The hockey and college basketball games at the Stadium are my most vivid memories. The college basketball doubleheaders were usually on Saturday night. They would feature two Chicago area teams, usually De Paul and then maybe Illinois, or Northwestern, or Loyola. These local teams

would play top teams from around the country, which in those days meant out east, mainly. Teams like Duquesne, and LaSalle, and NYU, and sometimes other Big Ten teams would play against the local teams. The Stadium was usually packed. The first game started around 6 P.M. and the second one around 8. Edwin and I, and sometimes my Dad and Aunt Sophie would go to the games. With my Dad we drove. But with Edwin, we just took the bus.

High school football was a big sport too in those days. Like the basketball championship being played at the Stadium, the City Championship in football between the Public League and Catholic League was played at Soldier Field. In those days, Soldier Field held over 100,000 people. It was often filled or almost filled for the games. Again, it was with Edwin with whom I went to the games. He was in High School at De Paul Academy and he took me to football and basketball games all the time. He took me to several of the City Championship games.

Everybody who followed sports in Chicago knew about the high school athletes. They were front page news in the sports sections of the newspapers. You knew more about them than most college stars, except for Notre Dame football players. They were the top sports personalities in Chicago at the time. Except, they really weren't personalities in today's sense of the word. There were no "Up Close and Personal" stories about the athletes. It was all about their exploits on the field. No assault charges or drug use charges in those days. A lot of them were probably drinkers, but nobody wrote about that in those days. Sports was about the game and the team and the stars of the team. But even the stars were subordinate to the team.

Professional sports were pretty much limited to baseball and football. The Cubs were always horrid. The Sox started to get good in the early 50's when they started to bring in Latin American players - Minnie Minoso and Chico Carresquel. All through the 50's, the White Sox chased the mighty Yankees and sometimes the Cleveland Indians. I went to my first professional baseball game on Opening Day at Comiskey Park in either 1952 or '53 with my Dad. He had played minor league baseball for the White Sox when he graduated from Lane Tech High School. He had been on the Lane Tech team that won the City Championship in his senior year. He played for the Duluth White Sox for a little over a year. But a combination of the "Great Depression," his Dad dying relatively young, the expectation that he was needed to help out at home, low pay for minor leaguers at the time, and some homesickness kept him from pursuing the Major Leagues.

I don’t know if my Dad regretted not pursing a professional baseball career. He never said anything about it. I remember he continued playing semi-pro baseball. I saw him play at Thillen’s Stadium when I was probably 7 or 8 years old. My Mom, Rosemary, Tony, Frank, and probably Margaret as a baby sat in the grandstand and watched Dad play. I think, back then, pro sports were generally not a career choice. It didn’t pay much even at the pro level. And most pros had other jobs in the off-season to pay the bills. By the time I was aware a little of what was going on around me, my Dad had a growing family to support, and that was his main focus. However, because he liked the game so much, almost all of us kids and my Mom are baseball fans.

I still remember that Opening Day game I went to with my Dad in the early 1950's. Just like the first time at the Chicago Stadium, I was totally dazzled by Comiskey Park. The field was a dark green with perfectly manicured infield and grass. It was a day game. I got out of school to go. I think the Sox lost something like 3-2. I remember the Sox were down probably 3-1 in the bottom of the ninth. We started working our way to the exits when all of a sudden the Sox scored a run and they had a runner on base. We stopped and sat in the box seats which had been vacated. I remember "Jungle" Jim Rivera, who played right field, either scored the second run or was on base with the tying run. Sherm Lollar, the catcher was up. A base hit would tie the game. But he made an out, and that was it for the game. But still a memorable event.

For the rest of the 50's we went to Sox games regularly. In the early 50's I went with my Dad, Aunt Sophie, Rosemary, and Edwin. Eventually, Tony and Frankie came along. As I got a little older, I started going to the games with my friends. We would catch the "El" at Logan Square, transfer to the State Street Line downtown, and get off at 35th Street and the ballpark. We probably went to 4 or 5 games with the family and as I got older, I went to another 10 or so with my friends. In those days, you were either a Cubs or a Sox fan. You couldn't be both. We would have heated arguments all the time about which team was better (in those days, the Cubs were almost always out of it by May or June). Since we lived on the Northside, most of \our friends were Cub fans. But we held our own because the Sox were better during those years. They often came close, but never could quite beat out the Yankees. The only time they did was 1959 when the Sox won the American League pennant. That had been the only time in my lifetime that they got into the World Series until they played in the World Series in 2005 and won it all. But back in 1959, the Sox lost in six games to the Los Angeles Dodgers who had moved from Brooklyn a year of two before. Except for 1945 when the Cubs played in the World Series and I was too young to be aware of it, 1959 is the only year that a Chicago baseball team has played in a World Series until the White Sox in 2005 and the Cubs in 2016.

Professional football was a growing sport in the 50's. At the beginning of the decade, it was certainly a second-tier sport compared to baseball. Professional basketball did not exist in Chicago and professional hockey was at best a third-tier sport. We were only interested and aware of it because of the lady at my Aunt's and Uncle's grocery store. The Bears, like most Chicago teams of the time, generally did not do well. They were competitive but seldom made it to playoffs. Of course, in those days, there were only maybe 12 teams at most, split between two divisions. The winners of both divisions played for the championship.

In the early 50's, very little of sports was televised. We didn't have a TV till 1952 or '53. The Cubs and Sox home games were usually televised. Road games were not. Professional football did not get televised regularly on Sunday afternoons until the late 50's. College football on Saturday afternoons started to be televised in the 50's. Usually one game a week. You still learned most about sports from the newspapers, and secondarily, from listening to the games on radio. Often, we listened to sports on the radio while we were working at something around the house. Cleaning, painting, washing walls, or whatever other jobs my Dad had lined up for us in our part of the house, or Aunt Sophie's on the first floor, or Busia's in the basement.

Sports really was a big part of my life during the 50's. In the early part of the 50's we played baseball, football, basketball, and hockey every chance we got. We played in vacant lots, in the alleys, at the ball field next to the Rectory, and sometimes even at a park. We played from morning to night during the summer. We played after school and on the weekends, though weekend playing was subordinate to other things.

Saturday, for most of the day, was devoted to our share of the household cleaning. Also, my Dad was always doing something major to the house. We had to help him. No questions asked. I learned a lot about carpentry and pipe cutting, and painting and wall papering and other maintenance and redecorating skills. The only thing I did not learn much about was electricity. My Dad usually did that himself, and so I never learned it. Consequently, we did not play much sports on Saturday. We did so only occasionally, late in the afternoon, when we finished our work for the day.

Sunday was also a limited sports day. There was Mass in the morning. Usually I went to an early one because I was an altar boy. The first Mass was at 6 AM on Sunday. Father Piwka was the Pastor and he usually had the first two Masses of the day - 6 and 7 AM. Then he was through for the day. A priest was usually limited to two Masses on Sunday. After Mass, we would have a big breakfast at home - eggs, bacon, coffee cake or home-made bread. We went to Mass and ate breakfast in shifts. I was usually part of the early crowd. My Mom and Dad usually went to 7 or 8 AM Mass. The 9 AM Mass was for the school kids, so if you weren't an altar boy, you were supposed to go to that Mass, which was what Rosemary and my brothers went to until my brothers became altar boys.

Sunday morning was also time devoted to reading the newspapers. We always got the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Sun-Times. Between both papers, with lots of sports coverage and all kinds of other news, we had a full morning of reading. There were great columnists in the paper in those days. Before television, newspapers really presented most of the news. And they provided analysis too. We would be sent to the bakery to get "buns" for dinner and supper. We had a large dinner at noon. Usually it was baked chicken, baked potatoes, cranberry sauce and some disgusting vegetable like broccoli or cauliflower or brussel sprouts. I hated all of those vegetables but had to eat some of them per my Dad's direction. I would try to hide them under my plate or sneak them to my brothers or sisters who did not hate those veggies like I did. Sometimes I would get caught and get smacked by my Dad. Also, if you complained about eating them or said they made me sick, he would make you eat them and sometimes shove them in your mouth. It sure added a lot to my and everyone else's dinner!

Supper on Sunday usually consisted of Polish ham on the buns we got at the bakery that morning. There was also potato salad and some kind of jello salad with veggies or fruit in it. Aunt Sophie, Uncle Ed, Edwin, and Theresa often joined us for dinner. During dinner, we listened to some radio shows. One was the “Jack Benny Show.” Another was “Fibber McGee and Molly.” Another was “Amos and Andy.” And yet another was “The Great Gildersleeve.”

Listening to the radio during a meal was not typical. At most suppers, we all just talked with each other about whatever was going on in our lives. Everyone had an opportunity to share their

experiences with the whole family. And, importantly, we learned to listen to each other. Somewhere along the line, we started adding jokes to our family dinner time. If someone heard a funny joke or story that day, they would share it with all of us. So, we started paying attention during the day about what we heard or saw that was funny. And we always had some good laughs during supper.

Part of Sunday was also often devoted to family get togethers of one kind or another. Because Busia lived in the same house as we did, my Uncle Matt and Uncle John would stop by and see her on Sunday morning after they went to Church at their parishes. Sometimes they brought my cousins with them. That was usually fun. Also, if there were birthdays, or First Communions, or Confirmations, or graduations, those celebrations were also on Sundays. Sometimes too, we would go visit the families of some friends of our parents. We usually didn't care for that too much because most of these kids were pretty dull to us. We didn't know them very well. But we usually made the best of it.

Sports was a year-round activity. And I just loved it. I was pretty good at it too. I loved the sports just for the playing of it. Sure, we wanted to win, but it was just fun to play and just hit the ball. We would spend hours with just one other guy if that was all who was available playing catch and hitting the ball to each other. If we got enough guys together, which wasn't too hard with all the kids around, we could always get a game up even if there were only 4 on a team. When that was the case, then right field was out. Anything you hit to the right of second base was out. Also, if we didn't have enough players for a first baseman, then it was "pitcher's hands out."

We also played basketball in the alley. Some of our friends had basketball backboards and hoops on their garages. We would play 2 on 2 or 3 on 3 games against each other. But if there were only 2 or 3 of us, we would play “Horse.” Someone would make a basket from anywhere. The next player had to match the shot. If they missed the shot, they got the letter “H” for their first miss. When they missed their second shot, they got the letter “O” and so on until they had enough misses to spell out the word HORSE. The last one to not have enough misses to spell HORSE, was the winner.

We also played “touch’ football in the alley. As we got older, we would go to Addison Park about ¾’s of a mile away and play tackle football. Most of the time we had helmets and shoulder pads, but nothing else was padding. And when it snowed, we patted down the snow and played hockey in the alley. We didn’t have ice skates, but the snow was pretty slick, so we could play hockey. As we got older, we would go to Addison Park to play hockey and/or just skate. The parks in cooperation with the Chicago Tribune had speedskating competitions in the parks each winter. The were called the “Silver Skate” competitions. One year I competed in a race for my age group. I won the race and got a small medal.

I just loved the athleticism of playing. The movement. The sense of accomplishment and satisfaction with a good play I made or a good play someone else made. We were very competitive, but we were taught to be good sportsman. You didn't taunt your opponent. You didn't rub their nose in it if you won. You treated everyone with respect, even while trying to

knock the crap out them in football or whip a baseball by them, or whatever the sport was. What I liked about sports too was the total concentration and immersion of yourself in the game. I used all of my physical skills and my mental abilities to win. I just gave it everything I had all the time. And it was great.

And just to get back to working, since we did not get an allowance, if you wanted to have money to go to a movie or buy a new baseball or bat or hockey puck, etc., you had to pay for it yourself. For most of the sports things, except baseball gloves and hockey sticks, we pooled our money, so we had enough to buy a baseball or softball or whatever we needed. If we didn't have enough money between us, Aunt Sophie was always ready to throw in a little money to help us get what we needed to keep playing. Aunt Sophie was a soft touch when it came to things like that. She also had a drawer in her kitchen where she kept cookies for us to stop by and grab a few. She tried to always have several kinds of cookies. We didn't all like the same cookies, so Aunt Sophie learned what we each liked, and she would keep a variety ready for us.

I almost always had a paper route from about fifth grade through my freshman year in high school. The first paper route was for the Irving Park News. It was a once per week newspaper which had neighborhood news and a lot of advertising for local shopping. Since that was only once per week and not much money, I got a job delivering papers every day. At the time there were two Chicago newspapers which came out in the afternoon. One paper was the Chicago Daily News. The other was the Chicago Herald American. I delivered both papers. I had a route of about 50 homes. I would take my bike after school, bike over to the newspaper distribution center, pick up my papers, roll them up with rubber bands and deliver them. If the weather was dry, we would just throw the rolled-up papers on the front stoops of the homes or apartment buildings. But if it was raining, we would carry the papers up to someone's front door or into the lobby of the apartment building and leave them somewhere where they would stay dry.

In addition to delivering the papers, we had to collect money from the people to whom we delivered papers. We did that, I think, once a month. We would knock on every subscriber's door, collect the money, and then turn it into the newspaper distribution center. We would then get paid a portion of the money we collected. If we did not collect the money from a subscriber, we did not get paid our portion of the subscription rate. So, we were very diligent in knocking on the doors and collecting the money. I hardly ever had trouble collecting money from subscribers. They knew what they were paying for and were happy to do so. And in many cases, I was delivering the paper to people in our neighborhood. I went to school with their kids and probably saw them in church as well. The best time to do your collections was always around the Christmas season. Then, when you collected the subscription fee, many people would give you a Christmas tip. I was in the money.

When I got into 8th grade, I got a morning paper route. The morning papers in Chicago were the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Sun-Times. I had a route with about 135 subscribers. Papers had to be delivered to every door by 6:30 AM. The papers were delivered to the front steps of our home by the newspaper distribution company. So, I got up around 4:30 AM. Instead of using a bike because it was too many papers, we were given a pretty good-sized cart which would hold all of the papers. We would walk down the paper route and deliver the papers to the homes and

some businesses. Again, if it was dry weather, we would just roll up the paper, put a rubber band around it, and toss it on the stoop. But if it was raining or snowy, we delivered each paper to a spot on the porch or stoop where the paper would stay dry. One of the nicest places I delivered to was a bakery. The bakery was open at 5 AM or so. Often, when I walked into the bakery to deliver the paper, if someone was behind the counter, they would offer me a sweet roll. That was a real treat and kept me going until I got home about 7 AM, had breakfast, and got ready to head off to school. Again, we collected money every month and got paid based on our collections. With 135 subscribers, December collections plus tips was a winner. Since I had to leave earlier to get to St. Patrick high school on time, I stopped my morning paper route after the Christmas season in my freshman year in high school.

I enjoyed the work. I especially remember how quiet the City was a 5 AM when I started my route. As it got closer to 6 AM, the City was starting to hum. Also, I enjoyed making some money and doing a job well. That is something my dad always emphasized with us. "If you are going to do a job, do it right" was a frequent comment from him. We knew what doing a job right meant because my dad was a master machinist and carpenter. He did excellent work in both fields. His day job was as a machinist. His sometime evening and weekend work was as a carpenter.

Dad was a union member. He belonged to the machinists' and carpenters' unions. It was through that that I started to become aware of politics. Eisenhower was President through most of the 1950's. He was pro-business and anti-labor. Because of the unions, my dad was able to earn enough money to support his large family without my mom having to work outside of the home. The unions he belonged to helped a workingman like my dad to have good pay and benefits. And it allowed my parents to pay tuition at Catholic elementary and high schools where we received very good educations.

All of my immediate and most of my expanded family were Democrats. This was the case because so many of them lost homes and jobs during the Great Depression which began in 1929 and lasted until 1939. My Dad was playing minor league baseball for the White Sox during the early years of the Great Depression. He had to quit playing baseball because of the Depression and the negative impact on his family. Dad got into an apprentice program as a machinist. His oldest brother, Matthew, had quit high school a few years before and got a job as a garbage man with the City to help support his parents, sisters, and brothers. The Republicans at the local, state, and national levels did very little to help struggling families. It was during the time of the Great Depression that many Poles and other ethnic groups in Chicago switched from generally supporting the Republican party to supporting the Democratic party.

My uncle Matt got involved with the Chicago Democratic party. Over the years, he rose up the ranks in the Party. By the 1950's Uncle Matt had become an Alderman in one of the city's 50 wards. And more importantly, he became the Ward Committeeman who represented his ward on the Cook County Democratic Central Committee (more well known as the "Democratic Machine.") Being an Alderman gave him some power, but it was as a Committeeman that he developed and wielded more political power because the Committeemen had two important jobs. First, they decided who got slated as Democratic candidates in the City, Cook County and across

the State. Second, they controlled the patronage workers who had jobs with the city, county, park district, and often with private businesses. Patronage workers, in return for their jobs, had to do political work for the Democratic party. They knocked on doors during election times, and they helped resolve constituent problems and help them meet their needs.

Uncle Matt continued to rise within the Democratic Party. He eventually became a Cook County Board Member, and more importantly, the Secretary of the Cook County Democratic party. He got that role because he consistently turned out the highest number of Polish voters in the County during elections. And being Chicago, two Irishmen, Mayor Daley and County Board Chair, George Dunne, held the titles of Chair and Vice-Chair respectively in the Democratic party. Uncle Matt was the most powerful Polish member of the Democratic Committee. And, again, since it was Chicago, a Jewish fellow held the title of Treasurer. I don't recall his name.

I graduated from eighth grade in 1956. As I progressed through the grades, I remember being more and more looked at by others as a leader. Whether it was sports, or projects at school, or church events, I frequently was in a leadership role. Sometimes the teachers picked others to lead, but I was always second or third in the pecking order. I liked that. I got used to it. I expected to be in that position, whether appointed or not.

I guess I liked best when other kids picked me to be their leader. I remember joining the Junior Bears' football program at Paul Revere Park when I was in eighth grade. I was the only one from IHM to go out for the team. I made the team as a lineman – offensive and defensive in those days. Since I didn't know anyone – kids had come from various Catholic and public schools in the area – I wasn't picked as a captain at the beginning. That was all right with me. I was just feeling my way along. It was my first experience of organized sports at a competitive level. I just wanted to understand what was expected of me in this type of situation. After about half of the season, the coaches picked me as a co-captain. I was really pleased. Other kids had started to follow me. I set a good example. Practiced hard. Learned everything I could about the game and our team. I remember going to the end of the season banquet for the team. It was one of the few times my Dad and I ever did anything together, just the two of us. It was a banquet at the park. Nothing fancy. After the dinner the coaches handed out awards. I got one as a co-captain. I still remember a coach introducing me to the crowd. He said that I was someone who started out kind of quietly, but by my play and leadership, they made me a co-captain.

That really stuck with me over the years. I guess that was my style and I was comfortable with it. Most of the time I followed that approach all of my life. I contrasted that with some of the other kids who already had friends in the program when we started the season. They started out as the leaders, but I supplanted them in other kids' mind and in the minds of the adults. I found that to be the same in high school. I wasn't one of the loudmouth, self-promoting leaders who often got the first flush of support. I learned, however, that after a few weeks, people would follow me. And I guess it wasn't just that I wanted to be the leader. It was that I wanted to win. And I knew I could get us all to win if I was the leader. I knew what others could do and I would use them and myself in the best ways to give us a chance to win. I think kids instinctively

understood that I knew what they were good at, how they would fit in and contribute to a victory, and that I would find a way to give us all the best shot at winning.

I am not saying that I understood all of this at the time. I think I understood some of it. But as a progressed through the 1950's and my teen years, I understood more and more in self-reflective way who I was, how I did things, and why I succeeded.

One last thing about playing for the Revere Park Bears was that I got to play at half-time of a Chicago Cardinals pro football game at Comiskey Park. Chicago had two professional football teams at the time, the Bears and the Cardinals. There were about a dozen "Junior Bears" football teams spread around Chicago in those days. Two teams would play a ten-minute game at half-time of the regular professional games. I was playing defensive linebacker for several plays. I was wearing the number 8 on my uniform. When I made an unassisted tackle, the public-address announcer said something like "that great tackle was made by Robert Bssscchhat." He couldn't pronounce my last name. Not the first time that ever happened to me. But it was a real thrill to be on a professional football field. I can still picture how all the people in the stands looked to someone playing the game on the field. And my Dad, who seldom had the time to attend any of our games, was able to come to the game with me and get in free. So, he saw me play a little.

Before I leave my elementary school days, I want to talk about some of the negatives of growing up in that period and in our family. Overall, I was a pretty happy kid as the above stories illustrate. But there were some negatives.

Though many of the church and religion related experiences were positive, there were some strong negatives. The emphasis on sin was overdone. I sometimes wondered too much about whether what I was doing was a sin or was an "occasion of sin" – one of those old-time concepts that you should not put yourself into situations that could lead to you doing something sinful. I probably had more anxiety about such things than was good for me. I don't know that it permanently had a negative effect. I think the good aspects far outweighed the negatives, but I did have some on-going problems with guilt and anxiety and fear regarding my life and my soul. It was something it took many years to come to terms with.

Another negative was my Dad's behavior towards me and the rest of the kids. He could be pretty tough on us physically. I got hit a lot. I unfortunately sat to his right at the dinner table. I don't remember how many times I was hit out of the blue because of something I did or said at the dinner table. I also remember him coming home from work and having my Mom tell him about some bad things we had done during the day. We got belted pretty good or more usually spanked with a pretty heavy belt.

I could also never talk to my Dad. I learned early on that what he said and thought was the law. My opinion wasn't worth anything. If I disagreed with him I would be yelled at or hit.
So, for a strong-willed kid who liked to be a leader and was respected by kids and adults outside the home, being home was a pretty confining experience.

I never felt any real closeness to my father and also my mother, because she was part of the violence. I am sure having 10 kids was an unbelievable challenge and stressful situation. I also understand now that they were both brought up in homes were physical discipline was the norm. I know now that my Dad did not like coming home from work and hearing from my Mom about the bad things we had done during the day. He said he felt like an enforcer who had to spank us because we had upset my Mom and we had to behave better. However, at the time, I did not like the violence at all. It made me never feel close to either of my parents. I respected them like I was supposed to do. I did what they told me because you "should honor your father and your mother." But frankly, I recoiled at their rare and occasional hugs. I didn't want to be hugged by someone who hit me or set me up to be hit. So, I wasn't aware of it at the time, but I wanted to get out of that environment.

The Arrival of Television

One very significant new thing in the 1950's was television. TV broadcasting started in the late 1940's, but we did not have a TV in our home until 1952 or 1953. My Uncle Matt had a TV before we did, so when we went to their home for a family party of some kind, we usually watched some TV. Also, some of the kids at school had TV in their homes before we did. Consequently, I occasionally went to their homes after school. I think the first TV show I saw was the "Howdy Doody Show" which came on TV after school. Buffalo Bob was the host. Clarabelle was a non-talking clown who communicated using a horn which made a noise when he squeezed it. Howdy Doody was a puppet. There were also some other live and puppet characters. I don't remember it being a particularly entertaining show, but it was one of the first shows I saw, which was a new experience.

As the 1950's moved on, TV became an exploding part of the social, economic, political, and entertainment aspects of society. There were only three TV networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC) and in Chicago we had our own TV station, WGN. Public television had not yet arrived.

TV impacted family lives in many ways. One was that families would often get together to watch some weekly TV shows. In our home, we no longer listened to radio shows on Sunday nights during and after dinner. Some shows became "must see TV." Those were shows that many people watched. They were only on one night a week for the TV season which ran from September through May. If you did not watch a show when it was on, you had to wait until the rerun season which ran during the summer. Some of the TV shows would be televised again and some would not. Tape recording of TV shows was not yet available.

One of the effects of the "one and done" approach to television watching was that people's social habits changed. If many people watched a popular TV show one evening, it was a prime topic of discussion the next day at school, work, and a variety of social settings. TV entertainment became a shared cultural experience. In some ways it brought people together because so many of us were watching the same TV program at the same time. We had a shared experience about which we could think and talk about. On the other hand, watching TV often became a solitary activity which separated and isolated people from each other more than before.

As an example, what was going on in the TV world, particularly with situation comedies, spilled over into the everyday culture. One of the best examples of this was a TV show called "I Love Lucy." It was built around Lucille Ball and her husband Desi Arnaz and their neighbors. At one point in the multi-year run of this program, Lucille Ball became pregnant and was expecting their first child. In addition to watching the show on TV, people all over the country were eagerly awaiting news of the child's birth in newspapers and radio and TV news reports. When the baby was born, the front-page headline on many newspapers around the country was: "It's a Boy." Everybody knew who they were talking about. Two versions of the TV episode which were to be on the week which followed the child's birth had been taped ahead of time. One episode had a baby girl being born and the second had a baby boy being born.

TV also had a big impact on the economics of the country. Advertising for all kinds of consumer products from shampoo, to cars, to cigarettes, to just about anything and everything that people might want just grew and grew. People were exposed to more and more advertising. The "American Dream" of having more than your parents had started to take hold. So did the phrase "Keeping up with Jonses." Madison Avenue in New York became the symbol and source of so much of the advertising.

Finally, TV started to impact the politics of the country. TV advertising by candidates started. Televised debates between candidates started to become more common. The impact of TV on politics became very evident at the end of the 1950's and into the 1960's as the Kennedy-Nixon Presidential debates took place and played a significant role in the election outcome.

Chapter Three

1950's Continued - A Vocation to the Religious Life

I thought high school would be a change and a chance to be more independent. I looked forward to it. Not only learning things, but being in a larger world, on a larger stage, and playing high school sports. When I did get there, I loved it. I went to St. Patrick high school. The school building was brand new for the freshmen. We moved from classroom to classroom…not always in the same classroom like in elementary school. I met a lot o f new people. And I got to play sports against a broader range of kids both intra-mural and against other schools.

I tried out for the Freshman football team for the quarterback position. I tried out for the quarterback position instead of some other position because that was one of the more important positions on the football team. You got to handle the ball on every offensive play, and you were looked at as one of the team leaders. Most games were played during the afternoon on weekdays. But one game was played at night. My Dad came to that game and saw me play. Though he did not say anything afterwards, I think he was pleased. He had been a very good athlete in high school, and I was showing him that I was a very good athlete also.

I was introduced to the Christian Brothers at St. Patrick High School. Up to then, I had always had nuns as my teachers. I had some wonderful nuns as teachers and some real mean ones as well. Of course, teaching a class with 30 to 40 or more students would tax the disciplinary skills of any teacher. But the Brothers were great. They were smart. They were mostly good athletes. They had a real positive spirit about them. They would hit you if you acted up, but you learned early on that their corporal punishment was much more severe than what the nuns handed out. These guys could hurt you. It only took once in my freshman year to find that out. I was goofing around in class and Br. Jeffery caught me at it. I don't remember what the infraction was, but I broke some rule and had to pay the price. Br. Jeffery gave me a choice: either write a fairly long essay on some topic or other or get two raps in the head with his knuckles. The two raps with the knuckles sounded better than the writing. It would be over quickly and having boxed a lot as a kid and having had my bell rung in football a few times, I figured take the hits and move on. So, I told him I'd take the knuckles. What a mistake. He hit me on the top of my skull twice and I thought I was going to pass out. Man, did it hurt. I am sure I fought back tears because you couldn't cry in front of your classmates. But I knew then and there that I would never ask for the knuckles again. And since I didn't want to write a long essay, I never misbehaved in his class again.

It was at this time too that I started to think more about what I was going to do when I grew up. I liked sports and was good at them. I did well in school. I didn't really know too much about the everyday realities of work. My dad was machinist and a carpenter. A skilled tradesman and union member. Though I liked working with my hands, it did not appeal to me as a way to spend the rest of my life.

Since I admired the Brothers a lot, I thought teaching would be a good thing to do. I could be like the Brothers…smart, athletic, leaders, and religious. Religion was very important to me. I grew up immersed in it. There were a lot of religious heroes that we read and heard about. The martyrs. The missionaries. The people willing to dedicate their lives to a worthy cause, and if necessary, die for that cause. And what cause or ideal could be higher or greater than God?

So, I started thinking about being a Brother. The Brothers had sent around a questionnaire asking if anyone had an interest in possibly being a brother. I said yes, it looked interesting. So in about the middle of my freshman year in high school, I got called out of class to meet with a Br. John Martin. I didn't know what to expect. I found it interesting. I did not think of it at the time, but it was probably the first time anyone talked to me about what I wanted to do when I grew up. It just wasn't something you talked to dad about. Right now, it was my job to go to school and do well, academically and athletically.

I started meeting with Br. John every few weeks to discuss joining the Brothers. It sounded exciting. They had a seminary in Missouri. I saw pictures of it. Lots of ball fields. A gym. Tennis courts. Handball courts (I wasn't sure what that sport was, but I was game). It was located out in the country. For a 14-year-old kid, this was really a draw. Plus, I liked the Brothers. They were role models to me. Why not go and become a Brother? Learn, play sports, get closer to God, actually be heading toward a grownup life. Plus, though I wasn't conscious of it at the time, it was chance to get away from my Dad.

Sometime in the Spring of 1957, around when I turned 15, I decided I wanted to become a Brother. I would go to Glencoe, Missouri in the Fall and start a new adventure. I told my mom and dad that I wanted to do this. They did not seem surprised or ask many questions about it. In those days, people were always praying for vocations to the priesthood or religious life at various church liturgies. So, I don't think it struck them as odd that one of their children wanted to be a Brother. They never told me what they think about anything so at the time I was just happy that they were not opposed to it. As I thought about it later, I suppose they might have been proud that one of their kids had a "vocation," a calling to the religious life. But they never told me that. I was just happy to be going.

It's funny as I look back that the fact that Brothers took a vow of chastity was not high on my radar screen. I was aware of sex. I liked girls. I had kissed several. I enjoyed their company. I went to dances. I went on group outings with a mix of boys and girls. Sometimes to the beach. Sometimes to movies or bowling. But I was busy and interested in other things more than I was interested in girls. Sports were really important to me. So was school. So were my family relationships and responsibilities. I had paper routes and other part time jobs. I had a full life. Besides, we weren't supposed to have sex until we were married. That seemed like a long time off in the future. I had survived fine up to that point in my life without sex so what was the problem or issue? Also, the guys I knew as freshman in high school who said they were having various levels of sexual activity struck me as blowhards and jerks. I didn't believe them most of the time when they talked about how "far" they got with some girl over the weekend. Also, if they actually were getting anywhere with a girl, I figured they were not the kind of girl you really wanted to know in the long run. So why waste my time. There would be plenty of time for sex

in the future when it was appropriate and when I met someone I loved and would marry. It just wasn't a big deal. I was more interested in making it as the starting quarterback on the freshman football team. And I did that. Between school work and sports, I had a pretty full schedule and a fine, happy time. I was getting to know girls and that was fun and interesting, but not as interesting as sports at that time of my life.

Joining the Brothers who took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience did not seem like a big deal to me. As far as a vow of poverty was concerned, I pretty much lived that in my daily life being one of ten children. We were never poor. We always had food to eat and clothes to wear. But we weren't into acquiring things individually. If we got something new in the family, it was usually something that all of us could use and enjoy. If we got clothes, it was with the understanding that you should take good care of them because you are the first to wear them, but they have to last for your younger brother or sister. It wasn't like you owned things. It was more like you were the caretaker of them for a while. Since I was the oldest boy, clothing that I got was new. But I never considered them mine. As soon as my younger brother Tony was big enough, he would and could wear the clothes that were mine. In fact, there are a series of high school graduation pictures in which me, Tony, and my brother Frank all had on the same sportscoat in our senior year in high school. Even something like ice skates. I would get them first, but I knew that they belonged to whoever's foot they fit. I think one of the few things that actually belonged to me was my baseball glove. Probably because my dad played baseball. When I got a baseball glove, you molded it to your own hand. My dad would give you neatsfoot oil and you would rub it into the leather to soften it and to mold it to your hand. So, a vow of poverty was not a big deal to me.

A vow of obedience did not bother me either. Again, in our home, you had a vow of obedience whether you took one or not. What my dad said was the law and my mother backed him up. I guess at fifteen, being obedient is kind of a strange concept. I always figured I wanted to do what was right, so being obedient wasn't a big deal. My dad was unreasonable some time, but I survived that. So how much more unreasonable could the Brothers be than my father? I wasn't worried about it.

Come September 1957, I was off to Glencoe, Missouri to start my sophomore year in high school. In that part of the seminary, it was called the Juniorate. That was what you would be in until you graduated from high school. Then you would spend a full twelve months in the Novitiate. Then you would spend the rest of your college years in the Scholasticate.

The Juniorate was the starting point. To get there, we had to take a train to St. Louis. I had never been on a real train. The subways or "els" in Chicago weren't real trains. My family took me to the train station in downtown Chicago. There I met up with a number of other kids from Christian Brother high schools in Chicago (St. Patrick, St. Mel, St. George, and De La Salle where the four that existed in Chicago in 1957). Br. John Martin accompanied us down to Glencoe, so those of us from St. Pat's had someone we knew.

We took the train to St. Louis. It was about a 5-hour trip. Very exciting. It was different to see the countryside and towns from the train tracks rather than from a car. My mother had packed me a lunch, so I ate that on the way down.

When we got to St. Louis, we were picked up by a bus that the Brothers owned. They drove us to the seminary. We piled out of the bus and stood kind of in awe of this new place we were going to be living at. These were big years for vocations to the Brothers. There were probably 70 or 80 of us as sophomores. Maybe 40 juniors, and maybe 30 seniors. The class size dwindled each year. We heard that about 20 kids in our class would leave (go over the hill) in the first couple of months. About 10 more would leave during the rest of the year and about 10 more would not come back as juniors.



Christian Brothers House of Formation in Glencoe, MO.

Each of us new guys were assigned to a "Guardian Angel," who was an upperclassman who would show us around and teach us the ropes. My Guardian Angel was named Roger Secklicky. He was a senior. He was from Chicago…St. Pat's I think. He showed me to the dorm where I would sleep. He also showed me were to put my clothes and toothbrush and soap. He also showed me where the "Common Room" was and where my seat was (next to his for a while).

We also saw the Refectory (where we ate), the Chapel, and the classrooms. We then went outside the main building to see the grounds which were extensive. It was a beautifully hilly country. The "Foothills of the Ozark's" they were called. For a Chicago boy, where everything was flat or flatter, the hills, the open space, and the overall rural setting was different and exciting. There were walkways and grottoes all over the place. A cemetery with people buried way back in the 1800's. We then went to the gym, the print shop, the ball fields, the outdoor swimming pool and all the other things that pretty much made up a self-contained world. When

you got there, you were supposed to stay there. We were surrounded by hills and farmland. Most of the farm homes looked pretty poor and ramshackle.

Chapter Four

A Typical Day in Glencoe

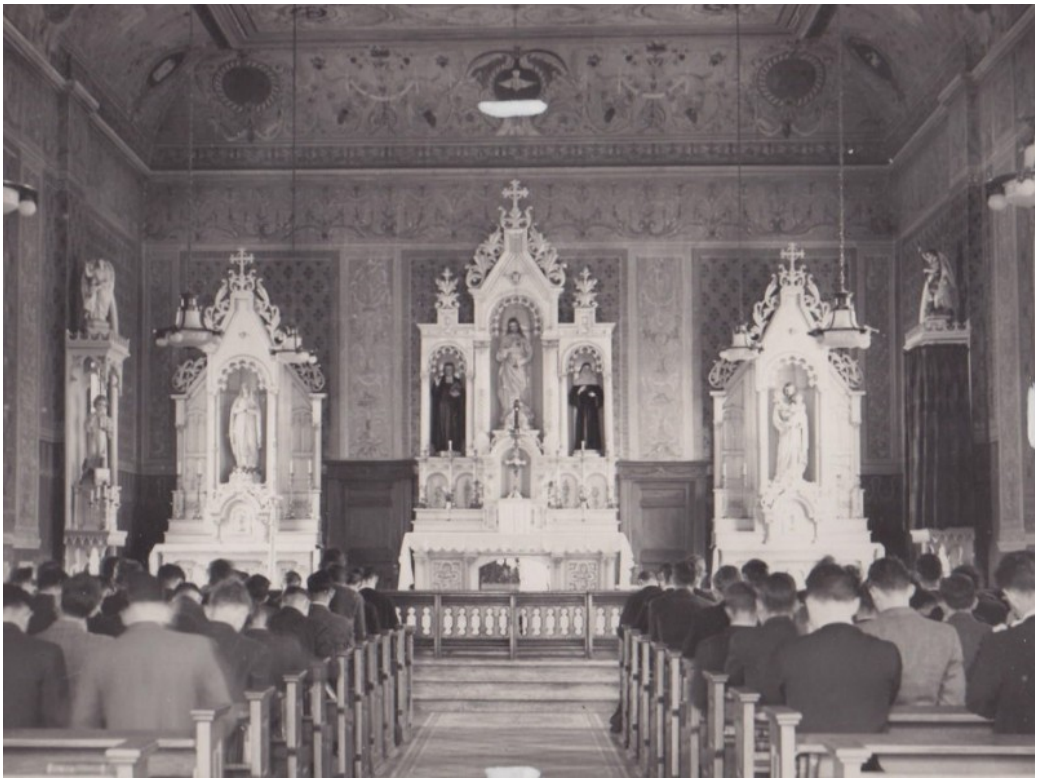
5:30 AM – Wake Up
Daily routine at the seminary was very well organized. We got up at 5:30 A.M. with a bell ringing and one of the Brothers calling out "Live Jesus in our hearts." We were to respond "Forever," and then proceed in silence to brush our teeth, wash up, shave (not me yet), and get dressed. We had morning prayer at 6 A.M. There was usually time to polish my shoes, since I was pretty quick mover in the morning. They had a special room for just polishing your shoes. Everyone had a cubby hole space for polish, a shoe brush and a buffing rag. There were some guys who were really into polishing their shoes. We were inspected by the head Brother on a regular basis as to personal care and hygiene. Polished shoes, a clean shirt, a tie every day were all enforced rules of dress.

There were about 40 guys in our dorm. Some, like me, moved pretty rapidly and got to the communal sinks before they got too crowded. Some, like my soon to be friend, John Willette, were very slow in the morning. He would wake up when the bell rang and then just sit on the edge of his bed for about 10 minutes trying to wake up.

When I say communal sinks, what I mean is probably something similar to what they have in the army. It was a long sink, probably 25 feet long. It had access from both sides so about 15 to 20 guys at a time could wash up, shave and brush their teeth. There were faucets spaced along the sink with spigots on each side. There was no hot water. Bracing!

6:00 AM – Morning Prayer and Mass
We had morning prayer in the Common Room at 6:00 A.M. Most of us made it with a few minutes to spare. Some guys, like John would straggle in at the last second or be late. A "no no." If you came late, then you had to stand while you ate your breakfast in the refectory. John got pretty good at eating while standing. During morning prayer we knelt most of the time on a wooden floor. Penance. Learn to take the pain.

At 6:30 A.M. we walked down to the chapel for Mass. The novices were already in the chapel. They had been there since 5:30 A.M. for morning prayer and meditation. Mass went to about 7:15.



7:15 AM - Breakfast
We then went down to breakfast. We were broken up into three groups. One group served the food, one cleaned the tables after the meal, and one washed and dried the dishes. Groups rotated on the tasks weekly.

Meals generally were eaten in silence. Someone would read out loud for our edification and instruction. There was usually some scriptural reading. Then maybe a reading from a religious book…a life of a saint, a theology text, or some of what was called "spiritual reading." Then there would be reading from a work of literature or history or another worthwhile and interesting text. We took turns reading. Each person read for about 5 minutes. Then the head Brother would click a clicker and the next person would come up and read. This was done by tables. The first person from the table would read. Then the next one would read, and so on until the six people at the table had read. Then it would move on to the next table. Probably 90% of the meals were eaten in silence while someone read out loud. It was really quite interesting. I learned many things just by listening to the reading.

7:45 AM – Morning Chores
After breakfast, we all had jobs which we did in silence, also. Your job could be anything from sweeping floors, to cleaning the bathrooms, to getting food ready for the next meal by say, peeling 100 pounds of potatoes. Some of us had jobs that took special training. I was selected to be trained as a barber. There were about 10 of us trained to do so. All haircuts were given on the campus. I was also selected to work in the shoe shop. We repaired everyone's shoes. We replaced heels and soles. We also worked on soccer shoes which were like gym shoes, but with

rubber cleats on the bottom. The canvas top part of the soccer shoe would often tear away from the sole of the shoe. To keep the shoes usable for a longer time, we used leather patches and sewed the canvas top of the shoe to the rubber bottom part of the soccer shoe. To do that sewing, we used an old, foot petal industrial sewing machine. It was interesting learning both jobs. It was an honor to be chosen for a special job which was usually the result of good grades and not being a pain in the butt to the Brothers in charge.

8:30 AM – Classes, Prayers, and Lunch
After morning work, we would go to class. At noon we would go to the chapel for prayers…as I recall, the Rosary followed by the Angelus. We then had lunch in the refectory. Again, usually in silence with reading going on as we ate. After lunch we went for a walk around the grounds in small groups of about 8. We were led by a Brother or a senior who would lead the discussion of the readings as we walked around the campus. It was called Recreation of the Rule. Recreation in the sense that we had eaten and refreshed our bodies that way. By walking around and discussing the readings, we also exercised and recreated our minds. We would stop along the way at the various grottoes for a brief prayer and then we would continue walking and discussing the readings or other topics which the leader would bring up. Serious stuff. Not a lot of fluff.

I still remember realizing that the meaning of the work recreation was actually re-creating…an opportunity to re-create ourselves by physical, mental, and spiritual activity. That is what Recreation of the Rule meant. St. John Baptist De La Salle, who was the founder of the Christian Brothers, was a very practical man. He tried to get his Brothers to have a holy life but an active, well-balanced life. He wrote into his guidelines or "Rule" for the Brothers that they would have Recreation of the Rule twice a day…after lunch and after dinner. It was also an opportunity to build a sense and the reality of community among the Brothers.

1:00 PM - Classes
After lunch and Recreation of the Rule, we would get back to class for a few more hours. The thing I remember most about the classes is that we had excellent teachers. Since we were all going to be high school teachers, they brought in some of the best teachers in the Order to teach us. They were excellent because of their knowledge and teaching techniques. But most importantly, they loved learning and they loved to teach.

3:00 P.M. – Work and Playing Sports
After classes we had some type of outdoor activity. As I remember it, we usually had team sports on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from about 3 to 4:30 PM. On Tuesday and Thursday, we would have about one and half hours of work. The work was sometimes of a routine nature, cleaning an area of the building or maintaining a hunk of the grounds. Often it was getting the athletic fields and facilities in shape for the next day's games. However, very often, we got involved in major projects, like building a dam or building a building.

4:30 PM – Study Hall
We then had study hall from about 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM.

5:30 PM – Spiritual Reading

That was an interesting concept that was new to me. You selected a book with a religious/spiritual theme. You were not only supposed to read it but think about it and pray over it. You were supposed to see how the ideas you read about pertained to your own life. It was very interesting. A different way to read as well as a vast, new range of possible books to be read. I suppose there were lives of the saints to read, but that is not what I recall reading. I remember reading more of the spiritual writings of some of the saints…their attempts to understand God and Christ and everything else about religion and the church. I read about the liturgy in general and the liturgy of the Mass in particular. I read some very profound (at least they were to me) books about all aspects of theology. It was a new world. Very challenging. Very intellectually stimulating. It made my beliefs seem not as some weird ideas that were a comfortable hiding place from the realities of the world, but a whole additional dimension to the world and to reality.

6:00 PM – Dinner
Dinner was another quiet meal in the refectory. Afterwards it was recreation of the rule time again, unless it was your group's turn to do the dishes.

7:00 to 9:00 PM – Study Hall
At this time, we went back to the Common Room and studied. You could use the Library also if you needed to. All was done in silence. I learned to study well. No TV. No music. It was a great concentration builder. You can learn a lot in a short time if there are not a lot of distractions.

9:00 PM – Night Prayers and Going to Bed
We would have about 15 minutes of night prayers in the Common Room, kneeling on the hard, wood floor. A little more penance/character building at the end of the day. Toughen you up!

We all slept in dormitories with 20 to 40 guys in each dorm. Since I had always slept in a room with one or more of my siblings over the years, it was not too much of a problem for me. We had guys who were loud snorers. Sometimes you would have to wake one up to quiet them down. Other guys talked in their sleep. That was usually something you let them do. It was a source of humor amongst us.

Chapter Five

Basics of a Religious Life

Being a Christian Brother in training introduced me to new ideas, activities, and ways of living. I was in the high school portion of the training. That would last three years until I graduated from high school. The name of our high school was LaSalle Institute in Glencoe, MO. The school was named after St. John Baptist De LaSalle. He was a priest in France who founded the Order of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the late 1600's. The main purpose of the Brothers was to provide free education to poor students who could not afford an education. By the 1950's, the Christian Brothers had schools around the world to fulfill their mission to educate children

When I entered the Juniorate in 1957, we were considered to be "in formation" to become a Christian Brother. After we graduated from high school, we would then be a Postulant for several months until the Fall school year started. At that point, we would be formally admitted to the religious order as Novices. When we became Novices, we would choose a religious name and receive and wear the religious habit of the Christian Brothers. When we completed our year of being a novice, we had completed our Freshman year in college, and we took one-year temporary vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. After we completing our year as Novices, we then moved on to the Scholasticate. The Scholasticate lasted three years during which we completed our college degree and took one-year temporary vows each year. Finally, when we completed the Scholasticate, we took final, permanent vows, and we were officially Christian Brothers.

Silence

The first big change in living daily life while in formation was silence. Everything was done in silence. We spoke only except at designated times such as in class and during sports and some outside work projects. We also spoke during Recreation of the Rule. No gossip, but usually about what we were studying or what was read at the meal. Or maybe an up and coming event. This time period lasted about 15 minutes. Then a bell rang, and we moved on in silence to classes after lunch or to study hall in the common room after dinner.

Silence was a very different environment. Not unpleasant really, but different. At the beginning, it was a challenge to be silent. It is so natural to talk to others about anything and everything. The ideas behind the silence were several. First, it was a monastic setting. Silence was the norm. It was to keep people from being distracted and not focusing on the spiritual side of life. The Brothers started every prayer service, of which there were many throughout the day, with the call to prayer, "Let us remember that we are in the holy Presence of God." Being silent was to help us remember that. Not just because God was watching us. But more importantly, because we were in the presence of God, we should realize that. Appreciate it. Enjoy it. Let it fill us with awe.

Silence was always a practical necessity as well. There were over 100 high school guys living together. So people could study, it was necessary to require silence. There were no private rooms, so everything was done in a group setting. If everyone was talking, laughing, shouting, etc. it would have been total chaos.

Finally, silence contributed to the learning atmosphere and environment. It encouraged people to study and read. It was somewhat like living in a large library. There were books everywhere and top teachers who loved learning and teaching.

Besides, most talking is inconsequential. Much of what is said by all of us every day is not really necessary. Silence helped us focus on what was important. It was a great self-discipline. No talk about attention deficit disorder in that world. Maybe someone had it, but it was a great environment in which to learn how to concentrate…stay focused…cut out the crap whether verbal or otherwise. Really get a sense of what is worthwhile and what is not. It certainly helped me figure out what was truly important and brought satisfaction in life. I think now that there is so much noise and distraction in our everyday lives that many people are not in touch with the deeper realities in themselves, others, and the world at large. People live very distracted lives. They are pulled along by all sorts of superficial stimuli and attractions. Things happen to them rather than their choosing what to do. Silence makes us confront realities. I am glad I lived in that world for a while.

Spiritual Reading

Spiritual reading is the practice of reading books and articles about spirituality with the purpose of growing in holiness. Spiritual reading is devoted to the reading of lives of saints, writings of Doctors and the Fathers of the Church, theological works, and doctrinal writings of Church authorities. In the context of the religious life, it was required of us based on the idea that "When we pray, we speak to God. When we engage in spiritual reading, God speaks to us."

After study hall in the afternoon and before dinner, there was a half-hour set aside for spiritual reading. As I moved through my junior and senior years in high school, I was given more challenging reading. I thought there was some real depth to Catholicism. It did not contradict the day to day reality I lived in. Rather, it brought an added dimension to my understanding of reality.

Some of the spiritual reading focused on self-examination and improving oneself to be more Christ-like. The Imitation of Christ by Thomas A'Kempis was one of the main books we all read as we moved along through high school. There were many other books along the same lines as well. I, of course, being my usual 100% plus effort guy, figured I would be the perfect imitator of Christ. Why not? Why make a half-hearted effort when a total effort would yield the best results and, I supposed, a happier life?

So, I went at it with everything I had. I would examine my behavior constantly to make sure I was as Christ-like as possible. It was fun for a while; but then, like the descent into silence I described earlier, the self-examination and self-awareness became confusing to me. I never

thought I was perfect, but I figured I was doing pretty well. And the more I looked for some sense of happiness as a result of all of these efforts, the unhappier I became.

Prayer

As listed in the previous chapter on the schedule in the Juniorate, times of prayer where scheduled throughout the day. We started with morning prayer in the Common Room at 6 AM. These were mostly prayers which we recited using a prayer book which was provided to us. We then went to Mass, which is also built around prayer. Some of the prayers were part of the daily Mass and some of the prayers varied depending on the season of the year, i.e., Christmas, Lent, Easter, Advent, etc. At noon, we would go to the chapel to pray the Angelus which was a combination of scriptural readings and written prayers.

In addition to the written prayers, we also started to learn about meditation. That was a new thing to me. We would read a passage of Scripture and then think about what it meant and how it could be incorporated into our lives. Part of the meditative prayer was to create our own prayers using our own language.

What I remember most about the regularity of prayer throughout the day was that it reminded me that we are in the Presence of God all the time. One of the basic prayers that the Christian Brothers have as part of their daily lives while in formation as well as carrying on their life as a teaching Brother was the following exchange. When we started praying as a group, the Brothers began by saying: "Let us remember that we are in the Holy Presence of God." That was followed by a response of "Live Jesus in our hearts forever." It taught me was that we should be aware that God is present with us at all times and everywhere. I took that as a very positive thing. I figured God would help me do everything I could to do good things and be good to people whenever I could.

Living In Community

The idea of living in a community was a very important aspect of being a Christian Brother. Some religious orders were monastic and solitary in nature. Diocesan priests lived on their own or with one or two other priests serving a parish. The Brothers were to live as a community…a group that lived and shared life together…serving God and serving mankind (in those days religious language in the Catholic Church and other religions as well was very masculine. Today, I think they would say serving men and women or serving humanity). Living, praying, working, teaching, eating, etc. in community helped us realize the power of community to get things accomplished. We also learned that there was support from each other to carry on the work of the Brothers, even through difficult times. Very profoundly, it made us realize that we are social beings who best meet and serve God in each other and in the students we would eventually teach.

Religion to the Brothers was a balance of communal and private, spiritual and work-related activities. You found God and you expressed your religious life in and through others. God is relational. We as human beings are relational. We learned that the religious life as a Christian

Brother was to be lived as an active member of a group of believers bent on doing good things for others. For some, the life of community did not fit. They left for another kind of life. I liked it. I enjoyed the many friends I had. I had intellectual stimulation and interaction. I had athletic challenges and games to play. I had a group of over 100 boys/young men who shared my commitment to loving and serving God. That was great. You did not feel like a freak because you thought loving and serving God was very important, if not the most important thing in the world.

And we had lots of fun together. Whether it was religious, athletic, intellectual, cultural, artistic or any other kind of activity, we had fun doing it together. I was in plays (and found out pretty quickly that a career as an actor would never work for me). I had interesting magazines and books to read. I listened to a variety of music. Mostly classical, but a lot of lighter classical. We had a band made up of us students. Some people came into the Brothers already able to play an instrument. I was not one of those. I tried to learn a couple of instruments (the clarinet and trumpet, I think), but I just never had the finger dexterity to read music and play notes that did not sound totally horrible instead of what music was intended to be. But we did have a choir and I joined that. I could always sing half-way decently. We did not have the radio, so I lost touch with Elvis Presley and the other old and newer rock and roll singers. We decorated our living spaces to reflect the feasts and seasons of the year. We would have days off or partial days off based on feasts of various saints or church related celebrations. On those days we would have sports tournaments. Often, we got to challenge and interact with the Novices who were the equivalent of college freshmen, though some were older. That was a big deal because that is what we wanted to become…people who actually wore the religious habit and eventually took vows. Also, the older group of guys were an athletic challenge. They were bigger and stronger than us…more experienced athletes. We loved playing them because we wanted to pull an upset and beat them. And we did do so sometimes.

Often, on these special days, we would see a fairly current movie that the Brothers would bring in. They were the same movies as in the theaters, but usually a year after their release. We had a regular projection room with the same type of projectors in the movie theaters. It was a great honor to be a projectionist. We would pop huge amounts of popcorn and have soda. On these special days, we also often had special meals or picnics down by the athletic fields.
We just had a great time.

<u>First Class Education</u>

My favorite teacher, though I had many excellent ones, was Brother James. I had him for sophomore English. He loved literature of all kinds. He would read passages out of books and he did them so well. I couldn't wait to get the book out of the library and read it myself. I began reading a lot. We did not have television to watch except on rare and/or historic occasions, e.g., Castro taking over Cuba or the first Sputnik satellite. We didn't have radio either, except for an occasional St. Louis Cardinals baseball game on one of the special days off. I probably read ten books at most before my sophomore year in high school. I read a lot prior to that, but it was usually newspapers and magazines, sports stories as well as general news, particularly about the City of Chicago.

That changed during my sophomore year. I probably read thirty books, most of them inspired by Brother James' love of them and his dramatic readings. He would also discuss the books with us, not just as stories, but also about their deeper meanings. And we discussed them with him in class or after class. He would point out things that I would not see, but I learned to read more closely and attentively as the year went on. I still remember him pointing out to me that Captain Nemo in Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea was "omen" when spelled backwards. He said that was significant, because often when Captain Nemo appeared in the story, there was a sense of impending evil and doom around. I know now that that was not the most profound observation in the world. But at the time, it taught me that there was much more to reading and the writer's art than was always obvious on the surface.

All of the teachers held us to the highest standards. You were not going to waste your time, or their time…or most importantly, God's time by not studying and learning what you were supposed to learn. And I lapped it up. I enjoyed every subject and topic we studied. There was so much to learn, and the teachers made it seem worthwhile and enjoyable. The joy of learning. I have never forgotten it. I still remember the joy of figuring out a tough math problem or understanding the deeper meaning of a novel, or whatever. And that love and joy in learning is something I have carried with me all of my life. That doesn't mean that it sometimes wasn't hard work to learn, and read, and write papers. But I experienced that it was worth the effort. That you could not learn anything unless you made the effort. And if you did not make the effort, you missed out on the joy of eventually learning something.

In addition to having wonderful teachers, we were being educated along the lines of a liberal education. I had never heard that term before. But it is something which the Brothers emphasized. Getting a liberal education had nothing to do with liberal or conservative politics. It is defined as a well-rounded educational program in the liberal arts that teaches the fundamentals of art, sciences and literature. It is an educational approach in which people are educated in multiple fields of study and not trained in a specific profession. Getting trained in a specific profession such as being a teacher would come into play in your junior and senior years in college. Your high school and first two years of college focused on learning how to read, think, discuss, and write well. In high school I had Latin for one year, then French for two years. For science classes we had general science, chemistry, and physics courses. In math we had geometry, trigonometry, and the beginnings of calculus. We had English reading and writing each year as well as religion and philosophy courses.

Work and Play

The Brothers had some very skilled craftsman as Members of their Order. There were carpenters and plumbers and bricklayers, etc. They would travel as a group (actually, the better word that the Brothers would use is a "Community") of 3 or 4 from school to school to make improvements to the schools. They were headquartered in Glencoe, so we were able to work with them often on our own facilities.

Again, to me, the work was fun. How often do you get to build a 15 to 20-foot-high dam across a valley to create a lake for irrigation and fire protection purposes? Or we would go into the surrounding hills and cut out big hunks of limestone to be used in building walkways around the property. Most of the work was done by hand…shovels and picks and wheelbarrows. But with 100 plus young guys working on the projects, they moved along pretty quickly. And it certainly wore the heck out of us. I am sure they did it mainly to keep us busy and physically strong and focused on positive accomplishments. Also, it made us too tired to start trouble or have a lot of energy to be thinking about girls.

The team sports were great fun. My first Fall in Glencoe, we played some flag football, a game I had not played before. I was usually the quarterback and team leader as I had always been.

Around late October, we started playing soccer. This was an entirely new game to me; but it was a big sport with the Brothers, particularly in the St. Louis area. I had never played soccer before. Neither did most of the incoming class of kids. Those who had been around a year or two already knew how to play it. Soccer was awkward to me. I had never played a sport where you could not use your hands. It seemed very unnatural. But I was a good natural athlete and I learned quickly and got better.

In the winter we played basketball and volleyball in the gym. I was also introduced to handball, a game the older Brothers loved. We had four outdoor handball courts and then started enclosing a couple of them. Handball was great game. Like racquetball, but without the racquets. Again, it was new sport to me. But I loved it and got better at it. Also, because I had learned a lot of carpentry stuff from my Dad, I was chosen to help enclose one of the outdoor courts into a year-round enclosed court. The thing I remember most was putting in the wood floor. The Brothers had gotten wood from a gym floor of a building that was being torn down. We had to remove all of the old nails and then re-lay the floor in the handball court. What a project. I learned a lot; and when it was all done, it was something I was very proud of. It was something I had helped create and would be around for a long time. It was a job well done. Again, something I have never forgotten, linking hard work with joy and satisfaction when something worthwhile was accomplished.

<u>Music</u>

Music was another wonderful aspect of being in the Brothers. Br. Peter was the music director for the Juniorate and the Novitiate. He was an excellent musician. He could play many instruments and had a great singing voice.

Br. Peter led the band which practiced several times a week. The band played symphonic music as well as music from operas, operettas, and musicals. Guys would be able to practice whenever they could find time. Most of the time, the band would put on concerts for those of us not in the band. And several times a year, they would put on concerts for the community in and around Glencoe. I always enjoyed music, so I thought I would try out for the band. I tried several instruments (a clarinet, trumpet, and trombone) and could not get the hang of them. I always wondered why I could not get the hand/eye/brain connection working to play a musical

instrument. I had good hand/eye/brain connection when it came to sports. Why didn't I have at least some of that for playing a musical instrument? I finally figured we all have different talents, and playing a musical instrument was not one of mine.

But I could always sing half-way decently. And all of us in high school and the Novitiate had choir practice several times a week. Part of the choir practices was to learn the Gregorian chants which would be sung at Mass on the coming Sunday. I probably heard some Gregorian chants in church when I was a kid, but I did not know that it was a particular kind of music. Gregorian chant was the liturgical music of the Catholic Church. It was used to accompany the text of the mass and the divine office. Gregorian chant is named after St. Gregory I, during whose papacy (590–604) it was collected and codified. It was a beautiful sounding music. No harmonies of voices. It was done a cappella, without any musical instrument accompaniment. But when 100 plus young men were singing the notes which had been developed over centuries, it was a very impressive and lovely sound. And the melodies changed from week to week to fit the Church feast days and celebrations throughout the year. It was great to be part of a musical group which produced such beautiful music.

In addition to the Gregorian chant, we also sang four-part harmony. For men's voices, the four parts are First Tenor, Second Tenor, Baritone, and Bass. I usually sang the Second Tenor part, though sometimes I would sing the Baritone part. Some of the four-part music we sang was church-related. Handel's Messiah is just one example. But we also sang four-part music based on operettas and Broadway musicals as well as other well-known American, musical standards, i.e., God Bless America. Sometimes, we would sing what is called polyphony, music with more than 4 different voices singing harmonizing notes at one time. It was great to learn about and perform so much good music. And the choir would also often accompany the band in concert performances in the area.

Beginnings of Doubt and Confusion

The first couple of years in the Juniorate in Glencoe were a very positive experience. All in all, it was a full life to me. Intellectual, physical, moral, spiritual, and cultural activities filled my days. They were all worthwhile pursuits and I could see the goodness and fun in them.

But as I moved into my senior year, some aspects of the religious life were starting to cause me trouble. One element was living in silence most of the time. It had its good points as discussed previously. But silence did have a downside for me also. Too much self-reflection became confusing. I was too aware sometimes of how I felt emotionally. And that confused me and kind of scared me. In particular what confused me was the sense of not being happy when I was supposed to be happy. It took me several years to figure this one out. And it took a lot of effort and emotional pain to finally come to terms with it.

The problem was this: I was living the "perfect life" i.e., a life dedicated to serving God and others. I lived that life pretty much perfectly, i.e., I followed every rule, guideline or whatever I was expected to do. Consequently, I expected to be happy with my life. Sometimes I was, but

most of the time when I thought about it, I did not feel happy. If I was living the religious life perfectly, or almost so, why wasn't I happier?

I redoubled my efforts to be more perfect…more holy…more silence. The problem intensified. By the time I was in my senior year in high school, I was getting very confused and very unhappy. I had no idea of what was going on. I pushed it aside and concentrated on preparing for actually becoming a Brother…taking the vows…being a real religious. Then, I figured, I would feel better.

I was depressed. I sometimes thought about suicide. Nothing made sense to me, at least as I thought it should make sense. I figured I had this vocation…this calling from God…to do something special…to be a member of a religious order doing God's work. I was doing it with every ounce of energy and intelligence I had. And I was miserable. I truly figured I must be going insane. How could I not be? There was obviously something wrong with my emotions. They were not normal. If they were normal emotions, not a crazy person's emotions, then I should be happy doing what I was called to do.

That was my big problem growing up. I had the usual ups and downs I, guess, as other young kids and teenagers. I worried about how I would do in school, with friends, with sports, with girls (before I entered the Brothers), with what I should choose to do as an adult. But I was not prepared for this growing sense of unhappiness and depression (not a term I was aware of at the time). It was not a good time in my life. And it lasted several years longer during which time I studied and read and prayed about what was wrong and what could I do to change it.

I had no one to talk to about it. My religious superiors would meet with each of us individually once a month to discuss how we were doing. I brought up the unhappiness sometimes, but no one really had much to say that was helpful. Most of the time I would not bring up anything because I did not want to appear crazy and have them throw me out of the Brothers. I could not discuss it with my parents because it wasn't the type of thing you discussed with them. Maybe I could have, but at that time of my life, it did not seem to be an option.

The next several years were a struggle and a learning experience and would form me for the next phases of my life.

<u>Summer Vacations</u>

Between our Sophomore and Junior year and then between our Junior and Senior years in high school, we were sent home for the summer to spend the time with our families. I had turned 16 in April of 1958, and so I was able to get a summer job. My Uncle Matt got me a job with the Chicago Park District doing park maintenance. He did it because Busia told him that I needed a job so I could contribute to paying some of my tuition and room and board in Glencoe. We were not required to pay for tuition and room and board, but the Brothers could use the financial support. That summer I mainly cut grass and picked up litter in the parks and boulevards on the northwest side of the City of Chicago. Uncle Matt also got jobs for Busia's other grandchildren when they needed a job to pay for college tuition.

During the summer of 1959, Uncle Matt got me a job with the Cook County Highway Department, again thanks to Busia. I was part of a crew of 4 who did traffic counts in the rapidly developing suburbs of Chicago. The post-World War II housing boom was on. Roads needed to be widened and improved to handle all of the additional traffic. Also, new roads needed to be built.

One of the things I specifically remember about that summer was seeing the first McDonald's restaurant in the Chicago area. It was just north of Chicago in Des Plaines. Our crew was out doing some traffic surveys in the area when we saw the first set of "Golden Arches."



One of the first McDonald's fast food restaurants in the Chicago area.

The idea of a fast food chain was brand new. I always brought my lunch with me to work. But one time I brought enough money with me to buy a hamburger, fries, and a Coke at McDonald's. The hamburger was okay, a little small, but the French fries were great. Who knew at the time what a huge business McDonald's would become and then be followed by other fast food franchises which changed the eating habits of many people. Fast food and junk food became a huge part of the American diet contributing greatly to the health problems of so many people in our country. But nobody was thinking about that at the time. One of McDonald's television and radio ads often told us that "You deserve a break today!" It was just a treat to grab a fast food lunch now and then.

In those days, we as a family hardly ever went out for a meal. On Mother's Day or my Mom's birthday, my Dad would take our Mom and all of us out for dinner at the Loyal Order of Moose Lodge restaurant. My Dad was a member of the Moose fraternal organization. We actually ordered from a menu which was pretty cool. We could pick what we wanted to eat rather than eating whatever was served as was the case when we ate at home. Not that there was anything wrong with the food we ate at home. My Mom was a good cook. She was also concerned that we ate a well-balanced diet. And there was always enough for us to eat, which considering the size of our family, was something that my parents worked hard to provide for us. As we got into our teen years, we would sometimes go out with our friends to Manzo's, a pizza parlor in the neighborhood.

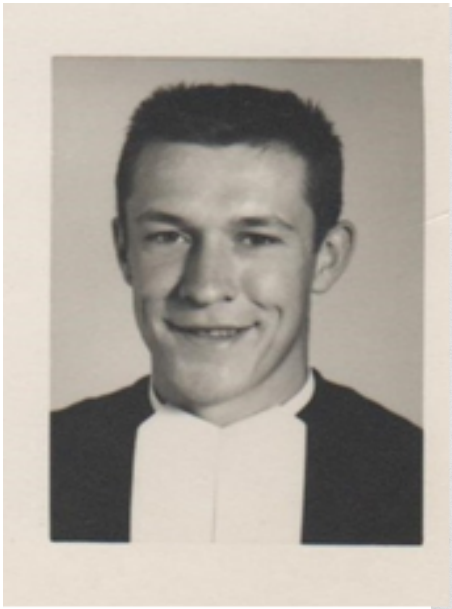
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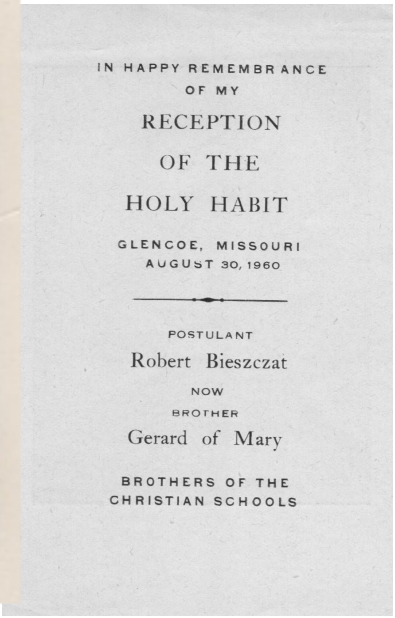
The 1960's – Becoming a Real Christian Brother

I graduated from high school in June of 1960. After I graduated, I spent the summer in Glencoe as what is called a Postulant. That meant I was someone who was formally a candidate to be admitted to a religious order. About 40 of us who were already in Glencoe as part of the Juniorate became Postulants. In June we were joined by about 30 more young men. Most of them had graduated from Christian Brothers' high schools in the Midwest, and at that point in their lives thought they had a vocation, a calling, to the religious life. A few of the new Postulants were older men who already had some college or graduated from college and had decided that they might have a vocation to the religious life.

As the summer ended, all of us Postulants moved on to become Novices. Novices spend a one year period of time further considering their vocation before taking vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. At the same time, Christian Brothers who were in charge of the Novitiate were evaluating all of us to see if they thought we were cut out to be Christian Brothers.

At the end of August of 1960, I officially became a Christian Brother. I got a religious name, Brother Gerard of Mary. I selected that name because of my Mom. St. Gerard was the patron saint of mothers, and my Mom, having had 10 children, always prayed to St. Gerard during her pregnancies so that they would go well, and she would have healthy babies. And my Mom would also pray regularly to Mary, the Blessed Mother, to help her be a good mother, which she certainly was. When I formally became a Novice, I also began wearing the religious habit that the Christian Brothers wore.





I thought that when I actually became a Brother, I would be happier. But it did not work out like that at all. When I finally became a Christian Brother living an even more deeply spiritual life, I was miserable. I felt detached from myself. I thought I was going crazy. I thought I was slipping out of reality and into some crazy-person world.

I talked to the Brother who headed up the Novitiate about my feelings. He told me that you cannot seek happiness itself, especially the feeling of happiness. Happiness comes as the result of pursuing and having good things. Well, I was pursuing good things. I was doing it almost perfectly. (You have to understand that when I set my mind to do things, I do them totally. I give it 100% plus. It was something I learned in sports and other endeavors as well. If I gave it everything I had, I would succeed more often than not. I did not expect to succeed all of the time, but I did expect to succeed often). In the same way, I did not expect to be happy all of the time. Who had a right to that? But I did expect to be happy some of the time. But I did not feel happy. I felt confused and very unhappy.

I am also a pretty smart person. I could usually figure out anything, given enough time and thought. As I became more confused, I redoubled my efforts to think this through. More silence…more efforts to get in touch with myself…more reading…more prayer. I thought the unhappiness and confusion would end eventually. Maybe a few months. But it never did. It just got worse and worse.

There was some relief in doing things. Playing sports. Doing physical work. Having fun with my Brothers. Cooking. Hiking. Physical things were good. I found then, and continue to do so now, that physical activity, the more strenuous the better, was good for me. What I figured out later was that the physical activity, whether sports or work, did two things. It made me focus on something other than my feelings. It made me focus on realities outside of myself. It also made my feelings get into a normal mode. I could feel what I felt and not have to think about it. I could feel good if I won or got something done. I could feel badly if I lost or did not get something done. But that was okay. It was normal feelings and I was comfortable with that.

But then I would get into the silent mode again and all of my confusion and doubts would come back. My feelings that I was going crazy and was getting crazier…less and less in touch with reality, continued to grow. I felt almost out-of-body sometimes. I felt like I was outside myself observing myself. It felt eerie.

I still remember playing shortstop in a softball game when I was in the Novitiate. I must have been having a particularly confusing day. Usually playing sports would pull me out of these depressions. But in this case, it did not. I looked up and saw the trees around the ballfield field. It is hard to explain, but the trees did not look normal. I could see every leaf. It seemed like I was in a different world…a different reality. It scared the shit out of me. I had never felt like that before. I was scared. I was beginning to have thoughts of killing myself because it was so painful.

I really had no one to talk to about this. Certainly not my parents. We never talked about stuff like that. I talked to the head Brother of the Novitiate. He tried, but he was not very helpful. I

just prayed harder. Tried harder. And got crazier in my mind. That went on all through my year in the Novitiate, the year equivalent to the first year of college. I turned 18 in 1960. I graduated from high school and headed into college. It should have been very exciting. And it was in a way. But the bad feelings far outweighed the good feelings. And I started to be doubtful that the religious life was the life for me.

Of course, there was another big load to handle. How do you reject God's call and plan for you? I had a vocation from God. A calling from God to live a more perfect life and to do God's work. So how do you walk away from that without turning your back on God? I was not able to deal with that. So, I struggled on. Prayed more. Worked harder at being "perfect." Maybe then the happiness would kick in.

Another traumatic event during the Novitiate year was the death of my sister Betty Ann. She had suffered from leukemia for about 2 years. It was very hard on my family, especially my Mom. Betty Ann died in January of 1961. She had just turned 8 the previous November. I had helped care of her when she was a baby. We older brothers and sisters were expected to help take care of the babies, and we did a lot of that.

By the time Betty Ann died, I had been away from the family for 3.5 years in the Brothers in Glencoe. I had spent two summers at home since 1957 and my family had visited me a couple of times a year. So, in some ways, I was out of touch with my family. I did not feel as close to them. It was something you had to do to make it in the seminary. You had to distance yourself from those feelings of closeness. You had to overcome the feeling of being "homesick." Otherwise, you would "go over the hill" and leave Glencoe and give up your vocation. Well, that was okay for the weak ones. But it was not something I was going to do. So, I distanced myself emotionally from my family.

When Betty Ann died, I was again very confused. I did not feel any sadness at her death. I just felt scared that I did not feel any sadness. It was just another sign to myself that I was crazy and getting crazier.

Since one of my sisters died, I was allowed to go to Chicago for the funeral. They had to outfit me with a black suit and collar which they pulled out of the great store of clothing in Glencoe. They put me on a train in St. Louis, and I headed to Chicago.

My cousin Edwin picked me up at the train in downtown Chicago and took me home. I think my brothers Tony and Frank came with him. I hadn't been back to Chicago for over a year and a half. A lot had changed. The Northwest Expressway had just been opened. I remember driving through Hubbard's cave and then driving on the expressway to Kedzie Avenue and the old neighborhood. That was something.

The wake and funeral are just a blur to me. Lots of sadness on my family's part, especially my Mom. I was the son with the vocation, home to raise spirits as a sign of God's love and favor, even though a daughter was lost. I was totally confused. I did my best to do what was needed

and expected of me. But I was an outsider at this point. I just helped out as best I could. Then I took the train back to Glencoe.

The rest of the year was very difficult. It was a constant struggle to stay sane and fight off suicidal feelings.

At the end of my year in the Novitiate, I took my vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. They were temporary vows. I thought that would be a watershed and happiness producing event. It was not. I was still unhappy and confused. My family came down for the event. My Mom and Dad, brothers and sisters, and my Aunt Sophie and Uncle Ed came down for the "Investiture" as the Brothers called it. They were all very proud of me. It was a big event for me too, so I got caught up in all of the hoopla. But as soon as things quieted down, the unhappiness returned.

But it was during the Novitiate year that I started on a path that I have been on ever since. It was a very painful year, but it was a year when I was introduced to a whole lot of new ideas, the understanding of which I have been pursuing ever since. It didn't seem like a new adventure at the time, but as I look back, it was the beginning of my growth and development as a mature human being…growing out of childhood and adolescence into a new knowledge of reality and how I fit into it.

It was during my Novitiate year that I was first introduced to the ancient Greek philosophers: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and others. We took an Introduction to Philosophy course taught by Brother Paul. He had kind of a weird personality…not very sociable…a little quirky…but he loved the subject and was good at asking us probing questions which really made us think about what we were learning. And he didn't just ask questions in the abstract about what the philosophers said and what it meant. He asked questions about how the ideas and concepts we were learning related to us as human beings…today…in our lives now and in the future.

Two quotes stand out in my mind as we started studying philosophy. One was "The unexamined life is not worth living…" from Socrates. The other was "Know thyself" from Thales. What an interesting perspective. What did they mean and how did that relate to my life now and in the future?

And it was just not an abstract, philosophical thought to me. I did not realize it at the time, but I understand it looking back, that I was trying to solve a huge problem for myself. So, I was learning everything I could to solve that problem. I read a quote from Stephen Jay Gould a few years ago that made a lot of sense to me. I don't recall the exact words, but the gist of the quote was that most learning comes as the result of trying to solve problems. They can be practical problems or theoretical problems. Also, part of the gist of the quote was that most creative thinking comes from trying to solve problems.

Well, I was trying to solve a very serious problem for myself at the time. The works and words of the philosophers we were studying were a whole new body of knowledge to me…something I had never explored before or really knew anything about.

What does it mean to "know thyself"? I guess I started to look at it from the perspective of what a human being is. The Greek philosophers said we were many things, but what stuck with me form those readings and discussions is that we are several things from a philosophical standpoint. We are a body…a physical entity. It needed all of the things a body needed. Food, rest, good health, movement, etc.

We were also a mind. We had an intellectual capability which was much more advanced than any other being that we were aware of on earth. And the mind/intellect was capable of not only knowing things outside of itself; but it was capable of knowing that it knows. As someone who had been too deeply immersed in self-examination and self-awareness, that came as no surprise to me. But it highlighted to me that one of the things that defines us as human beings is this mind/intellect which is capable of knowing itself…reflecting on itself.

These philosophers also thought that we had a will…an ability to choose. They thought that we were independent entities which could choose among a variety of options. Yes, they understood that our environment and experiences shaped our choices. But they did not think that they dictated the choices we will make.

So, body…mind…will. The body element we shared with every other living creature, so that did not really define us as something different in the real world. But the mind and will did make us different. I thought then and continue to think now that when it came to knowing yourself, the fact that we have an intellect and a will should be something that I should focus on in trying to know myself and live accordingly. Taking care of the body was important too. And eventually, I would see the body-mind connection as more important than I thought. But what distinguishes us from the rest of reality that we encounter is that we have an intellect and a will.

That made sense to me. It tied in with the religious concepts I had grown up with. The intellect and will were just the physical manifestations of our soul. You couldn't find or locate the soul in our bodies any more than you could locate the will, and in those days before all of the scientific advances in understanding the brain, you could not really locate the intellect. You could locate the brain and how it worked, but the intellect was more than that. It was the human ability to go beyond the things that our senses transmit to the brain. The intellect was the basis for our ability to develop concepts, imagine future possibilities, and create artistic and technological realities which went beyond what we actually took in through our senses.

So, in trying to know myself, I first came to the realization that I, as a human being, had some unique realities about myself…an intellect and a will. Therefore, for me at least, one of the things that I should do is live my life in a way that recognized those facets of who I am and develop them to their fullest potential.

I thought if I did that, then I would be happy, because I was doing what was proper and fitting for a human being to do. I guess I likened it to using any object of nature as it properly should be used as a test of whether it would be a successful experience. For example, you do not use an apple to unloosen a screw. You use a screwdriver. Everything has an intrinsic nature about

itself. It functions best when it is used and exists in its proper setting and reality. What distinguishes us as humans is our intellect and will. What I forgot about, or did not pay enough attention to, was that as humans, we are also bodies. It took me a long time to learn that my mind and will could only take me so far in living and finding happiness. I also had to take into account the needs and realities of my body. I just had always figured that the intellect and will were stronger than the body, and that the desires and direction of the intellect and will would supersede and overcome the limitations of the body.

It was just beginning to dawn on me, but it did not really become a conscious awareness for several years, that you could not ignore the body. That the body will rebel if you try to push it too hard in directions that it does not want to go.

The next set of concepts that impressed me did not come from a Greek philosopher, but a more modern philosopher whose name I do not recall. It was Br. Paul who brought these concepts to our attention. It made a lot of sense to me at the time and has informed my thinking still today.

I am sure these are not the correct words that the philosopher used, but it is the gist of what he said and what I incorporated into my own philosophy of how to live a good and happy life. Basically, what the philosopher was saying is that all of reality is relational to many things and that all things respond to other things constantly. That is life and reality…a constant interaction with people, events, circumstances, inanimate objects, animals, books, ideas…everything.

Just as we hope for and want a proper response to who we are and what our needs are, so we can function well as a human being; so too, there is a proper response that we should make to all of the realities outside of ourselves that we encounter as well. In addition, he was saying that both we and the outside entity deserve that proper response from each other. Having that proper response relationship depends on two things: one, is to understand the other entity as to what it really is and what does it require as a proper response; and two, actually choosing to make the appropriate response that the entity outside of ourselves deserves.

I saw that as part of the road to a happy life: to be in harmony with all of reality so that all of our relationships with animate and inanimate realities were appropriate, and therefore, satisfying. I learned and remembered since then that doing things based on how we internally feel and experience our reactions was not a path to happiness. However, if we do things in response to whomever and whatever we encounter (people, situations, work, etc.) because they deserve it, then we are fully present to and engaged with them. Then we experience being fully human which for me, resulted in being, peaceful, joyful, and happy.

That perspective of a proper response relationship has been an important touchstone to me over the years in determining what I should do…how I should respond to a particular person, situation, object, etc. I liked it too because it incorporated all three of the elements that make us specifically and uniquely human…our body, intellect, and will. We use our intellect to understand and discern that outside reality. We use our will to choose a response. And we use our body to carry out the response.

I also liked the idea and have used it over the years because it balanced my needs and reactions with the needs of the outside entity. It wasn't just about my needs or how I felt. That was important. But that was not all that is important. To me at least, it is important that other entities receive the proper response from me just as I would want the proper response to my needs from someone else. And not just because it would be reciprocal, i.e., I will treat you properly so that you will do the same for me. That is part of the equation. But very importantly, it is because the other entity deserves to be viewed, understood, and treated for what it is.

Another important aspect of this philosophy is that all things outside of ourselves do not deserve the same level of interaction, knowledge, and response. Our relationship to a rock does not require the same type of consideration and response as our relationship to an animal or another human being. But each relational object should be responded to appropriately. Even inanimate objects deserve proper responses as evidenced by the need to preserve the environment by understanding and respecting the reality of inanimate objects.

Several years later, I read the book I and Thou by Martin Buber. His description of the I – Thou relationship was right on target as far as I was concerned with the above philosophy, particularly as it applied to human relationships. Again, my interpretation of what he said, is that we must really pay attention to the person who we encounter in order to have an I - Thou relationship. It takes seeing beyond the surface of who that person is. It takes connecting with another person at the deepest levels of who they are and who you are. With that understanding and relationship, you can then respond to and interact with the other person in a way that is appropriate and satisfying to both beings.

So…body…mind…will as one basic set of concepts. Then, appropriate relational responses to all we encounter as another basic concept. Finally, the last set of concepts that were important to me were those of pursuing truth, goodness, and beauty.

Again, I do not recall which philosopher spoke to this specifically. I am sure several of the Greeks did as well as subsequent philosophers and theologians such as St. Thomas Aquinas. But the idea of pursuing truth, goodness, and beauty really appealed to me. It tied in with my understanding of what made us human…our body, intellect, and will. Dogs don't pursue truth. Flowers can be beautiful, but they do not choose to be beautiful. "A rose is a rose is a rose" is a truism, but the rose is not aware of, nor does it pursue, the truth of that statement.

But human beings can and do pursue the true, the good, and the beautiful. And when we find any aspect of any of those three things, we feel a true satisfaction by being in the presence of each of those things. In one sense we possess truth, goodness, and beauty; but in another sense, we experience them more than we possess them. We experience them by being in proper relationship to them. For example, the music of Puccini is beautiful. I encounter that beauty by listening to a singer and an orchestra produce beautiful sounds in the context of the opera. I encounter that experience best by listening quietly to the music…giving the music and performance its proper response. If I did not give the music its proper response, if I was conversing with another person, or was distracted or ill or deaf or somehow impaired so that I could not give it my attention, I would not experience the beauty in front of me. But when I do

give the beauty I am encountering the proper response, then I experience that beauty, I feel a great joy and sense of well-being…of happiness…to be in the presence of such beauty.

I guess to some degree we possess truth more than goodness and beauty. When we understand something, we have that knowledge with us, so in a sense we do possess truth. And when we do possess true knowledge, we experience a very deep joy and satisfaction in acquiring that knowledge. I have experienced that many times myself, particularly when I was trying to understand a difficult concept and then finally doing so. I still remember the look on a student's face from over 50 years ago when he finally grasped a math concept that I was teaching to him in sixth grade. It was like a light bulb going on in his head that you see in comic strips. He truly had a delighted, almost beatific, smile on his face as it dawned on him that he understood the concepts…possessed them in a sense…and now could actually use them.

And goodness…something we see in other things…something we can be ourselves. We all pursue the good as we see it. That good may be a wide variety of things from health, to happiness, to material possessions, to safety, to sex, to ideas, to just about anything. The trick is to see what is really good and what is a sham. Seeking the truth helps us understand what is really good versus what is not good, or what may be good for me, but not for you. Goodness in any form draws us to it. So does beauty. And in being drawn to goodness and beauty, we often see the truth of a thing or matter better. It is interesting to me that one of the attributes used to describe a breakthrough theory in science is its beauty…everything fits together…it has a certain elegance to it.

There were many other things I learned during that year in the Novitiate, but those are three sets of ideas that have really stuck with me over the years. These three new concepts (new to me at least) gave me a new set of tools to analyze my experiences and help me solve my unhappiness problem. It wasn't all so logical to me at the time. There were a lot of good days and bad days as the year in the Novitiate moved along. But as I look back, these ideas started me thinking in ways that I did not think before.

And interestingly, to me at least, these ideas did not contradict my religious ideas that I had learned and absorbed as a child and then growing up to the point I was at in the Novitiate. They just seemed like a broader range of ideas that supported ideas I already thought were important. Or they added dimensions to what I understood or took for granted. It gave me more tools to analyze reality as a whole and how I fit into it. And, how I might fit into the broader reality more happily.

Chapter Seven

1960's Continued - A Year in Tennessee & A Year in Minnesota

Christian Brothers College, Memphis, TN

After the Novitiate (my freshman year) we moved on to the Scholasticate (the remaining college undergraduate years). The Brothers were doing well in those days. Lots of new vocations. So, they opened a new Scholasticate facility at their Christian Brothers College in Memphis, Tennessee. That was exciting. It was something that I looked forward to.

The summer in Glencoe was also a little break from the depression. New Novices-to-be (they were called Postulants) joined us in Glencoe. There were all kinds of activity acclimating the new guys to Glencoe. Since I was always one of the leaders, I was given a lot of responsibility to accomplish that. I had a much better summer than the previous nine months. That, plus going to Memphis and a regular college was very exciting. The gloom lifted. Life was good. I figured all of my prayers and efforts had finally paid off. Thank God!

Memphis was great. I had never been in the south. St. Louis was somewhat in the south, but really a funny mixture of Midwest and the South. Christian Brothers College (CBC) was an all-male college as many were in those days. We moved in to our separate building and facilities just on the edge of the campus.

From a living facility standpoint, it was a big departure from my previous four years in Glencoe where I had almost exclusively slept in a dorm and did everything in a communal setting. In Memphis, we got our own rooms. Not much in them…a bed, dresser, closet and maybe a desk. Everything else was in common as in the other seminary facilities. We had a common study room, meal room, etc. The building itself was very modern. A lot of glass. I really liked it. The outer walls in the study room and chapel were all glass. There were a lot of trees around the building, so it was a great setting in which to live.

Going to college classes with other students was also very exciting and interesting. Unlike the last four years where I was always in class in a seminary building with other seminarians, in Memphis we were taking classes with regular students. I wondered how I would do in such a setting, but I found out in short time that I would do just as well as I always did in school.

At CBC, we were also able to start taking regular college classes. In the Novitiate, we took philosophy, theology, and French classes. We had a full class load in Glencoe, but there were no secular classes. At CBC I took a philosophy (Logic) and theology course my first semester. But I also took an English Composition course, an Advanced Math course, a History course, and a Zoology course.

Very interesting. The teachers were great. There was so much to learn, and it was such an exciting environment. We got to go to the college basketball games and other college events like

plays, music recitals, special lecturers, etc. I loved it. I was very happy. No depression. No feeling crazy. There was still a lot of silence, but I guess for me, it was a better balance. I felt normal.

It was at CBC that I found out that I would not probably pursue science as a course of study. I think I did not have the correct attitude for it. What illustrated this for me was when I had been in Zoology class for about two weeks and the Professor showed us a film about what part of a butterfly developing in a cocoon controlled the development of the butterfly. They kept cutting the cocoons at variou places along the cocoon, and then attaching them with a small glass tube. When they cut the cocoon too close to the front of the cocoon, nothing would develop. It they cut it a little further back from the front, the head of the butterfly would develop, but the rest would not. They kept moving further back and cutting and then attaching the two parts until they finally got the right spot where both the front part and back parts of the butterfly developed fully, attached, of course, by the small glass tube. Well, that was interesting. Not too exciting to me, but interesting. But then the two-part butterfly connected by the glass tube took off and started flying. That was interesting too. However, after maybe flying five feet, the glass tube broke and the two pieces of the butterfly fell to the ground. All of the other students found this to be very interesting. I found it hysterical. I was laughing so hard that I had tears in my eyes. I then realized that everyone was looking at me, including the Professor. He was not pleased and did not find it or me funny. After class I went up to him and asked it maybe I should transfer to another class. He agreed and approved a transfer to a Chemistry class. I knew then and there that I would never be a scientist. I just did not have the mindset for it.

Since I was going to be a high school teacher, I figured that I would be a math teacher. I liked math and always did well at it. But at the same time, I really had some great English teachers. I found that I really enjoyed literature. I had not yet decided to be an English teacher myself, but I remember how I really started to enjoy novels, and short stories, and plays. Poetry was good too, but I was always drawn more to the other types of literature. The Humanities were much more interesting to me than math, particularly when we moved beyond advanced calculus into more of the theory of math. I liked doing math problems. It was like solving a puzzle to get the correct answer. But theory of sets and other abstractions were too ethereal to keep my interest.

So, I decided I would be an English Literature major. And like all of my fellow Christian Brother brothers, I minored in theology and philosophy. And, as was frequently the case, I had a wonderful English Teacher named Br. Luke. He was particularly fond of plays. He had been to New York several times to see Broadway performances of all kinds of plays. One of the classes I took from him was all about the theater: dramas, comedies, musicals, tragedies, etc. He made them all so real. And he had insights into the plays and characters that were not always apparent on the surface. But if you thought a bit more deeply about the dialogue, settings, and characters, there was so much more to enjoy about a play. It wasn't better than a novel, but it was good in different ways.

Being in the south for the 1961-62 school year was my first exposure to overt racism and discrimination. One day, our group of Brothers went down into Mississippi to have a holiday at the vacation home of the parents of one of our classmates/Brothers who was from Memphis.

As we pulled into Holly Springs, MS, I saw my first pair of water fountains where one was for "Whites" and one was for "Negroes." There were signs on the doors of some businesses, particularly restaurants, where "Whites Only" signs were prominently displayed. The civil rights movement had not yet begun in earnest. But consciousness about racial discrimination was on the rise. Not that there wasn't discrimination up north. But I had seldom seen it so blatant, except when I was probably 10 years old in the early 1950's. As I mentioned earlier, my family would often go up to a lake in southeastern Wisconsin on a Sunday for a picnic and a day in the water. I remember seeing signs at the entrance of some of the lakes saying, "Negroes and Jews not welcome." At ten years old, I thought the sign was strange, but really had no idea yet what racial and ethnic discrimination meant. Like many in America, I started to find out more about it in the ensuing years.

Another, but less important thing I always remember about Memphis, was that when it snowed, the City shut down. One winter day, we had a snow and sleet storm. I think in total there was about 3 inches of snow and sleet. As a Chicago boy, 3 inches of snow was nothing. But in Memphis, where it might snow once every 10 years or so, the city had no equipment to deal with the snow. No snow plows, not salt trucks, no nothing. When snow came so infrequently, the way everyone dealt with the snow and ice was to shut down the City until in warmed up and melted the snow and ice. In this instance, it took about 3 days to do so. During those three days, it was like a city-wide holiday. Just about everything was closed, including the schools. Everyone was outside building snowmen and snow forts and having snowball fights. Everyone just stopped all the hustle and bustle of life and played. It was a fun and memorable experience.

During the year in Memphis, two things stick out in my mind. One was that I really learned how important vigorous exercise was to me both physically and mentally. I had always been physically active. Most of it was in a structured setting which had frequent periods of sports and physical work. But being in a regular college setting, I had more time to set my own schedule of activities.

After being in Memphis for several months, the novelty and excitement of the new setting and lifestyle began to wear off. The depression I had experienced before started to come back into my life. I found vigorous physical exercise (handball, basketball, and tennis) to be an effective counter to reducing episodes of depression. As a sidelight, I also found that exercising before an exam was more beneficial to me than cramming until the last minute before the exam. I had good study habits to begin with. But I found that if my body and mind were relaxed following exercise, I did better on the exams. Ever since that discovery about how exercise helped me do better mentally and emotionally when facing challenges and problems, I always have tried to work that into my schedule before working to address stressful situations e.g., labor negotiations.

The second thing that sticks in my mind from my time in Memphis was that as my depression became more regular, Brother John, who headed up the Scholasticate, suggested that I see a psychiatrist. That was a pretty novel thing for someone in a leadership position in a religious community to propose to a young person trying to find their way through the challenges of becoming a life-time religious person. I was sent to a Psychiatrist in Memphis for several

sessions. It was an interesting experience. I never had talked with anyone where I could express some of my deepest thoughts and feelings. I probably only went to 5 or 6 sessions. But it opened my mind to many new concepts of who and what we are as human beings as well as how the mental, physical, and emotional aspects of our lives are closely intertwined and affect each other.

I have always been a strong-willed person which can also be called stubbornness, pigheadedness, and other less flattering adjectives. I had made a choice when I was 15 years old to be a Christian Brother. I considered that I had a vocation, a calling from God to live my life in a religious community and to be a teacher. That life had some wonderful pluses to it. I really liked living in a community which shared a commitment to making the lives of children, particularly poor children, better as a result of our work. The founder of our religious order, the LaSallian Christian Brothers, had as his goal to "Touch the hearts and minds" of the children we taught and to help lead them to a good life for themselves from both a practical and spiritual standpoint. That was a pretty lofty goal.

To turn away from that calling, that vocation, was not something I thought I should do.

But I was also starting to find out that many aspects of the day to day living as a religious Brother did not mesh well with who I was and who I wanted to be. Of particular concern to me was the introspective elements of being a religious Brother. I was starting to see that the high level of internal focus did not fit me very well. I started to see that maybe there was a different way of living a good life and doing good things which did not have as much emphasis and time commitment to internal self-examination and development.

I started thinking that in order for me to have a happier life, I needed to be more outwardly engaged. I thought that might happen when I actually became a teacher, but that was still three years in future. In the meantime, there was still too much introspection for me. It was too hard to figure out what I really feeling and thinking. I was confused because what I thought I should be feeling did not correspond to the daily life I was leading.

In particular, I thought I should be happier because I was living as close to a perfect life as a member of a religious order: dedicating myself to God and doing everything (studying, praying, doing whatever work assigned to me, being friendly and helpful to my Brothers, etc.) to the best of my ability. I always did everything I set my mind to at a 100% level of effort. It always had good results and good feelings accomplishing things whether in school or sports or work. I found that a 100% commitment and effort in being the best Brother I could be was not having positive results for me. In fact, the harder I tried to be the "perfect" Brother, the more unhappy I became.

Something had to change.

But as my year in Memphis came to an end, all of us Brothers-in-training were being sent from Memphis to another Christian Brothers school, St. Mary's College in Winona, MN. I thought relocating to another environment might help. So, I pushed down my doubts and unhappiness

with the hope that a move to another school, along with an expected higher level of engagement with the outside world would be a good thing for me.

A year at St. Mary's College, Winona, MN



"God's Country!" That's what a lot of Minnesotans called Minnesota. It is also the "Land of 10,000 Lakes."

Though Glencoe, outside of St. Louis, was a lovely setting, the campus of St. Mary's College, sitting on the bluffs overlooking the "Mighty Mississippi" was spectacular. From the bluffs you could see for miles up and down the Mississippi. The sunsets over the river were just wonderful to see. However, after seeing the beautiful sunsets for a while, I began to wonder why the sunsets were so beautiful along that part of the Mississippi. The Mississippi runs from northern Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. That is a north to south flow. But the sun, which rises in the East and sets in the West, was setting right over the length of the Mississippi. After a few weeks, it finally dawned on me that along that stretch of the Mississippi, the river was flowing from the West to the East. Duh!



The Mississippi running from the west to the east below the bluffs of the St. Mary's campus.

Behind the campus which was sitting on the bluffs, hills continued to rise. We would climb those hills and sit on the huge rock out-croppings that were left there by the glaciers which carved out the Mississippi Valley. It was a wonderful place to "catch some rays" while reading, studying, meditating, and praying. Sometimes I would go up the hills by myself and sometimes with friends. It was just a thrill to be in such a beautiful place. I began to understand why people called Minnesota "God's Country."

And though I am a Chicago boy, and was used to cold weather, I found that Minnesota weather was a lot colder than Chicago. Heading off to class with the temperature around 20 degrees below zero was a regular occurrence. One winter morning, the temperature read minus thirty-seven degrees. I remember walking to class and the air was crystallized. Every bit of moisture in the air was frozen, hence the crystal-like look. In some ways, it looked like a very light snowfall, except the crystals were not falling. They just hung there, frozen in the air.

Another thing I learned during a Minnesota winter occurred while playing hockey outdoors. I played hockey at the playgrounds and parks in the Chicago area as a kid. But there was no hockey rink with boards along the edges. But at St. Mary's, hockey was an intercollegiate sport, so there was an outdoor, regulation size hockey rink. Besides being used for intercollegiate competition, the rink was also used for intra-mural games. Playing on a real hockey rink with boards, the centerline, blue lines, and face-off circles was a new and enjoyable experience for me.

The Brothers, me included, fielded an intra-mural team. During one, night game, the temperature was about minus fifteen degrees when we started the game. About midway through the second period, all of us on the ice were falling all over the place. We couldn't stand up on our skates, let alone actually skate to play hockey. We southern boys from places like Chicago

were dumbfounded. But the Minnesota boys knew exactly what was going on. They knew, and we quickly found out, that when the outside temperature hits twenty degrees below zero, the blades on your skates no longer melt the ice a little so that you can get some traction as you skate. Your legs just fly out from under you. Since we could no longer stay up our skates, the game was called. We would have to resume the game at some future time when the temperature was only ten or fifteen degrees below zero.

I also enjoyed taking upper level college classes at St. Mary's. During my freshman year in Glencoe and my sophomore year in Memphis, I was, like all of the students, taking the basic/prerequisite courses in a wide range of subjects. When I reached St. Mary's in Winona, I was able to start taking 300 and 400 level classes in subjects I was most interested in which were English Literature, Philosophy, Theology, History, Writing, and other areas of study broadly listed as the liberal arts. The schoolwork was more demanding, particularly writing more essays and term papers based on the wide range of subjects I was studying. I began to understand better how so much of reality is linked together, but also how different the subject areas were. I began to see the connections between things that I had never seen before. I also saw how broad the spectrum of knowledge is that is out there. I was learning a lot, but also began to appreciate how little I did know about so many things. That appreciation has remained with me all of my life and has always been a spur to me to not only keep learning, but to appreciate the joy of learning.

Two books which I read while at St. Mary's which had a very deep impact on me and have helped guide my life ever since are I and Thou by Martin Buber and The Art of Loving by Erich Fromm. Buber's book talked about how we can view ourselves as having two levels of relationships. One is treating myself and others as objects. He used the terms "Me" and "You" to describe this kind of relationship. That is how we relate to most people with whom we interact. The "I" and "Thou" relationships are described as deeper, more subjective relationships wherein we understand ourselves and build relationships based on who each of us is as human beings of value in and of themselves rather than how we interact with others on a "you and me" basis.

Fromm's book, though it sounds like a manual for making physical love, is really about what kind of practical things you can do to make deeper "I and Thou" relationships part of our lives. And like art in any form, how we can create and maintain beautiful relationships with other people. It takes conscious effort and time to build loving and beautiful relationships. And they won't happen unless we are aware of what we are trying to create and do what is necessary to create them.

What I learned from both books has helped me understand the nature of human relationships and what we can do to make our lives and the lives of others more human, more fulfilling, and happier.

So, in spite of the pluses of the new living and educational environment, I again felt lost and depressed. I thought maybe I was going crazy. I was living as a member of a religious order. I was answering the Vocation/Call to a higher life of service and spirituality. Why was I so unhappy?

As usual, I pushed myself even harder to be the best of what I was called to be.

It didn't work.

One of the things we did in the Brothers was have a monthly chat with the Christian Brother who was in charge of us. I had been having such conversations with whichever Brother was in charge since I was a sophomore in high school. We usually talked about how things were going for us in terms of our religious/spiritual life as well as our academic and social/community life. We talked about what we thought we were progressing in as well as where we were falling short and how we might improve ourselves in the month ahead. Those were good conversations, but they did not address how I felt about things. I don't remember ever being told or discouraged from expressing myself in that way. On the other hand, we were never encouraged to talk about how we felt. I thought it would be a sign of weakness to do so. I would be questioning my vocation, my special call from God.

As I mentioned earlier, when I was in Memphis, our Director, Brother John, gave me some encouragement to discuss with him how I felt about how my life in the Brothers was going. I think he saw that I was struggling. That is why he arranged that I speak with a mental health professional. I don't remember if he was a psychiatrist or psychologist. I don't think I knew the difference in those days. But in any case, it was the first time I could just say what I felt and thought without being judged as someone who might be rejecting his vocation, his Call from God, to live a more perfect life. I had probably four or five visits with the mental health professional while in Memphis. It was somewhat of a relief to be able to do so. And it took some of the stress off of me. As long as I was talking with someone about my doubts and fears, I did not have to make a decision to reject God's special call to me.

Fortunately, Brother John, the same Director I had in Memphis, was also assigned to move north with us to St. Mary's College in Winona. After the first few months of excitement moving into a new community, a new school, and a larger community of Brothers, I was again feeling very badly. I told Br. John. We talked about it. He then arranged for me to see a psychiatrist in Rochester, MN, the home of the Mayo Clinic. It was about a 40 mile drive from Winona to Rochester. I think I went over and met with him about a dozen times over a several month period of time starting around December and continuing into the Spring time of 1963.

These sessions convinced me that I was trying to live a day to day life which did not fit me. I wanted to do what I thought I was called to do. But as the years had gone by, I began to realize that a day to day religious life as lived by a Christian Brother, with lots of introspection and self-examination, was not the right kind of life for me. I needed to find a different type of day to day lifestyle which fit my personal temperament and mix of thought, prayer, and activity which would help me be a happier person.

At the same time as I was wrestling with personal issues and knowing I would have to make a decision to step away from my vocation, I also struggled with determining just what kind of life I should choose. That was hard to do also. There were many, many things I liked about living in a

community of Brothers. Since my sophomore year in high school, I was always living with 60 to 120 Brothers. We all shared the same calling. We all wanted to contribute positive things to the world. In the case of the Christian Brothers, that was providing a Catholic education to children, particularly poor children. To me and to all of us, that was a very positive thing to aspire to.

On a day to day basis, we studied together, played sports, prayed together, and ate together. Since we were all going to be teachers ourselves when we finished college, we always had the best teachers assigned to us, particularly when I was in high school and my first year of college in Glencoe. I was so fortunate to have so many teachers who were not only good teachers and knew the art of teaching, they all loved the subject matter that they taught to us. That love of their subject matter inspired me and my Brothers to always want to learn more. We all wanted to be like these wonderful teachers.

Being from a large family of six girls and four boys, living in a larger community was just an extension of my life at home. When I grew up in our home in Chicago, besides interacting with each other as a family, we all had friends who would come to our home. All of us got to know our sisters' and brothers' friends. We learned how different people can be. But the difference was not looked at as something bad. We learned to appreciate the differences between us and our siblings as well as the differences which we found in our friends. Having that same kind of experience in the Brothers fit me very well. We were all aiming for the same good things, but we all brought our own particular understanding of what that was and how we could try and get there.

So, the second question I was wrestling with was, "Once I left the Christian Brothers, where I had spent six formative years from the time I was 15 till the time I was 21, what kind of life should I be aiming for when I do leave the Brothers?"

I knew for sure that I would complete my college education. That was something that our family, not only our parents, but our aunts and uncles and grandparents, thought was important. Plus, having had such a wonderful educational experience for six years while I was in the Brothers, I just wanted to continue to learn anything and everything I could learn.

I also thought that when I left the Brothers, I wanted a family. My family was so important to me. I enjoyed all of them immensely. And when I say all of them, I include not only my mother and father and my sisters and brothers, I also include my grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. That was a large group. My mom was one of nine kids and my dad one of five. So, family was everywhere. And we enjoyed being together and celebrating whatever could be celebrated from new babies being born, christenings, birthdays, First Communions, graduations, and even funerals. (I'll talk more about fun funerals later on).

I didn't know exactly what I would do as a career. Since I had been training to be a teacher for six years, that seemed like a strong possibility. But other things looked possible too.

After wrestling with the decision to stay in or leave the Brothers for three years, I finally came to the conclusion that I needed to take my life in another direction. I told Br. John about it. He was

very encouraging to me. I am sure he was disappointed as well, because I think he thought I could be a great contributor to the Christian Brothers, not only as a teacher, but also in a broader, leadership and management role.

I am forever grateful to Br. John for helping me come to this decision. We remained friends for as long as he lived. He was a great man. He moved on from his role of helping form Brothers for their futures into higher leadership positions within the world-wide Christian Brothers order. He eventually became the Superior General of the Christian Brothers and relocated to Rome where he led the world-wide Christian Brothers for about 14 years. He helped the Brothers redefine and broaden their Mission, particularly in light of the significant drop in men entering any religious order. He increased the role of lay women and men in the Mission of the Christian Brothers. I was lucky to have spent two years with him. One year in Memphis and one year in Winona. When he died in 2007, the Christian Brothers, who have a monthly magazine, devoted one entire issue to his life and his impact on the Brothers. His picture is on the cover of that issue of the magazine. I still keep that magazine on a shelf in my office to remind me of such a good man who did so many good things for so many people, including me. I strive to do the same in my way.

After I made the decision to leave the Brothers at the end of the 1963 Spring semester, I had to first tell my family that I was leaving. That was a daunting challenge. My Mom and Dad usually came to visit once or twice a year wherever I was as part of the Brothers. Often, when they came, they would bring some of my brothers and sisters along. My Mom and Dad had planned on coming up in the Spring of 1963, so I waited until then to tell them in person of my decision. They were a little surprised, but they did not try to change my mind or tell me I was disappointing them or the rest of the family.

I told them I would be coming back to Chicago. I told them also that I wanted to not live in the same second floor plus attic apartment in which I grew up. It was hard. But I told them that I would not be comfortable living everyday with my Dad in particular. One of the reasons I left home to join the Brothers when I was 15 was that I wanted to get away from my Dad. I didn't think of it that way when I left for the Brothers, but upon reflection, that was certainly one reason I left home and headed down to Glencoe.

I figured my Mom would understand and support my desires, but I was pleasantly surprised that my Dad agreed. But instead of having to get my own place to live, which was pretty much impossible since I had absolutely no money to my name, my parents said that Busia, who lived in the basement apartment, would be moving up to Aunt Sophie's flat on the first floor. Busia was getting more limited in her movements and going up and down the stairs several times a day was getting very hard for her. They said that my sister Rosemary and me could live in the basement flat. That sounded doable to me. So, when I left Winona and headed back to Chicago, I had a place to stay.

One of the things I was not aware of at the time I left the Brothers was that the idea of a vocation to the religious life was starting to become less and less relevant to many young people. The number of aspirants to the Christian Brothers and other female and male religious orders was

starting on a downward slope. By the mid-1970's boys in the Juniorate and young men as Novices and Scholastics diminished greatly. By the 1990's, when I stopped in Glencoe on a business trip to the St. Louis area, there were about 5 young men in training to become Christian Brothers.

I think part of the reason for the drop-off was that the idea of a vocation began to have a broader application to many people's life choices. When I started in the Brothers in the mid-1950's, the word vocation was almost always only used to describe a call to the religious life. But partly because of the Second Vatican Council, which was in progress in the early to mid-1960's, the idea that living a life based on religious and spiritual dedication was something everyone could do in all aspects of their lives, including their families and the work they did to make a living. People did not have to choose to become part of a religious in order to live such a dedicated life. Up to the mid-1960's, being a religious was considered a "higher calling" compared to the life of the laity. But that too started to change during this time period.

Another part of the reason for a drop-off in vocations to religious life was the change in the overall western culture which valued freedom of choice to develop and express your individuality. The idea of living a life which in some ways was limiting your choices by taking vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience did not appeal to many people.

Finally, I think the overall importance of leading a life dedicated to God was not inspiring to as many people as it was before. Many churches were seeing their populations decrease. The description "Nones" came into more frequent usage. "Nones" were people who were spiritual, but not attached to any particular religious denomination or organization.

Chapter Eight

Life in the "Real World"

Living as a Brother in a community was a very different kind of life than the life that most people live. We used to joke in the Brothers that our lives in a religious community and in which we took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience was nothing like the outside world. I was excited to try life in the "Real World."

The first thing that needed to be done was to get the basics of a living space livable. Rosemary and I fixed up the basement apartment. We painted walls, got some new furniture (Danish Modern was brand new at the time), and I built a combination desk and set of shelves which included space for a stereo system which was a pretty new thing in 1963. We also had Busia's old black and white TV. So, we could watch what we wanted, when we wanted. Our sisters and brothers came down to watch our TV a lot, especially when Lawrence Welk and similar programs were our Mom and Dad's choices.

Rosemary slept in what was Busia's bedroom. I put up a bed in a corner of the kitchen and slept there. And unlike upstairs on the second floor and the attic where seven of my younger siblings still lived, we had one bathroom to share between the two of us. My Mom and Dad and seven siblings had two baths between them. Sometimes one of our sisters or brothers would come down to our basement flat because they couldn't get into one of the upstairs bathrooms when they really had to do so. As always, the basement, the first-floor apartment, second floor apartment, and finished attic where just one big home for all of us. We all used what was available when it was available.

When I came back to Chicago, Rosemary was teaching English in a public high school. She had graduated in June of 1962. She was the first of us to get a college degree. Getting a degree was important to our parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. All of us in our immediate family eventually graduated from college except Tony. Tony started college, but he did not care for it. He preferred working. One of his jobs over the years was being a salesman. He was a good one. And like our Dad, he was a craftsman and loved building things. As Tony got older, he started his own woodworking company, building one-of-a-kind furniture and doing interior remodeling. In the ensuing years, all of us got undergraduate degrees. Me, my brother Matthew, and most of my sisters went on for Master's Degrees, and my brother Frank received a law degree.

When Rosemary got her first job out of college, she went out and bought a red, Tempest convertible. As always, Rosemary was cool. She was also very kind to her younger brothers who were old enough to have driver's licenses. She would occasionally let us drive the convertible. That was really fun. She was so good to all of us. And, she set a good example for us.

When I came home to Chicago, I did have a job lined up for the summer. The Cook County Department of Public Aid was looking for interns to help the full-time social workers in the

summer. They had actually come up to Winona in the Spring and offered people in school at St. Mary's, St. Theresa's (a Catholic women's college), and Winona State University the chance to take a test to be considered for the summer intern positions. Since I knew I would be heading back to Chicago that summer, I took the test. I was notified a few weeks later that I had passed. They offered me a job. I wrote back to them and took it.

I was assigned to help the social workers in the Cabrini-Green Housing Project on the near northside of Chicago. Since I did not own a car, I was glad that I was able to get there on the bus. Working in Cabrini Green was a mind-boggling experience for me. Cabrini-Green was one of the toughest neighborhoods in the City of Chicago. People living there were very poor. Crime was rampant. The buildings were all 12 to 15 stories high. There were probably 10 apartments or more on each floor. One term which many people used in referring to Cabrini-Green and other high-rise public housing projects was that they were "human filing cabinets." Basically, they were a place to get people filed away and forgotten about. Cabrini-Green was a rough place when I worked there that summer. Eventually, it became one of the worst examples of what public housing had become.



One of the Cabrini-Greene apartment buildings in Chicago.

As a small sidelight to having this job, I started smoking. I had never smoked a cigarette before in my life. But during the initial, week-long training to do my job, just about every one of my classmates smoked during all of the training. It looked like they were finding the smoking relaxing and gave them something to distract themselves while listening to speaker after speaker tell us how to do our jobs. Plus, in those days, smoking was considered a cool thing to do. And there was not yet any hard evidence that smoking was bad for your health. Almost all of my friends smoked. I started smoking. I was never a big smoker, usually half a pack a day. It did not seem to bother me physically, except during hay fever season when my allergies would start

acting up, and then I would cut down to only a few cigarettes a day, usually after lunch and dinner. I continued to play as much sports as I could.

There was so much evident need among the people that lived in Cabini-Greene. It was hard to know where to begin. The Public Aid Department provided some money for basic life needs. But beyond that, there was not too much I could do to help people change their lives for the better.

What struck me above all else from the summer job experience was how difficult it was to raise a child in poverty, amid violence and drugs, and most importantly, without hope for a better future. Since that experience, I have often read articles about people who were brought up in such terrible circumstances. In almost every article, there is a reference to one person who really loved that child. It might have been a mom or a dad or an aunt or grandparent, or coach or teacher. It did not make a difference to the child who it was. What made a difference is that somebody really loved them. That person helped the child grow up with love and with hope. It is a lesson I have never forgotten. None of us can save the world, but all of us can love another person or persons.

One final thing I always remember about that summer job is that I saw my first computer in action. As part of the summer intern program, we received some training on a number of administrative and management practices and tools which were starting to impact organizations, private and public. Computers were just starting to be used in business and government. The first one I saw was owned and run by Commonwealth Edison, the local electric utility for the Chicago Metropolitan area. The computer's primary job was to prepare electric utility bills to be mailed to the million plus customers in the Chicago area.



An early computer which shows the size of a computer when they started becoming common in the business world.

When we walked into the computer room, the first thing I noticed was that it was huge. The room which housed the computer was about the size of two normal classrooms. The computer filled every inch of space. The computer sat on a raised floor so that air could circulate around it and keep the machine cool as it processed the utility bills. Also, we were told, that ozone was pumped into the room to help the computer function properly. All of the data which was processed by the computer came from punch cards (roughly 3" x 6" paper cards with holes punched in them). It was impressive. It was also just a small start to the use of computers by businesses and government. I had no idea how this new technology would affect how organizations would be run in the future. The idea that each of us would one day have our own computers in our pocket was unimaginable at the time.

Teaching 6th Grade – 1963-64

While I was working at Cabrini-Green, I knew I had to get a job for the next year. I still had a year of college to complete, but no money to pay tuition. Since I had been preparing to be a teacher and was the beneficiary of so many great teachers, I thought I would teach for a year. I am not sure where or from whom I had heard it, but I became aware that someone could teach in Catholic elementary schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago if they had completed three years of college. Well, that was me. I went down to the Catholic School Board offices and applied for a teaching position. I passed muster and was offered a chance to interview for a position to teach 6th grade at Nativity of Our Lord school on the southside of Chicago. After the interview, I was offered a job to teach 6th grade beginning in September of 1963. I took it and began getting prepared to start teaching.



Nativity of Our Lord Parish School – The Latin words mean: Knowledge is Power

In those days, a teacher taught all subjects to the class assigned to them. That included English, Math, Science, Reading, Spelling, Religion, and Art. I was going to have about 40 students in the classroom, which was typical for those days.

One of the things I learned when I started teaching was that Nativity of Our Lord parish was Mayor Richard J. Daley's parish. Mayor Daley lived about two blocks north of the school in a modest Chicago bungalow. His children went to that school. I did not have one of his children in my class, but there were one or two of them in other grades in the school. I wasn't aware of it right away, but soon found out that Mayor Daley came to Mass almost every week day morning.

He would get picked up at his home in a black sedan. He was driven to church and usually entered with a police escort. After Mass, he would get back in the black limousine and head downtown to City Hall.

To get from the northside to the southside to teach, I pretty much needed a car to do so. I could not afford one. But my brother Tony had an old beater that he let me take back and forth to school. It was actually a fun car. Tony was working at a speed/hot rod shop in our neighborhood. The car he let me use had racing stripes on it and a lot of stickers for auto racing related products: STP, Pennzoil, Champion Sparkplugs, etc. The kids I taught thought it was pretty neat.

Teaching was a lot of work. It was tiring. You were on your feet for most of the school day which ran from about 8:30 AM until 3 PM. And with 40 kids in the class, you had to keep everyone busy and engaged. In addition to the classroom work, I had to prepare lesson plans for the next day. Sometimes I had to prepare examinations for the next day. And some days I had to grade the exams as well as written assignments. I did all of the prep and follow-up work at home. That way I could head north on the Dan Ryan expressway around 3:15 before the rush hour heated up. If traffic was moving, it was usually about a 35-minute drive. Not too bad for an expressway in Chicago. It was a little bit slower in the morning. I usually allowed an hour to go from home to school.

One of the nice things about teaching was that my sister Rosemary was also teaching. She had the same type of school-related work that I did including preparing and grading tests and making up and keeping current on lesson plans for the next day's and weeks' classes. So, after supper with the family at 5:15 PM upstairs on the second floor, we both headed down to the basement and prepared for an hour or two for the next day's classes. We would usually finish up preparing around 7:30 to 8:00 PM. We would then watch a little TV and hit the hay.

The year went quickly, and, I think, well. It was great to see the kids in the class actually learn things. I can still picture the face of one boy who was struggling to understand something I was presenting to the class. His brow was furrowed, and his face and eyes showed great concentration. I knew he was really trying to learn. Finally, his face lit up and his whole body relaxed because he finally understood what he was trying to learn. It was like the proverbial light bulb going off in a comic strip when some cartoon character understood something. I can still picture his look of joy when he understood what he was trying to learn. That look of joy in learning is something I have always tried to remember as I continue to learn new things every day. I think too often we consider studying and learning to be a chore. Sometimes it is. But learning can truly be a joyful thing.

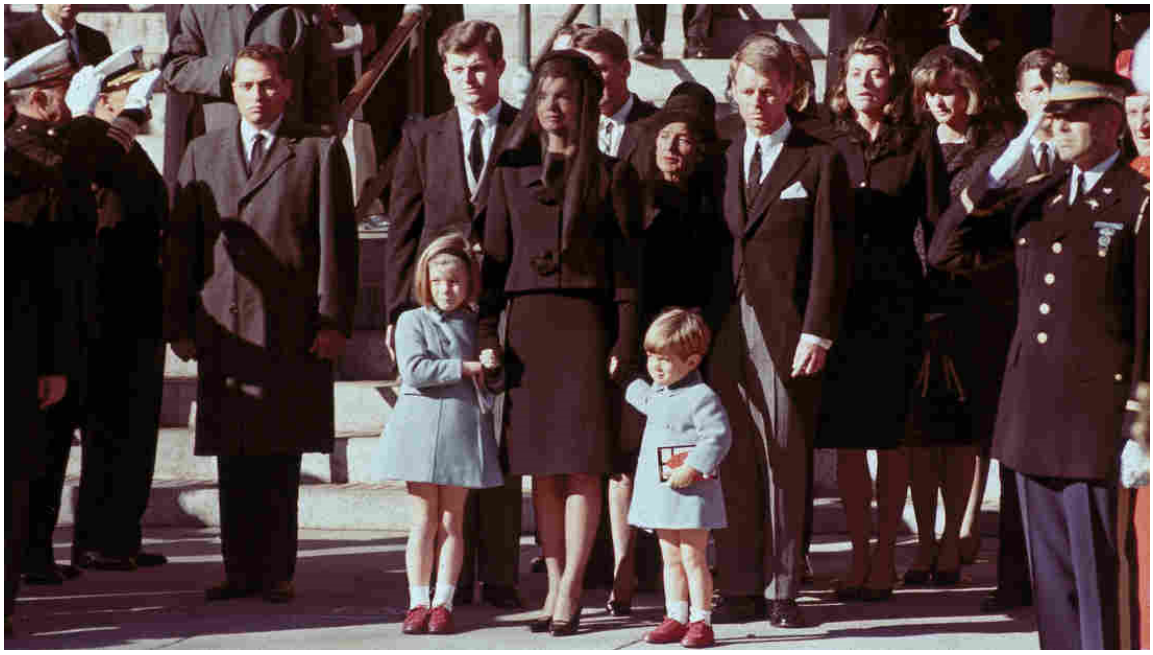
That experience of joy in one student's face and entire body has stayed with me through the years. I also always remember the joy that very young children experience when they are learning about everything in the world which is brand new to them. Being the second oldest of 10 children, I was told many times to take my younger sisters and brothers out for a walk or to a park. I always enjoyed watching them just lock in their attention to what was around them. One example was while walking down the street with one or more of them. All of a sudden, we

would come upon a trail of ants crossing the sidewalk. The kids just stopped and watched. They followed the line of ants to where they were going which was usually an ant hill or a hole in the ground. The trail of ants was often carrying bread crumbs or some type of food to the ant hill or hole in the ground. It made me realize how much children are full of curiosity. Everything they see is new to them. They are constantly open to new learning experiences. As adults, I think we often lose that sense of curiosity and joy of discovery and learning. I try to remember to be open to new learning experiences as often as I can. It is good to learn. And it can be fun to learn.

One very significant thing occurred in November 1963. Most of the students lived in the neighborhood and went home for lunch. I and the other teachers ate lunch together in a lunch room. That day, as was usually the case, we talked about how our classes were going for the day and what school related events were coming up in the next days or weeks.

As we went outside to gather our students to come into school for the afternoon session, many of them looked confused and upset. Apparently, when they went home for lunch, news was spreading the President John Kennedy had been shot, and he was in intensive care in a Dallas hospital. We brought the kids into their classrooms and started teaching the afternoon courses. Sometime during the early afternoon, word was received that President Kennedy had been assassinated. Being a Catholic school, the Sister who was the Principal of the school got on the intercom, told us the news, and led us in prayers for President Kennedy, his family, and for our country. School was then dismissed a little bit early. I got in my car and drove home. The entire City of Chicago was starting to shut down. People were heading home to be with their families. All of us were glued to our televisions getting the latest news of the tragedy.

The sense of shock continued through the weekend and into the State Funeral on Monday. Most businesses closed through Monday. The only “normal” activity that took place was the National Football League playing its full schedule of football games on the intervening Sunday. The NFL took some flack on that, but nobody got too upset. On Monday, many, many people watched the funeral on TV.



Jackie, Caroline, and John Kennedy, Jr. with Teddy Kennedy and Bobby Kennedy.

It was the first widely shared moment in history that I experienced. It was interesting to see how united people were in their sense of shared grief. I had heard from many of my extensive family that the shared loss and grief caused first by the Great Depression in the 1930's and then by World War II brought people closer together. People had their differences, but many had suffered losses and they all experienced help and compassion from others. I was born after the Great Depression and during WWII. I did not experience those national challenges and efforts to deal with them. But my extensive family frequently discussed those topics around kitchen tables and at family gatherings. The assassination of President Kennedy had a similar impact on many people. As a result of the assassination, Vice President Johnson became President Johnson. One of his first speeches was that we all had to pull together to get through this difficult time. And he called on all of us to give our best to our country and to those who most needed help. It was a call which I internalized, and it made me to start to think about what role I could play in that effort.

During the year of teaching, I started looking into what college or university I should apply to in order to complete my bachelor's degree. Since I already had a number of courses in Theology and Philosophy, I thought I would be able to transfer more, if not all, of my credits if I went to a Catholic college or university. Loyola and DePaul were the two largest Catholic universities in the Chicago area. I talked with Admissions staff at both schools. I decided I would apply at Loyola. I was accepted, and all of my credits were transferred to Loyola. I would enter Loyola in the Fall semester.

<u>Being a Chlorine Operator</u>

As my teaching year was drawing to close, I needed to get a job for the summer, so I would have enough money to pay my tuition. In our family, if you went to college, you could live at home

for free. But you had to earn your own tuition. I had saved up some money from teaching, but I knew I would need more.

Also, in my family, if you were going to college, Uncle Matt would get you a job with the City for the summer. Uncle Matt by then was becoming more powerful within the Cook County Democratic Party. Because of that, he was able to get us summer jobs filling in for full-time employees, most of whom would be taking their vacations during the summer months.

As school years came to an end, Busia, my grandmother from my Dad's side, would tell Uncle Matt, my Dad's oldest brother, who among her grandchildren needed a job for the summer. Uncle Matt would then line up summer jobs for us.

Uncle Matt got me a summer job at the Mayfair Pumping Station. This pumping station treated water which came in from Lake Michigan and then distributed the water to probably a million people in the north and northwest sides of Chicago. I was given the job of being a Chlorine Operator. A Chlorine Operator's job was to regulate the amount of chlorine gas which would be added to the water after it came into the pumping station and before it was distributed to the customers. It was a 24/7 job in the sense that someone always had to be monitoring the water pumpage amounts and adjust the amount of chlorine gas that was added to the water. There were three eight-hour shifts at the pumping station. I worked on all of them depending on which shifts the full-time workers were taking their vacations.



Mayfair Pumping Station on the Northwest side of Chicago

It was interesting and responsible work. When the health of about 1,000,000 people is at stake if you did not do your job correctly, you paid attention to what you had to do. Also, working as a Chlorine Operator could be dangerous because of the chlorine gas you were handling. All of the full-time workers had horror stories of previous Chlorine Operators who did not follow proper procedure and suffered significant lung injuries, and even death, by inhaling chlorine gas. The chlorine gas came in metal containers which needed to be replaced regularly as the chlorine tanks

became empty. The Chlorine Room had about 10 rows of tanks with each row of tanks having 10. These tanks fed chlorine into the water. Whenever one of the tanks registered as empty, you put on a gas mask and went into the Chlorine Room. You shut off the chlorine tank, detached it from the chlorine feed system, rolled the old tank out on a dolly. You then rolled in the new tank, hooked up to the chlorine feed system, tested it to make sure it was correctly connected, and then waited till more tanks had to be replaced.

The amount of chlorine which needed to be added depended on the amount of water that was being pumped out to customers. Night times were dull because from about 11:00 PM until about 5:30 AM, the pumpage was usually low and steady. Most people were sleeping. So, no adjustments were needed to match up the necessary chlorine gas to how much water was being pumped. But starting around 5:30 AM, the water demand increased significantly. By 6:30 AM the demand for water was peaking and would remain at a high level until the late evening time.

I made very good money for a summer job as a Chlorine Operator, thanks to Busia and Uncle Matt. I was able to pay my tuition and buy my books to start at Loyola in September.

Chapter Nine

Back to School – 1964-65 School Year

This was really exciting. After attending the first three years of college as a Christian Brother, living in a community of Brothers, and going to school in Glencoe, MO, Memphis, TN, and Winona, MN, going to a regular university in a city like Chicago was quite an experience.

Loyola U. had two campuses. The Lewis Towers campus was just north of downtown Chicago. It was right off of Michigan Avenue, the Magnificent Mile. It was across the street from the Chicago Water Tower, one of the few buildings which survived the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. And it was just a couple of blocks from Rush Street, which was the very popular nightspot location in the City.



Lewis Towers campus of Loyola University in Chicago

The other campus was called the Lakeshore campus which was on the far, northeast part of Chicago. I decided to go to the Lewis Towers campus because I could catch an "el" not too far from my home and get off at a subway stop a couple of blocks from the campus.
It was good to get back to attending classes. I was majoring in English Literature. I needed many courses in that area of study, so I could get my degree within a year and a half. Most of my credits from Glencoe, Memphis, and Winona were accepted at Loyola, but I was not going to have enough credits to graduate in the Spring of 1965. I took a full course load of 21 hours both semesters, but still had 2 courses I had to take in the Fall of 1965. My grades were mostly "A's" With maybe one or at most 2 "B's."

Whereas the 1950's were a continuation of the post-war 1940's in which I grew up, the 1960's experienced many changes, socially, culturally, economically, and religiously.

Outside of my English Lit classes, the one class I remember most was an Introduction to Economics course. It was very interesting. I had never studied economics before. What I recall most about the class was reading a book by Milton Freidman, an economics professor at the University of Chicago. I don't remember the exact title of the book. But it was basically a libertarian, free market approach to economics and how it interacted with politics. I thought it

had some very interesting ideas. But as I read through the book, it became clear to me that Freidman's basic belief was that the main reason people make decisions in their lives is to maximize their economic benefit. Everything in his theories was based on this belief.

I thought to myself, "Milton, you have some good and interesting ideas, but maximizing economic benefit is not the only criteria by which people make decisions, and it is not the most important criteria by which people make decisions." But I was just a youngster taking his first economics course. Freidman went on to start the Chicago School of Economics at the University of Chicago. The Chicago School became the basis of the return to unfettered capitalism which took root in the Reagan administration in the 1980's and has lived on since then as the over-riding economic theory and practice in our country and most of the developed world. It caused a monumental change in the concentration and disparities in wealth in our country. As the concentration in wealth in our country and around the world continues to grow, I often think back to reading that book by Milton Freidman. His theories sounded good, but after 40 plus years of being the predominant economic model in our country and around the world, fewer and fewer people have more and more of the wealth. His theory has not worked except for the super wealthy who continue to accumulate greater wealth and more and more working people are struggling to keep their heads above water.

From a religious standpoint the Catholic Church convened what is called the Second Vatican Council which first met in October of 1962 and concluded in 1965. Pope John XXIII was a relatively new Pope who thought the Catholic Church needed some fresh air, "aggiornamento" in Italian, to look at the Catholic Church in light of the many changes in the world as a whole.

One of the first things that the Second Vatican Council did was to allow the use of people's own language instead of Latin during Catholic Masses and other religious/liturgical ceremonies. This change took place in 1963 while I was still in the Brothers. There were many changes which came about in the Catholic Church as a result of the Council. In addition to the change in language, lay people (i.e., non-ordained or non-clerical people) were given larger roles to play in the worship practices of the Church. Lay people could read the scriptures in their own languages and they could distribute Holy Communion to the people. At first this role was extended to men, but in a relatively short time for the Catholic Church, it was also expanded to include women. It took about another 15 years before girls could serve at Mass as Altar Girls just as I had served as an Altar Boy growing up.

In addition to the change in some of the practices of the Church, there were some very substantial changes in the theology of the Church. Three that I remember specifically were the following:

First, the Catholic Church, which was a top down, hierarchical organization, was redefined as 'The People of God." The hierarchy (Popes, Cardinals, Bishops, and Priests) were still important members of the Church. But the Church included all of us who chose to be members. Most people, including myself, weren't too sure how this would impact the Church on a practical, day-to-day basis. But the conceptual and language change defining the Church began to

empower people to become more pro-active in their roles within the Church and how the Church related to their everyday lives.

The second thing I remember being very different than how the Church had been operating for centuries was the announcement of "Primacy of Conscience" when people had to make difficult moral choices. The Church retained the right to make moral statements and set moral guidelines, but if someone disagreed with what the Church taught and enforced, that person could make a decision to act or not act in a certain way based on what they considered to be moral or right action. The idea of primacy of conscience was based on the premise that our individual conscience was well-formed. This meant that we needed to seriously think through our knowledge and experience of what is right and wrong and not just make a judgment of conscience without that serious reflection.

This idea of primacy of conscience became very important a few years later regarding the matter of birth control. The Catholic Church opposed any type of birth control except using the rhythm method which basically called for Catholics to not have intercourse during a woman's fertile period. For many Catholics for many reasons, that was not a workable solution. During the Second Vatican Council and for several years afterward, the Catholic Church studied the issue extensively. A study committee of priests, theologians, and many lay people, including women, concluded their study and recommended that the Church change its teaching on birth control and allow couples to decide how they wanted to proceed on the matter.

Unfortunately, in my opinion, when the matter came up for final approval, Pope Paul VI in 1968 rejected the recommendation of the study committee and upheld the Church's teaching prohibiting using anything except the rhythm method as a means of birth control. Many priests at the parish level counselled their married parishioners to search their own conscience regarding how the teaching of the Church on birth control applied to their own lives. Many Catholics did search their conscience and decided to use birth control as they saw fit for them and their families. But for many Catholics, it just confirmed for them that the Church was out of touch with the realities of their lives. People wondered that if the Church was so wrong about birth control, what else were they wrong about? Many people ignored the teaching. The Church lost its credibility as a moral teacher. Women, in particular, started leaving the Church.

When the decision to continue to forbid birth control was made by the Catholic Church, it was not an issue for Gaye and me personally. We wanted to have children. But after our second child was born, we decided that it would be best for us and our family that birth control be how we lived our lives in the future.

The third thing I remember as being a big change was how the Bible was open to new interpretations. The stories in the Bible were now being looked at as stories which illustrated points about who and what God is and who and what we are as human beings. The Bible stories of Adam and Eve, Noah and the Ark, and many others were starting to be seen as teaching examples rather than actual, historical happenings.

There were many other important changes brought about by the Second Vatican Council. But those three were ideas which affected how I continued to think about and live my life as a person of faith, albeit, a changing faith for the rest of my life.

Another big change that happened in the early 1960's was the rise to prominence of the civil rights movement. Many people and organizations had been working for years to achieve fair voting and civil rights for Negroes which was the most commonly used term of those days. Then, in the early 1960's, the movement grew and coalesced around the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Protests and demonstrations supporting civil and voting rights drew large and diverse marchers across the country. These demonstrations also galvanized many individuals and groups to oppose this movement. The most notable confrontations were in the south, but there was also opposition to the civil rights movement in the rest of the country.

Though many actions took place throughout the early 1960's regarding the Civil Rights movement, in my awareness of what was going on, 1963 was a key year in bringing about change in people's attitudes towards making changes in US laws regarding voting rights and civil rights for minorities.

In May, President John Kennedy and his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy forced the University of Alabama to allow minorities to enroll. The Governor of Alabama, George Wallace stood in the doorway at the University to prevent them from enrolling.



The federal government and the National Guard of Alabama saw to it that Gov. Wallace stepped aside and let the African-American students enroll at the University. The next day, President Kennedy went on national TV and spoke to the nation. He emphasized that all Americans

deserved the right to enjoy the full freedoms of our country. He also emphasized that this was a moral issue more than it was a political issue. And, as always, he called on all Americans to bring their best selves to the fore in addressing the civil rights issues which we still needed to confront almost 100 years from the day that President Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves.

And though the majority of Americans tried hard to bring about a more just and democratic society, some people acted with escalating violence. In June, Medgar Evers of the NAACP was assassinated in Missisippi. A church in Alabama was blown up by those opposing the civil rights movement. Four black girls, ages 11 to 14, died in the bombing. Another 14 people were injured, most of them children. Most people in the country were outraged by the bombing. More and more people saw the need to change the laws to protect all Americans from discrimination and violence.

One of the lessons I learned from the civil rights movement was that though many important positive changes start from the bottom up, sometimes, it takes power at the top to bring that grassroots effort to fruition. One of the most frequent arguments against the federal government creating and enforcing laws regarding civil rights was that those laws and their enforcement should be left to each individual state to determine. But in this case, eventually, the majority of people in the country supported the role of the federal government in creating laws which were the same for every American in every state in the country. That was not a total departure from the federal government's role in the past, but a more active federal government in setting nationwide laws, policies, and practices was looked on as appropriate on certain matters.

President John Kennedy and US Attorney General Robert Kennedy started to take a more prominent role in working for laws at the national level regarding civil rights. Unfortunately, President Kennedy was assassinated in November of 1963. When Lyndon Johnson became President, one of his highest priorities was to pass national legislation regarding voting rights and civil rights. The Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964 and a Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965. These laws gave all Americans the right to be served in facilities which are open to the public—hotels, restaurants, theaters, retail stores, and similar establishments, as well as in housing. The laws also provided greater protection for the right to vote which had been severely limited, particularly in southern states. Eventually, laws which prohibited blacks and whites getting married were also struck down as the federal laws prohibiting discrimination based on race were litigated.

Now that the laws had been passed, it became important to implement the laws. Since I was in the Brothers for the early part of the civil rights movement, my role in bringing about legislation was minimal except for voting for people who were in favor of the federal government taking a role in bringing about equal protection of the law for all Americans.

One of the few times I had the opportunity to actively participate in a civil rights demonstration was in the Spring of 1965. One of the laws passed in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited housing discrimination. As the housing discrimination protests were gathering steam all around the country, they included Chicago and the Lewis Towers campus of Loyola U which I was attending at the time. The University had policies regarding housing and the use of a swimming

pool at the downtown campus which prohibited blacks from living in some university housing and using the pool. I joined several demonstrations to change those policies. Those demonstrations were effective, and the University changed its policies relatively quickly.

On a larger scale, Martin Luther King came to Chicago several times in 1964-66 to lead open housing demonstrations.



Sidney Poitier, Harry Belafonte, Martin Luther King Jr., Mahalia Jackson, Al Raby.

The housing demonstrations, which took place in several ethnic neighborhoods in the City, were a much more volatile situation. Demonstrations were peaceful overall, but the people in the neighborhoods were very upset and angry about the demonstrations. They felt that their most significant asset, their homes, which they had worked long and hard to obtain, were going to be significantly devalued by the open housing movement. Our neighborhood did not border on any of the minority neighborhoods, so the level of fear and anger was not an everyday reality. But people did have a concern that what they had worked so hard to obtain and maintain could be lost sooner or later.

Since my Dad worked not too far from the downtown Loyola campus, I would sometimes drive down with him. He would drop me off near Loyola and then go to work. My Dad never really said anything about the civil rights and equal housing issues. He certainly did not say derogatory and racist things that others did about Dr. King and the issues which Dr. King was demonstrating about.

As we drove down the Kennedy Expressway to his work and my school one morning, I asked him what he thought about what was going on with civil rights, open housing, and minority issues. He hardly took a second and said: "God made us all. God loves us all. Who am I to do anything different." Wow! I was surprised and impressed by his answer. I was surprised because my Dad was not one who made comments about anything he believed in. He believed in God and the Catholic Church. But he never talked about what he thought and how he felt

about many topics of the day. And I was impressed, because I don't think I have ever heard a more succinct summary of the issue and why and how we should respond. I have never forgotten his words. They are embedded in me and have guided my thoughts and actions in the area of racial matters ever since.

Thank you, Dad.

Finally, and by no means the least important thing that happened in the 1964-65 school year at Loyola, was that I met a beautiful, lovely, intelligent, and funny young woman named Alice Gaye Bowers. We met in an English Literature class. She was hanging out with a group of girlfriends near the front door of the classroom. I was hanging out with a group of guy friends near the backdoor. When I first saw her, I thought what a great looking woman. But I figured someone that good looking already had a steady beau. At the same time, she apparently took some notice of me, mainly because I was laughing very loudly which I had a tendency to do.

After several weeks of class, we finally spoke to each other. She came charging into class just as it was beginning. One of the few unoccupied seats in the classroom was next to me. So, she sat there. She said later that there were a few other seats open, but she thought she would sit next to "Laughing boy" (She told me later that is how she thought of me at the time) and see if I was as funny close up as I seemed to be from some distance.

When she sat next to me, I just smiled. I was not a whiz when it came to meeting and dating young women. Spending 6 years in a seminary setting certainly limited my experience compared to other 22-year-old guys. There was a break during the class, and I mustered up the courage to say something to this lovely person. Apparently, I did not make a fool of myself. And for the next several weeks, we managed to find empty seats next to each other when we came into class. We started coming to class a few minutes early so that we could talk with each other. I don't recall what we talked about. Probably things about the class itself and class assignments. But we did exchange some personal information about where we lived and what else we were involved with in school. I learned that her full name was Alice Gaye, but that she went by the name of Gaye because her Mom's name was also Alice.

Finally, after about a month of chatting in class, I decided I would take a chance and ask her out on a date. I asked to talk to her in the hall after we completed that day's class. I asked if she would go out with me on a date. Her first question was "How do you pronounce your last name?" I told her the name is Bieszczat and spelled it for her. She gave me this incredulous look and said something like "Really?" I said really. But she smiled. So, I asked her if she would go out with me the coming weekend. She said no because she already had dates for the coming Friday and Saturday evenings for the next few weeks. So, I asked if we could go out on Sunday evening. She said she would go out with me on Sunday in a couple of weeks. So, I asked if I could take her to dinner, and she said yes.

Since I was from a family of ten kids, we hardly ever went out to dinner. Some of us might go to Manzo's Pizza Parlor in the neighborhood after work or on a weekend evening. But I had no idea of what a nice restaurant might be to take a date out for dinner. I did a little looking around

and found a German restaurant not too far from where Gaye lived. The restaurant was named Math Igler's. It served mainly German food and had singing waiters. So, on a Sunday night at the end of March of 1965, I headed out to pick up Gaye. She lived with three girlfriends and fellow students at Loyola. They shared an apartment over a toy store on Sheridan Road, not too far from the Lakeshore campus of Loyola. I parked in front of the store and went up to ring the bell. No one answered. After trying a few times, I walked around the back of the building and climbed the wooden stairs up to what I thought would be her apartment. I knocked on the back door. One of Gaye's roommates heard someone make some noise on the back porch and asked Gaye if maybe her date was creeping around the back of the house. Gaye opened the door and off we headed to the restaurant.

We had a lovely dinner. We found out we had a lot to talk about. About half way through the dinner, the singing waiters formed a small group and started singing at the different tables. They asked for requests. Since I had found out that Gaye was Irish, when the waiters got to our table, I asked them to sing "When Irish Eyes are Smiling." The waiters invited me to sing along with them which I did. It was fun, and I think Gaye thought it was fun too. When I dropped her off back at her apartment, I asked if I could call her and go on another date. She said yes. I was one happy boy.

I called Gaye early in the next week and asked her to go on another date. She said yes. But again, she already had dates for Friday and Saturday nights. We made a date for the following Sunday. We went to see the movie, "Mary Poppins." We went out for a drink afterwards and just talked about a lot of things. I called her again early in the following week, and she agreed to go out with me, though I had to settle for Sunday evening again since she already had dates for Friday and Saturday night. I forget what we did on that date, but we had a good time and just enjoyed talking with each other about all kinds of things. Finally, for our fourth date, I asked her to go with me to one of the Cook County Forest Preserve properties on a Thursday afternoon. I brought a kite along. We spent the afternoon flying the kite and just happy to be with each other.



Gaye swinging a bat at the Forest Preserve. Probably the first time she ever did that.

When I called Gaye the following week to set up another date, I did not have to wait until Sunday to out with her. She had dumped the other guys. We actually had a date on a Saturday night. Things were looking up for the Polish boy.

When classes finished in May, many of Gaye's friends graduated, including her three roommates. One of her roommates was accepted to study for a Ph.D. in Psychology at the University of Chicago. Another was accepted into medical school. And one went out and got a job. Gaye had a few courses to take before she could graduate in January of 1966. So did I. Gaye and her roommates moved from the northside of Chicago near Loyola U to the southside of Chicago neighborhood of Hyde Park near the University of Chicago.

Both of us needed to get summer jobs so we could finish school in the Fall semester. Gaye got a job at Marshall Field's at their downtown store. Uncle Matt got me another summer job as a Chlorine Operator at the Mayfair Pumping Station. Gaye and I spent the summer working and becoming really good friends. We were comfortable talking about anything and everything. We enjoyed each other's company. I found out Gaye was an only child. Both of her parents had died at an early age. Her Dad had died several years ago from cirrhosis of the liver. Her Mom died in the Fall of 1964 in a car accident on the Eisenhower Expressway.

During the summer, Gaye met my family for the first time at the wedding of one of my cousins. It was a typical Polish wedding with lots of food, plenty of liquid refreshments, and hours of dancing. When we got to the wedding reception and entered the banquet hall, Gaye asked me which people were my family. I pointed to a set of three tables where everyone was talking and laughing. She asked which ones were my family. I told her all of them. She was a little taken aback but dove right in and interacted with all of them. As she got to know them, and they got to know her, they became friends and continue to be so today.

Being a Chlorine Operator, particularly on the night shift gave me a lot of time to read. Two books that I read that summer were The Other America by Michael Harrington and The Secular City by Harvey Cox. Both books made me think more about what my career might be when I finished school. Teaching was still a possibility. But I was also thinking about ways that I might get involved in the public sector to make the world a better place for a broader range of people.

Since I still had to take a few courses to earn my degree at Loyola, I was not in a position to start applying for jobs which required a degree. Consequently, I applied again to be an elementary school teacher in the Catholic Schools in Chicago. I was invited to an interview at St. Cornelius School on the northwest side of Chicago. I got the job teaching 7th and 8th graders English, Math, and Religion. I started right after Labor Day and also started night classes at Loyola. Gaye continued to work at Marshal Field's and took her final night classes also.

Chapter Ten

After College Realities and Decisions

Gaye and I both graduated in January 1966. We both earned Bachelor of Science degrees in English Literature. That meant we could now go out and get a full-time job and become self-supporting. I had no idea what kind of work I would do. My Dad was in the trades and most of my role models as far as possible jobs were concerned were teachers. I looked at job ads in the paper. The job market was very strong at the time. In those days, if you had a degree in any field of study, you could get a pretty good job. In fact, having a degree in the area of the liberal arts was a plus in the job market. That was a time when being able to think broadly and deeply and to write and speak intelligently was valued by employers, particularly in their management ranks. Companies were growing, and they were always looking to recruit young guys to get into management programs. Women were still limited to traditional women's jobs such as teaching or nursing or secretarial or social work.

I figured the best way I could try and get a job was to go to an employment agency. I found one on Michigan Avenue in downtown Chicago which looked pretty good. I went there and talked about my education and experience with one of the job placement people. He thought I should apply for some entry-level management positions. They lined up some interviews for me, and off I went. The first place where I interviewed at was a large Campbell Soup production plant in Chicago. It was really interesting to see how automated the entire soup production and canning process was. I had never seen anything like that in my life. I thought this would be interesting place to work. I liked all of the machinery and equipment necessary to run the operation. After getting a tour of the plant, I was brought into a room and was interviewed by an HR guy and a mid-level management guy. When the interview as over, they told me they would get back to me through the employment agency.

The next day the employment agency called me and told me that I did not get the job, but that I should come to their offices and talk with them. It was one of the most helpful and memorable discussions I had about interviewing. The placement guy had gotten some feedback from the Campbell Soup interviewers about my interview from the previous day. The placement guy told me three things I should do at future interviews to improve my chances of getting hired. The three things were:

1. When you come into an interview room, shake hands with every one of the interviewers and when doing so, make eye contact with each person as you shake their hand.

2. Look like you are there to do business. An interview is not like a casual conversation. Sit up straight at the interview table or desk and put your arms and hands in front of you, with your forearms and elbows on the table.

3. Speak more loudly than you do in a normal, everyday conversation. He said don't shout. But in an interview, there are usually several people you are talking to and some of them are a little

farther away than when you have a casual conversation. He said to get used to how loud the sound of your voice is to yourself when you are talking with some across a room. Practice talking with someone across the room from you.

At my next interview, I got a job as a Finishing Foreman at the National Castings Foundry in Cicero, IL.

Gaye became a Caseworker for the Cook County Department of Public Aid. Gaye still lived in Hyde Park with her friends. I continued to live in the basement with my sister Rosemary on Spaulding Avenue.

My job in the foundry was interesting and very dirty. The dirt came primarily from the sand which formed the molds for the various pieces of metal we made. Iron was melted at the beginning of the production process. The molten metal was then poured into the molds. The metal then cooled and solidified. Once the metal pieces were cool enough, the sand forms were removed from around the castings. This was done by chipping and metal-blasting away the sand forms. That is how most of the dirt and dust in the factory was produced. The metal castings then were moved over to the Finishing Department where I worked. At the end of every shift, all of the first line supervisors and line workers were covered with black dust. All of us had to take a long, hot shower to get clean enough to go back to our homes or whatever else we were doing after work. At the time, no one thought or talked about how unhealthy that kind of work environment was for us. We just figured that is what happens when you work in a foundry.

Working in a factory was a very different experience for me in many ways. There was a whole new range of people as part of the company. There were top executives, mid-level managers, general foremen, first-line foremen (me), and the workers. The workers were a very diverse group ethnically and racially. They were unionized. It was my first experience working with union employees. It was also my first time working with people of color. About half of the unionized work force was African-American. Growing up in a Polish ethnic neighborhood and spending 6 years in seminary did not provide many opportunities to interact with African-Americans. I found out very quickly that the older guys were just like my Dad. They wanted what was good for their family. They wanted a nice home in a safe neighborhood. They wanted their children to get good educations and have a successful life. And they were willing to work hard to earn the money to do that. There were also ethnic immigrants, mostly from eastern and southern Europe who also wanted the same things we all did: a steady job, competitive pay, and a chance to improve their own lives and the lives of their families.

One of the ethnic immigrants was Bohemian. He started as a unionized line worker and then was promoted to first line supervisor, the same type of position as mine. He saw the spelling of my last name (Bieszczat, at the time) and told me that where he came from, it was not too far from the Bieszczada Mountains which are along the border of Poland and Czechoslovakia. I had never heard that before. I joked with him that I wasn't sure if they named the mountains after my family or named my family after the mountains. My guess is that our family name came from the mountains not far from where some of my great grandparents and grandparents came from.

The foundry ran two shifts each day. Generally, my work day was the first shift from 6:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Occasionally, I worked the second shift. Starting work at 6:30 AM required that I get up about 5:00 AM, eat some breakfast, and drive to work. Getting up that early meant I needed to get to bed between 9:00 and 10:00 PM. That was a little shock to my internal clock and cut into my social life, at least from Sunday night through Thursday night.

One final thing of note about my experience in the foundry was that computers were starting to be used to perform some of the metal finishing processes. Instead of a skilled machinist positioning a piece of metal in vise-like apparatus so that the metal could be chipped, abraded, smoothed, and pressed to meet very stringent specifications, the company started introducing some computer programming which would automatically do the settings and work necessary to come up with the finished product. Computerization was just a small part of the metal-finishing process. Again, I, and pretty much everyone else who worked in the foundry, did not foresee how much this would change the manufacturing processes in all sorts of industries in the future.

As far as my social life, Gaye and I continued to date each other exclusively. We went out once or twice a week, usually on Friday and Saturday nights when I did not have to get up at 5:00 AM the next morning. We would usually go to dinner or see a movie. We would then just talk for hours afterwards. Sometimes we would stop in a bar and have a drink while we talked. Sometimes we would go to her apartment and talk. And sometimes we would just sit in my car and talk for hours about just about everything. We learned a lot about each other including our hopes and dreams for our futures. And on those days when we did not go out, we would spend about an hour on the phone with each other.

We now were best friends. People who could openly talk about what was important to each of us individually, but more and more, what was important to both of us as a couple. It was early in 1966 that I seriously thought about asking Gaye to marry me. But I was hesitant to do so because the Viet Nam war was heating up big time. I had a deferment from the draft while I was a college student, but that deferment ended when I graduated. Since the company I worked for made heavy metal parts, some of which were used in military equipment such as tanks, the company applied to the Selective Service System and obtained a defense worker exemption for me. But it was not a deferment I could depend on for the longer term. As the war in Viet Nam grew ever larger, deferments which once were common, were being eliminated. Plus, if I wanted to change jobs, I would probably lose my deferment immediately. The odds were that I was going to get drafted sooner rather than later.

Gaye and I talked over the situation and considering that I would most likely be drafted within the next several months, I decided that I would volunteer to join the army as part of the Officer Candidate School (OCS). I figured as long as I was going to be drafted into the Army, I would prefer to serve as an officer. I went to the Selective Service Center in downtown Chicago and volunteered to join the OCS program. I went through my physical and mental exams which took the most part of the day. And when I got to the end of the process, they told me that I would not qualify for OCS, mainly because of my history of allergies. I guess the Army did not want someone in a foxhole who might start sneezing at any time.

I continued working in the foundry and seeing and talking with Gaye as much as possible. But I figured I would get my draft notice. About a month after failing to get into the OCS program, I got my draft notice. Again, I reported to the same downtown processing center. I went through many of the same physical and mental tests that I went through before, though the mental tests were a little less challenging than the ones I took when I volunteered for the OCS program.

When I got to the end of my tests, I was told to sit and wait until they evaluated my exams. An Army Officer then came out and told me that I had passed all of the tests and that I would receive a letter from the Selective Service telling me when and where to report for induction.

I was surprised that I passed all of the tests and told the Officer that I had just gone through the testing process when I applied for OCS. I said to him that if I am going to be drafted, I would like to volunteer to be part of the OCS program. He told me to wait a few minutes while he conferred with some other Officers. He came back a few minutes later and told me that I cannot enroll in the OCS program and that instead of being classified 1-A, I would be classified as 3-A because of my health issues. Basically, a 3-A draft status meant that I would not be serving in the Army unless the US was invaded by a foreign power. That was not likely to occur. So, for all practical purposes, I was not going to be drafted. I could go on with my life without worrying about that.

I called Gaye and told her the good news. We said we would talk about it more when we went out on Friday evening.

Chapter Eleven

Getting Married

As soon as I found out that I would not be drafted, I went to Marshall Field's in downtown Chicago and bought an engagement ring. I had wanted to ask Gaye to marry me for months but did not want to do so if I was going into the Army. I did not want to marry her and then possibly die in a rice paddy somewhere in Viet Nam.

When we got together that Friday evening, I got down on my knees and asked her to marry me. I pulled out the Marshall Field's ring box and handed to her. She said "Yes." I was one happy guy. And one lucky guy to have met and gotten to be very good friends with such a beautiful, intelligent, sophisticated, elegant, loving, and funny woman. I never considered myself a "Lady's Man." So, I was very glad when I met Gaye, dated her for a little over a year, and got to the point in life where I could start a life with her without worrying about going off to war.

Wedding Bell Plans and Realities

We became engaged in early June of 1966. We wanted to get married as quickly as possible. But in my family, having a big wedding was expected. So, we started planning the wedding. The most important timing element was getting a hall for the wedding reception. In Chicago, getting a hall for a wedding that would have about 200 guests is not an easy job. Most halls used for weddings are booked six months to a year in advance. We did not want to wait that long.

We looked in the phone book for wedding reception halls and called a number of them. They were all booked for at least six months. I don't recall how we came upon it, but we contacted a former church in Evanston which was used for a variety of gatherings, many connected to Northwestern University. They said the first opening on which they could host a wedding reception was October. We sent them a check to reserve the date.

We then started on all of the other wedding preparations. Gaye picked her Maid of Honor (her best friend Sarah Klassen) and Bridesmaids (Gaye's cousin Loretta and my sister Margaret).



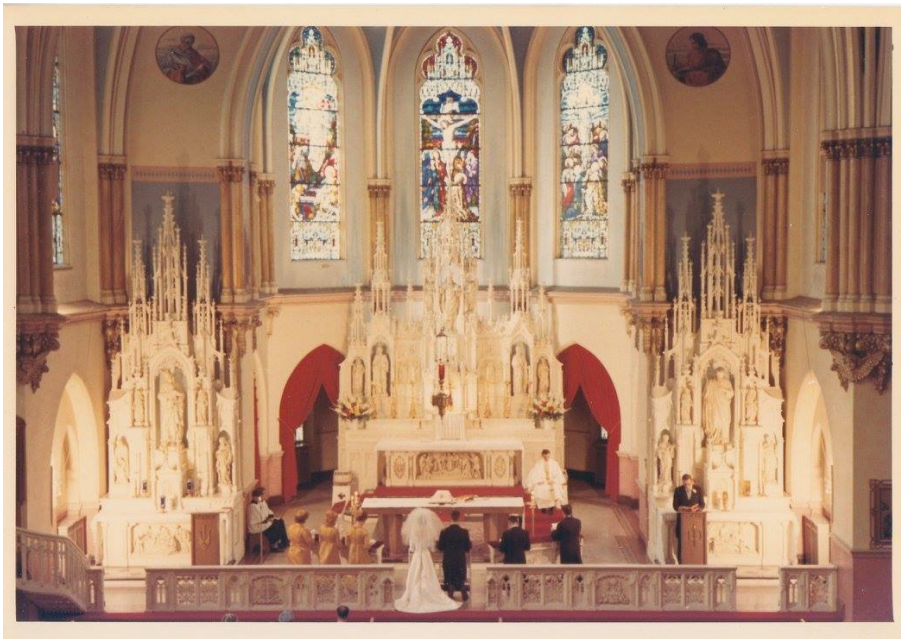
Loretta, Sarah, Gaye, and Margaret.

I picked my cousin Edwin as Best Man (Edwin was always like my older brother) and my brothers Tony and Frank to be Groomsmen.



Frank, me, Edwin, and Tony.

We decided that we would get married at St. Nicholas parish in Evanston. That was the parish that Gaye's Grandmother and Aunt Dinny belonged to. It was just down the block from where they lived in Evanston.



St. Nicholas Church in Evanston, IL

We went to see one of the priests at the parish to talk with him about getting married. October 8 would work for the Church. He told us we first had to go through a brief pre-wedding discussion with him, which we did. One of the things Gaye brought up was that when it came to the traditional Catholic wedding vows, in which both parties vow "To love honor, and obey" each other, that she did not want to include the word "obey" in the vows. Having gotten to know her over the last year and a half, I was not surprised she thought that way. I told the priest that was fine with me, and he said that was fine with him. So, the wedding plans continued onward.

As the wedding plans progressed, I did have to deal with some doubts about whether or not I should get married. The doubts had nothing to do with Gaye. What concerned me was that I had made a decision about ten years previously to join a religious order. I eventually took temporary vows for three years. I did not get to the point of making final vows. But I began to feel a little scared that in getting married, the wedding vows were not temporary vows. And since I had already failed to follow through on completing the temporary vows, was I going to do the same thing on my wedding vows? To help me sort through this issue, I called and made an appointment with the psychiatrist in Rochester, MN who I saw a number of times when I was in the Brothers at St. Mary's College. When I met with him, I told him what I was afraid of, and that I did not want to make vows if I was going to not keep them. I forget what his exact advice was, but I know I left his office and drove back to Chicago. The doubts I had about myself were pretty much put to rest. When I got back, I told Gaye about my visit with the psychiatrist. She understood my concerns. And we continued to work on the wedding plans.

We found a caterer. We then looked for someone to provide the liquid refreshment for the wedding reception. We had learned when we booked the reception hall in Evanston, that Evanston was a "Dry" city. That meant that no liquor, including beer, could be sold in Evanston. But instead of having bartenders serve drinks, the reception hall had several fountains which

would continuously provide mixed drinks to anyone who wanted one. We had three fountains prepared. One had a mix of vodka and orange juice. Another had a mix of scotch and soda. The third had a mix of whiskey and ginger ale. I was concerned about how my uncles would enjoy a wedding reception, without the option of a shot and a beer chaser. At first, they were a little taken aback that there was not going to be any beer that night. But once they got used to the idea of just walking up to one of the drink-dispensing fountains and filling their glass, they quickly adapted and enjoyed the novelty.

Of course, you could not have a Polish Wedding without a Polka Band. On of my cousins, Dick Pitera had a four-piece wedding band. We hired him to provide the music. In addition to all of the dancing, there was also a lot of singing. My family loved to sing. At one point between dance sets, me, by brothers and sisters, and my cousins all walked over to Gaye's Grandmother. She was of 100% Irish descent. We surrounded her and sang "When Irish Eyes are Smiling." Her Irish eyes were beaming. She was very moved by what we did. And for the rest of her life, she often brought it up as something truly memorable in her life.

What a wonderful day. To me it was the continuation of the great friendship Gaye and I started about 18 months ago, and it was the start of a new kind of relationship which we hoped would last the rest of our lives. As I write this 52 years later, the relationship has only deepened. I love Gaye and I am grateful that she saw something in a Polish guy that she took a chance on me. I still consider it my luckiest day, the day I first met her at Loyola.



Gaye and me at the luncheon reception at the Orrington Hotel in Evanston.



Gaye's Grandmother, Aunts, Uncles, and cousins from her Dad's/Bowers side of the family.



My Mom, Dad, sisters, brothers, and in-laws.

After the wedding, we went on a honeymoon to New England. Neither of us had ever been there before. Actually, neither of us had ever gone on a weeks' vacation before. Beautiful Fall colors were everywhere. We visited a lot of historic sites. And I ate lobster and real Clam Chowder for the first time. On the way back, we stopped in upstate New York to visit with two of my Mom's brothers, Uncle Joe and Uncle Victor Liss and their families.

When we got back to Chicago, I moved into the apartment in the South Shore neighborhood where Gaye and her friend Sarah had moved to in May of that year. Being a northwest side guy, I was not very familiar with the southeast side of Chicago. It was an interesting place to live. South Shore was primarily a Jewish neighborhood that had transitioned to a more diverse community, first with other ethnic groups and then with more African-American families. It was a little longer drive for me to work, but not too bad. And it was pretty close to where Gaye worked as a Caseworker.

One of the most memorable happenings of our first year of marriage is that the City of Chicago got hit with its heaviest snow fall ever recorded. As I drove to work at 5:30 AM that morning, it was snowing pretty hard. But in Chicago, that was not anything unusual. Since I was on the road before most commuters, I made pretty good time getting to work. During the day, snow continued to fall. As we approached the end of the first shift, our bosses asked us and the rank and file to stay and work the second shift as well. They told us people were having a hard time getting into work, and they would not have enough workers to complete the day's production. We all understood the importance of completing the day's production, because once you start melting iron ore and pour it into the forms, the entire process had to be completed. If it was not completed, the company would be left with literally tons of iron that had to be poured and cooled. We all agreed to work the second shift. The union workers got overtime. We management workers got 8 hours of compensatory time to use in the future.

When the second shift ended, we all went out to our cars to head home. They were buried in snow. Traffic was very, very slow, even though it was around midnight when we left the foundry. The expressway I usually took home was shut down. So, I started taking alternate routes to get home. At one point in my journey home, I crossed over the Dan Ryan Expressway. There was not a car moving. Many were stopped in the middle of the expressway. No one was in the cars, but the cars were not going to be moved for a while. It is the only time in my life that I saw that the Dan Ryan was completely shut down. What a weird and memorable site. After taking any and every street that was plowed a little, I finally made it home around 2:30 AM after about a 3 hour trip. For the next three days, a Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, the city was totally shut down. Nobody drove anywhere. If you could walk to a store to get some food, you could do that. But food stores ran out of just about every bit of food they had by Saturday afternoon.



Over those three days, people who could get out shoveled snow, so they could park on the streets or get the alleys passable and into and out of their garages. It was a very festive time in many ways. People worked together shoveling snow and pushing cars. We took breaks to sip some spirits to warm up. Everybody got to know each other better. Instead of just being a face you saw in the neighborhood and waved hello to, people became fellow survivors of the Great Blizzard of 1967.

After about a year and a half working at the foundry, I decided that a career in foundry work was not going to be for me. I started looking for another job. President Johnson, who helped pass civil and voting rights legislation in his first couple of years in office, proposed a package of legislation called the War on Poverty. Based on my previous reading of such books as The Other America and The Secular City which I wrote about earlier and my summer work in the Cabrini-Green housing projects, I was very interested in seeing if I could make a contribution to this effort. I took a day of vacation from my job at the foundry and went downtown to the Regional Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). I applied for a job as a Field Representative. Not too long after, I was called for an interview. I interviewed for the position and heard shortly thereafter that the wanted to hire me. I said "Yes" and got ready for a new job doing something I hoped would combine my commitment to making the world a better place with my particular skills and overall life experience.

Chapter Twelve

Starting a Public Service Career

Taking the job with the OEO was a more significant event in my life than I realized at the time. The job not only introduced me to a whole new world of organizations and how they inter-acted with each other in positive and negative ways, but it also required me to develop many new skill sets, particularly helping to bring together a wide diversity of people to address issues of concern to them.

I worked out of the OEO Regional Office in downtown Chicago. The Regional Office worked with communities in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The work force in the Regional Office was quite diverse. My immediate supervisor was an African-American woman named Georgia Brown. She was originally from Detroit. About 1/3 of my co-workers were also African-American including management and support staff. The Assistant Regional Director was a woman. Our Regional Director was a man. His name was Alan Beals. I will talk more about him later.

One of the things I learned early on in working for the Office of Economic Opportunity was that the main thrust of the War on Poverty was not going to be about providing direct cash benefits to anyone. After, I spent a few weeks in the Chicago office, I was sent to Washington, DC for a week of training to learn about the War on Poverty.

What I learned was that the War on Poverty's underlying premise for combatting poverty was to help people help themselves.

It was about poor people organizing other poor people to take control of their futures.

One of the most significant successes of the first years of the War on Poverty was the strong emphasis on organizing and empowering people in poor communities to take control of many aspects of their lives (education, job opportunities and training, crime control, health care, and legal issues, to name a few).

The original intent of the War on Poverty was not to create safety net programs. It was to identify, train, and nurture the leaders and residents in low-income communities to mobilize themselves and take control of their own destinies.

Also, one of the key elements of the War on Poverty was the idea of Maximum Feasible Participation (MFP). What this meant was that as needs in the low-income community were identified and programs to address them were developed, the Community Action Agencies went out into the community to raise money and coordinate these programs. They brought people together from the public, private, and not for profit sectors to help them address issues of poverty and opportunity. The federal funding was to help these organizational efforts with the long-term goal of having these programs be self-sufficient.

That kind of work was undertaken by local Community Action Agencies (CAAs). My job was to work with these new community organizations to bring a whole community (business, government, schools, churches, not for profits, etc.) together to address issues of poverty in the community. My job as a Field Representative was to work with these newly formed, community-based organizations in the State of Michigan to help them identify what was needed in their communities and then get federal grants to support their work empowering people in poverty to improve their opportunities to be self-sufficient as individuals and as families.

Some of these programs which were developed by poor people in their own communities are the following. They varied depending on the particular circumstances of their communities:

- Job-readiness training programs
- Head Start programs which brought together families and the broader community to give children a better chance at success
- Legal services to assist the community in addressing landlord, housing discrimination, and welfare eligibility issues
- Community-based mental health and substance abuse programs
- Improving access to health care; helping create community health centers
- Programs to enroll seniors in the newly established Medicare program, combat isolation, and promote access to regular meals
- Rent strikes to demand sanitary, heated, and safe living conditions
- Migrant workers striking for improved living and work conditions
- Working with local law enforcement agencies to improve community relations with people living in poverty

Importantly, most of the people who led the organizing for these efforts were poor themselves and lived in the communities that they were trying to improve. They had very strong leadership qualities and were well-respected by local residents. The local CAAs hired them and they worked within the communities to identify barriers to economic opportunity and to empower local residents to overcome those barriers.

One of the most dramatic images of successful organizing was in the late 1960s in Chicago. At the time, garbage in the city was picked up once per week by municipal crews. But if the weather was bad—not an unusual occurrence during winters in Chicago—garbage in the poorer neighborhoods was often not collected at all. Local community activists organized a protest, funded in part by War on Poverty community action agency grants. People brought their garbage bags downtown and left them on the sidewalk outside of City Hall. There were pictures in the papers and images on TV every day showing the growing piles of garbage outside of City Hall. It didn't take long for the City to change its operation and make sure that everyone got their garbage picked up every week no matter how poor they were.

Unfortunately, the success of community organizing and empowerment was seen as a threat to politicians across the country to both urban/liberal and rural/suburban/conservative elected officials at every level of government. Congressional members, fearing these new leaders as

well as activism in poor communities, gutted funding for this crucial element of the War on Poverty starting in 1969. The program was killed by its own success.

What this history suggests is that combatting poverty now and, in the future, should once again be built around helping poor people organizing themselves to address the challenges that they see their families and communities up against every day.

The communities which I worked with in Michigan were usually multi-county organizations surrounding a central city such as Muskegon, Battle Creek, and Kalamazoo, Michigan. I also worked with some totally rural CAAs.

It was just an education to see the diversity of issues different organizations identified as barriers to economic opportunity in their communities. Being a city boy from Chicago, I had no knowledge of and experience with poverty in rural areas. Just getting people together in far flung rural areas was a difficult thing to accomplish, particularly with senior citizens. I still remember working with a five-county CAA in the "Thumb" area of northern Michigan.

One of the projects people put together was establishing a senior center with transportation opportunities to get people to them and back home on a regular basis. The CAA brought together local businesses, governments, and not for profit organizations in the area who designed a program and raised their own funds to run the program. On one of my visits as a Field Representative for OEO, I went to the Senior Center to see what they were doing.

There were close to 75 people there that day. At the Senior Center, the people who came had the opportunity to have their health checked, get assistance in signing up for Medicare and Social Security benefits, setting up a bank account, and many other services which they could not access most of the time. As part of the day, they shared a lunch, and then they played some cards. They asked me to join them, which I did for a while. We played pinochle. And if I recall correctly, they beat the pants off of me. I had a wonderful time and still remember what a plus it was to these people's lives to have an opportunity to leave their often isolated homes and lives and get together with other people to share a meal, get access to services they needed, and just have some pleasant recreational times.

Another big success of the War on Poverty was the Head Start program. I helped communities get organized to have such a program and helped them obtain federal funding for it. Head Start programs began as summer enrichment programs but quickly became year-round programs. Head Start served both urban and rural communities. Again, as was the aim of the War on Poverty, it brought together a wide range of organizations to address the challenges of getting children ready to enter the regular school system. Head Start programs brought together and helped coordinate the efforts of educators, parents, health providers, not for profit social service organizations, and businesses so that low income children had the opportunity to improve their educational, health, and, in the long-run, their economic opportunities.

Some people thought then and still think today that Head Start was not a success and that it was and is a waste of tax dollars. I thought then and still do today, that no program is ever perfect

and achieves all it wants to accomplish. But the images that stick in my mind are 4 and 5 year-olds coming to the Head Start school with smiles on their faces and being full of laughter as they got a good breakfast meal, opportunities to learn to read and start to understand basic math, and getting along with others in school work and in play. The children also got a healthy lunch. They received physical, dental, and eye exams, and necessary treatment when necessary. Much of this testing and treatment was done by health professionals in the community on a pro bono basis.



First Lady, Lady Bird Johnson, with a group of Head Start children.

Over the years since I helped Head Start programs get established in 1967 and 1968, I have often spoken at a number of colleges and universities about a variety of topics. If I have the opportunity to do so, I ask for a show of hands from faculty and staff of who participated in a Head Start program when they were a child. There are almost always people in the audience that got a head start on a successful life through the Head Start program. I am pleased that I had the opportunity to help start some of those programs.

Another War on Poverty program that I worked with was the Job Corps program. This program basically gave young men and eventually young women the opportunity to learn some specific job skills as well as the soft skills to get and succeed at a job. In addition to the job-related training that the young people received, the Job Corps participants were given the chance to get into a different environment than the poverty and violence in which they lived every day. Job Corps programs were set up at sites away from the poverty and violence which impacted these young people. For many, it was a fresh start at a Job Corps camp.

My job one summer was to walk the streets in Detroit and recruit young men to sign up to join Job Corps. We worked with the local Boys and Girls Clubs in the poorest neighborhoods in Detroit to identify young men who might benefit from the Jobs Corps program. I then set off on Woodward Avenue with a list of names and addresses and a handful of brochures, knocking on doors to try and recruit young men. I remember two things in particular about that door-knocking experience.

One was that I was the only white person in the neighborhood. People looked at me and wondered what some unknown, goofy 26-year-old white guy was doing in the neighborhood knocking on doors. That was also the reaction of most people who opened their doors when I knocked or rang the doorbell. It always reminded me of the old saying "The check is in the mail. I'm from the government and am here to help you. And I will respect you in the morning."

But most people were gracious to me when they opened the door. I always told them that the local Boys and Girls Club suggested that I stop by and talk with them about a new job training opportunity for which the young man or men in their household could sign up. The adults knew and trusted the Boys and Girls Club staff because many of the staff came from the neighborhood and/or the adults had been to events at the Clubs where their young men had played sports or where involved with other programs.

The second experience I will never forget is how powerful hope is, particularly when people have lost hope.

When I was invited into their homes, I was usually brought into the kitchen where the mother, grandmother, or aunt of the young man would ask me to sit down and to talk with them. Dad's were usually not around when I knocked on doors. They were either working or not part of the household anymore. Though they were skeptical when I started talking about the Job Corps program, they often started to see that this program might really be an opportunity for their son, or grandson, or nephew. It would be an opportunity to not only learn some job skills but would also get the young men into a safer environment where the often gang-related violence in the neighborhood would not touch them.

I can still picture the slowly emerging look of hope which started to fill the eyes and faces of a grandmother and mother as they heard about the Job Corps program and thought this would really be an opportunity to give their young man a better chance to have a better life.

Hope and opportunity motivate all of us throughout our lives. People like me, not rich by any means, but someone who regularly has opportunity and hope as part of their lives, take such hope and opportunity for granted. People living in poverty and amidst violence do not experience many hopeful opportunities. They often do not see that they can affect positive change in their own lives and the lives of their families. But when they do see a real opportunity, they are energized to go after it for themselves and their families. That's what the Office of Economic Opportunity gave to many people. It gave them opportunity and hope. I have never forgotten those faces and what it meant to them. I have always tried to bring hope and opportunity to anyone and everyone I have worked with over the years.

Finally, one of the most successful anti-poverty programs which seldom gets talked about as an anti-poverty program is Medicare. When I was working for the Office of Economic Opportunity in the mid-1960's, the poorest age group in the country were people over 65 years of age. Close to 40% of them were at or below the poverty line. The largest, single cause of being so poor was medical costs. In the 50 years since Medicare came into being, the poverty rate among people 65

and over has been reduced to less than 10%. This was a great relief to seniors as it also was to the children of senior citizens who did not have to mortgage their futures to meet the medical expenses of their parents.

One other thing that happened while I was working at the OEO Regional Office in Chicago was that I helped organize a union to represent all non-management employees in the office. I and several other non-management employees were not pleased with how we were treated by many of the management staff, particularly as related to benefit administration (vacation, holidays, sick days, etc.). We also thought that some of the management staff were quite arbitrary in assigning work and disciplining employees who did not meet some managers' expectations.

We talked with employees to see if they were interested in forming a union. Most were in favor of the idea. We then formally applied to have an election held in our office. Once we were approved to have the election, the election was held. The majority voted to have a union.

Since we were federal employees, we could not bargain for higher salaries or better benefits. Those items were controlled by Congress and the Office of Management and Budget in Washington, DC. But that was okay. We did not organize a union to get better salaries and benefits. We organized because we wanted a structure and an opportunity to be treated more fairly by management. We particularly wanted a right and a process to file grievances. To represent the employees in grievances, several of us were elected by the union members to be on the Grievance Committee. I was elected the Chair of the Grievance Committee.

Being elected Chair of the Grievance Committee was certainly an honor. And I and the Committee took our responsibilities very seriously. I think our work on behalf of the employees improved the overall morale of the non-management staff. And, not surprisingly to me, improved productivity as well.

One of the unexpected by-products of being Chair of the Grievance Committee was that I got to work with the Regional Director of the Chicago Office to resolve grievances. The Chicago Regional Director was named Alan Beals. It was a name that did not mean anything in particular to me, and I was not aware of what previous work experience he had prior to becoming the Regional Director.

It turned out that Alan had a background in city management. One of the times after we finished a grievance negotiation session, he asked me if I had ever thought of being a city manager. Actually, when he asked the question, I was dumbfounded. I never heard of a city manager as a job. Being born and raised in Chicago, I just assumed that all cities were managed by Mayors. In the case of Chicago, I facetiously figured God created the original Mayor Richard Daley, and that was that.

Alan told me that many cities in the country were managed by professionals who reported to the Mayor and City Council. In most cities, the mayor and city council members were part-time positions. They acted like the Board of Directors of a business corporation. They determined the

tax rates, salary structure, passed ordinances covering traffic enforcement, business licensing and inspections and other broad, policy issues. One of their jobs was to hire a CEO to run the city on a day to day basis. Alan suggested I look into the city management profession. By making the suggestion, he apparently thought I would do that type of job very well.

Being a city manager was very intriguing to me. Instead of being on the bottom of the totem pole as part of the Federal government, being a city manager looked like an opportunity to get things done which impacted people's lives every day. I could be where the action was…more implementing programs than funding them from afar as part of a large bureaucracy.

Also, having worked for two large organizations, one in the private sector and one in the public sector, I thought I could do a real good job managing an organization and take advantage of all of the talent that the people in an organization have and not stifle their enthusiasm and ideas as I saw much too often in the jobs I had so far.

When I looked into the city manager profession, I found out that I needed an MPA degree (a Master's in Public Administration) if I was going to be considered for such a job. I considered it the equivalent of getting my union card in a trade union. I did some research on universities in the Chicago area where I could get an MPA. The only school that offered that degree in the Chicago area was Roosevelt University on Michigan Avenue. The university was only a couple of blocks from the OEO Regional Office where I worked. So, I registered to start taking evening classes in the MPA program.

In addition to my own career moves, 1968 was a very eventful year in many ways.

The war in Viet Nam continued to escalate and the unrest over the war at home was growing significantly. President Johnson was already being challenged by two very strong Democratic candidates: Robert Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy. Both candidates were doing quite well in the early primary races. In March, President Lyndon Johnson announced that he would not seek election to a second term as President in November of 1968.

On April 4, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, TN. I heard the news on my way back home to Chicago from Kalamazoo, MI where I had worked with the local Community Action Agency for a few days. Riots broke out in Chicago and many cities around the country on that day and the following days. Again, the country was in shock that such a thing could happen. And again, many businesses and schools closed for a few days while the funeral was prepared for and conducted.

A couple of months later on June 6, Robert Kennedy was assassinated while he was campaigning for the Democratic nomination for the Presidential election that November. The assassination of Bobby Kennedy was another blow to the country. Whether people were Democrats or Republicans, people abhorred this assassination as they did the assassination of his brother, President John Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. Never before in the history of our country had so many prominent leaders been assassinated in such a short period of time.

In late August, the Democratic National Convention was held in Chicago. Because of the unpopularity of the war in Viet Nam as well the racial tensions following Martin Luther King, Jr's assassination, protestors from around the country came to Chicago to promote their causes. It was not long into the convention that riots broke out around the convention hall and some of the downtown hotels. The Chicago Police Department cracked down hard on the protestors. The demonstrations became violent. The Police Department lost control of its people in what became known as a police riot.



National Guardsmen and Viet Nam war protestors outside the Conrad Hilton Hotel in Chicago.

My attitude toward the Viet Nam war and war in general was changing. I was born during World War II and was raised in the years after that war. The overwhelming consensus at the time was that we, the good guys, won the war against the bad guys. In Europe we were the deciding factor in ending Hitler's desire to remake Europe into a continent that he and Germany would dominate and control. In Asia, the US responded to an unprovoked attack on Pearl Harbor which left thousands dead and the US navy devastated. American's fought that war to avenge that attack and to prevent Japan from controlling too much of the Asian continent.

We were the good guys, fighting and winning peace on two continents and preserving our own peace and prosperity in our country and the entire North American continent.

There were movies glorifying our victories. Newspapers, magazines, radio, and a new thing called television, built the image in our country that the US had saved the world. Yes, it took many lives to do so, but that is what the good guys do. They sacrifice their lives to make the world a safer and better place to be.

There were many reasons given for the US fighting the war in Viet Nam. One of the main ones was that we did not want the Communists in North Viet Nam to take over South Viet Nam as well. It was part of the overall Cold War battle between the US and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) which began in the 1950's and was still a powerful influence on how the US saw its role in the world.

In my judgement, I did not see that the Viet Nam war was a war we (America) needed to be engaged with. It was a civil war between countries who not too long before had been one country. I didn't see it as our country's role to decide how the people in both Viet Nams should

decide their futures. In my judgement, a powerful country like ours should not be assuming that we know what is best for people in other countries. And, we should not be interjecting ourselves in conflicts within other countries that should be resolved by the people in those countries.
I also began to think that the war was unwinnable. Fighting a war against an indigenous population in their own country was something new for our country to be involved in. As the scope of the war grew and intensified, we were barely holding our own as a military presence. While at the same time, the number of casualties to our troops was increasing substantially and we were devastating North Viet Nam with carpet bombing with bombs and napalm.

As an American, I was willing to fight in the war when it started. I wasn't gung-ho to join the military. But as I wrote earlier, I was ready to do my duty if I had too. As time went by since my rejection by the military when I tried to enlist in 1966, I began to be glad that I did not get accepted or drafted to fight in this war.

Back to Our Careers

Gaye quit her job as a Caseworker with the Cook County Department of Public Aid early in 1968 so she could start teaching in September at a girls Catholic High School on the south side. She had gotten a job with the Chicago Tribune advertising department for the summer.

I continued working at the OEO Regional Office and taking classes at night until I got halfway through the required courses after the summer semester in 1968. Then Gaye and I talked, and we decided that we could make it on her salary if I went to school full-time to knock off the Master's degree a little quicker. So that's what we did.

I learned a lot in graduate school about a broad range of topics. It was a mind-expanding experience. One of the things I always remembered from grad school was what one of my teachers, Mr. George Tomsho, said about decision-making from a management standpoint. He said that we should make decisions only when it is necessary to make them. He went on to say that too many managers make too many decisions before they need to do so. Sometimes they feel under pressure to make a decision immediately because that is what bosses are supposed to do. They think if they don't make a decision immediately that they will look weak or indecisive. But unless we are responding to an emergency situation (i.e., an attack in the military, a police or fire emergency call, a work-related accident, etc.) most important decisions do not have to be made immediately.

Rather than getting in the habit of making decisions immediately, he said the first thing to ask ourselves is "When does this decision need to be made"? He said this was important because when making a decision, it is highly desirable to have all of the relevant information necessary to make a good decision. Getting that information may take an hour, a day, a week, or longer. Only make the decision when you have that sufficient information.

Good advice I have thought about and used many, many times over the years.

When the Spring semester in 1969 came around, I still had a few courses to finish to get my degree. I signed up to take them as evening classes and started looking for a job in city management. I started sending our resumes. But just as importantly, one of my teachers in the graduate program, again Mr. Tomsho, told all of us in his class that another way to get a job was to take your resume and stop in cities and introduce yourself. He said you never know when someone might be looking to fill a vacancy or that they anticipated a vacancy coming up or they were creating a new position. In each of those circumstances, a job opening may not be posted yet. But if you walk in looking professional with your resume, you never know what might happen. He said that in most cases, you would not meet the city manager, but you would almost always get someone to talk with briefly and hand over your resume. He said that it shows you have some initiative and are willing to do something a little unconventional, yet still professional, to get a job done.

Since we were living on the south side of Chicago, and Gaye was teaching nearby, I started calling on the city manager's offices in the south suburbs. I aimed to visit 5 offices per day. I probably only did it for a few days before I stopped in at the Village of Park Forest. And just like my professor said, the current Assistant to the Village Manager was leaving to take a job in another community, and they would soon be looking to fill the position. I had the good fortune to meet with Robert Pierce, the Village Manager, that very day. We talked a while. And I was offered the job starting in early February of 1969. I took it. I think my salary was about $500 per month.

Chapter Thirteen

A New Baby and our First Home

Shortly after I started working for the Village, Gaye and I found out that she was pregnant and that the baby would be born sometime in September. We were both delighted with the news. Gaye would have time to finish the school year by early June. And then we could move to Park Forest where we would live while I worked there.

Up to now, we had rented apartments in the South Shore neighborhood of Chicago. We looked at some apartments in Park Forest. But we thought maybe this would be a good time to buy our first house. We did not have a lot of money for a down payment; but Gaye had a small inheritance when her father died a few years earlier. Gaye had used most of the money to pay for her college tuition. But she had enough for us to make a down payment on the home and to get a mortgage. The home cost about $15,000. It was a three-bedroom ranch with one bathroom. It was built on a slab without a basement which was pretty common in many homes built in the suburbs as men returned from military service in World War II and got Veteran's benefits.



362 Miami Street, Park Forest, IL

We moved in May to our new home. Gaye had always enjoyed gardening when she lived in a single-family home when she was a child. She started reading avidly about gardening and by the time we moved in, she had gardens laid out for the property. Gaye was five months pregnant, but she was young and strong and dove into the gardening. I was the grunt worker who dug up spaces for her to plant flowers and fruits and vegetables. Being a newer subdivision, the soil was

not the best. She read about improving the soil by composting household and yard waste. It was a pretty new idea at the time for residential properties, but it made a lot of sense.

As the summer wore on, Gaye was getting closer to her due date which would be around September 20. Gaye had found an obstetrician in a nearby suburb who delivered babies at St. James Hospital in Chicago Heights. Since Gaye became pregnant before I started working in Park Forest, we were not covered by insurance to pay for the doctor and hospital bills. But in those days, going to a hospital was not that expensive. Most times, women who had babies would stay in the hospital several days after the delivery. We figured that unless there were some complications, two days would be the most we could afford.

On the evening of September 22, Gaye started to get some contractions. We headed over to the hospital around 9:30 PM. Gaye got checked in to a delivery room. I was allowed to be in the room with here while the labor process progressed. When it came time to have the baby delivered, I was told to leave the room which was standard practice in those days. It was also usual in those days that expectant parents had no idea of whether the baby would be a boy or a girl. We had talked about some possible names for a girl or a boy but had not settled on a name.

At about 3:15 AM on September 23, our daughter was born. Both mother and daughter were doing fine. Gaye took one look at the baby and decided she wanted to name her Maureen Anne. I was allowed to see her after the birth was complete. We were both very, very happy to have such a beautiful baby girl.

Around six AM, they moved Gaye to a regular hospital room which she shared with another mother who had just had a baby also. I headed home to start making phone calls to our families to let them know that our baby girl was born. Everyone was delighted. After I made a number of phone calls, I took some black electrical tape and drove out to a sign on the way into the Village that said Park Forest, 31,100 Population. I took a piece of the electrical tape and put it over the last zero, so the population now read 31,101. I took out my Polaroid camera and took a picture of it, which we still have today.



Gaye and Maureen were doing well, so they both came home on the afternoon of September 25. Gaye had zero experience taking care of a baby. She was an only child and had never baby-sat for a child. So, she was a little apprehensive about how to care for Maureen. On the other hand, since I was the second oldest of ten children, I had plenty of experience taking care of babies. My older sister, Rosemary, and I used to laugh that we had changed more diapers by the time we were 15 than most people do in a lifetime. After a few days, Gaye's apprehension was gone, and she went on to taking care of Maureen on her own when I returned to work.

Chapter Fourteen

Learning Local Government From the Bottom Up

Working as an Assistant to the Village Manager in Park Forest was a great learning experience. My boss, Bob Pierce, was a very good supervisor and mentor. From a manager standpoint, Bob was very good at asking his subordinates for their ideas about how to possibly resolve an issue or challenge which confronted the village. If I was working on something and there were several ways to proceed, I could stop in Bob's office and talk to him about what direction I should go in. Again, Bob was very good at asking me questions about what I thought. He did not usually come up with his own answers. He gave me the opportunity to articulate the issue and possible solutions. By the time I left his office, I had a good idea of how I should proceed to address the matter. I began to understand that most people have some good ideas on how to address problems in their areas of work, but they need the understanding and support of their managers before they start to make things better by dealing with the problem.

What I was also starting to learn about managing people was that people who do the work every day usually know better ways to get the job done if they are asked. When I thought back to my first two full-time jobs in the foundry and then at the OEO Regional Office, that is something management people did not do in those organizations. I found that to be very frustrating as did many of my co-workers.

I remember one specific time when we were getting complaints from citizens about the process of issuing municipal vehicle stickers which people had to buy ever year to support street maintenance programs in our community. The Village President, Barney Cunningham, was a part-time Village President. Like most city manager cities, all of the elected officials were part-time as far as the municipality was concerned, and they had full-time jobs in their regular careers. In this case, Barney, Bob Pierce, our Finance Director Bill Tollefson, and I were discussing how to deal with the complaints. After about 10 minutes of discussion, Barney said why don't we ask the two women at the front desk what they think. We asked them to come back to Bob's office. In another 10 minutes, based on the ideas of the women actually selling the stickers, we came up with a better solution which worked. I never forgot that lesson for the rest of my management career.

I learned a lot about what a municipality does to provide services to its residents and businesses. That included police and fire department responsibilities, public works maintenance (snow removal, pothole fixing, street sweeping, garbage collection, traffic controls, etc.) as well as other regular local government functions including engineering, utilities (water, sanitary sewers, and storm sewers), human resources, economic development, grant writing, a public library, and inter-governmental work.

One thing I always remember learning about providing services to the citizens of the community was that political parties did not make a difference regarding how the services were provided. In most large cities like Chicago, being a Republican or Democrat made a big difference when you

ran for office. But one of the requirements to being recognized as a city manager and professionally run city was that the elected officials were elected on a non-partisan basis. I remember our part-time Village Attorney, Henry Dietch, say once that "There is no Democratic or Republican way to pick up the garbage. Just pick up the garbage!" He was right, and I always remembered that.

I also learned how important it was to people that the value of their property not be lessened in any way due to something the village was going to do or what they thought the village should do. Land planning and zoning were always topics of great interest to homeowners if any proposed changes would impact their properties.

One issue area which many suburbs of Chicago did not have to deal with was dealing in a positive way with the human relations issues that were a reality in an integrated suburb like Park Forest. Because Park Forest was an integrated community, realtors in the area would "steer" prospective African-American families to look at homes in Park Forest. That was fine with us. But what they also did was "steer" white families to other suburbs which were totally or almost totally white communities. The Park Forest community and its elected officials wanted an integrated community were everyone was welcome, and no one was excluded. One of the programs I was asked to participate in was to go to realtors in the area as a prospective home buyer and ask to be shown homes in a certain price range. At the same time, one of the African American members of our Human Relations Committee would go separately to these same realtors. If we found that some realtors were "steering" us to different communities because of our race, we would sit down with those realtors and tell them that was not what we wanted happening in our community. The realtors knew that there were new laws prohibiting discrimination in housing. To our knowledge, they complied with our requests. We never found it necessary to take anyone to court.

Another one of my jobs as Assistant to the Village Manager was to serve in many ways as the Human Resources Director. I wrote the ads for job openings, conducted tests, and screened applicants before people were interviewed by the appropriate department head and the Village Manager. One thing I started to do was to pro-actively try to recruit candidates which mirrored the diversity of our community. That is what Affirmative Action was about in those early days after the Civil Rights Act was adopted. We were not considering changing our standards when it came to hiring people. But affirmative action meant making specific efforts to recruit a diversity of candidates by reaching out to a broader pool of candidates. In those days it meant finding various print outlets which were focused more on serving the minority community, contacting and notifying minority organizations such as the NAACP and Urban League to post our job openings, and speaking at community colleges, high schools, and libraries which served communities which had a strong minority population. My recollection is that we did not hire any minorities during the year and a half that I worked in Park Forest. But it started the ball rolling. During the next several years, Park Forest became a leader in diversifying its work force to mirror the makeup of the community.

One other thing that I remember from my work in Park Forest had to do with Fire Department services. Park Forest had a Fire Department consisting of some full-time firefighting staff and

some volunteers. Full-time staff were on duty 24 hours, 7 days a week. Volunteers supplemented the full-time staff on evenings and weekends. But during the weekdays, when most of the volunteers had full-time jobs some distance from the Village, Village employees working on weekdays were also trained to assist the Fire Department when fire and ambulance calls came in.

Since I worked in Village Hall right next to the Fire Station, I got trained as a supplemental firefighter. It was very interesting. Once lesson I learned, which I have never forgotten, is that a group of firefighters had to work very closely as a team. One of the training exercises I went through was learning how to fight a fire as a team in a smoke-filled building. I did not realize until I got into the smoke-filled building that I could not see anything two feet in front of my face. I had a gas mask on which certainly helped the breathing. But not being able to see anyone in front or in back of me was pretty scary. What we learned when going through the training exercise was that when entering a smoke-filled building, we all had to be linked together with ropes so that no one was lost in the process of fighting a fire and/or rescuing a person inside the building. It took a great deal of teamwork and trust in the other firefighters to safely and effectively do your job.

I learned a little about emergency medical care when ambulance calls came in. Back in 1969 and 1970, ambulances were basically old funeral parlor hearses which were used to pick up people at accidents or when they had medical problems at home or work. There were no paramedics or emergency medical technicians in those days. We learned basic first aid. When we would get to the scene of an accident, our main job was to load the people safely in the ambulance and get them to the hospital as quickly as possible. Again, I learned how important it was to work as a well-trained team with everyone doing their job in order to try to save a life.

When I passed all my training, I was issued a fireman's helmet, coat, trousers, and boots. When calls came in during the day, I would run over to the Fire Station, put on my protective clothing, hop on the back of the truck and head over to a fire or accident scene. It certainly was an adrenaline rush to do that. As I look back at that relatively short stint as a firefighter helper, I often laugh to myself, that when they issued me my protective clothing, they never gave me an axe. They probably thought I would hurt someone with it rather than be a help at the scene of a fire.

Some Final Thoughts on the 1960's

Big changes from a cultural standpoint were beginning to be seen in America. The time of flower children, hippies, and yippies had started. Smoking marijuana and using other drugs such as LSD was becoming more fashionable and acceptable to young people. The sexual revolution was in free swing. "Free love" and open marriages were part of the cultural change as well. The generation born post-World War II were starting to become known as the "Baby Boomers," children born in the late 1940's and through the 1950's who were now becoming young adults. This group was rebelling against some of the cultural norms of the 1950's and early 1960's which seemed too constrictive and limiting to the aspirations of many young people.

None of this cultural change touched me very much. I was busy going to school, so I could get a degree and a job, hopefully get married, and then support my family. Nobody was going to do that for me. So, all of my waking hours were spent working towards those goals.

I never got into the drug scene. Part of that was because I had very limited tolerance for alcohol. I enjoyed a little bit of it. But anything more than one beer or two highballs would make me dizzy and sick to my stomach. I figured drugs would probably do the same to me. Also, when reading about people who were using drugs, I got the sense that some of the drugs took a person to a different perception of reality. I guess I had been working very hard to understand reality for many years. I still did not understand as much as I might have and needed to. But I did not want to muddle my brain and perceptions of what was real and what was important by taking drugs to experience drug induced perceptions of reality.

As far as the change in sexual behaviors, I was always a little skeptical about how good free love and open marriages were for most people. I think the previous standards of behaviors in those areas were more restrictive and condemnatory than they should be. They were particularly so for women. But I thought the loosening of those standards trivialized loving relationships and reduced "love" to too much of a physical relationship and not enough to the deep, interpersonal relationship that real love can be. Plus, I was fortunate to meet, marry, and love my best friend shortly before this change in the culture came about. So, as these changes took place, I was an observer of the change and had no desire to be part of it.

Change is going on all the time in just about every aspect of life. I did not oppose the changes which were going on culturally, if that is what some people wanted to do.

I just did not have time to get involved in the hippie/yippee lifestyle.

I guess, more than anything, I had a full plate as the 1960's progressed and rolled into the 1970's, and I needed to focus my time and energy on those things for which I was responsible.

Chapter Fifteen

The 1970's – Some Big Changes

I completed my last classes towards my Master's degree in 1970. I still had to write a thesis. But getting all of the course work done made it possible for me to start looking for a city manager position. And like most young people in any profession, I wanted to work myself up the ladder, increase my experience, and make more money. Making more money was never the main reason for taking a job. All I ever wanted was enough to provide for my family and to get paid competitively in the marketplace for the job I was doing. I was making about $600.00 a month in those days, which was competitive for the job marketplace. But my family had grown since we got to Park Forest, and Gaye and I hoped to have another child.

While working for the Village of Park Forest, I became a member of the International City Management Association (ICMA). That was and is the professional association of municipal management professionals. One of the things they did was mail out a bi-weekly newsletter which included a listing and brief description of city manager positions around the country. There were usually 15 to 20 new positions listed in each newsletter. As I looked at the openings and applied for a few positions in the Chicago area, it became clear to me that if I wanted to get my first city manager position, I was going to have to apply for positions in small towns wherever they were located.

One position that became vacant was for city manager of Waseca, MN. It was a city of about 7,500 people located about 75 miles south of the Twin Cities. A couple of weeks after I mailed my resume to them, I got a phone call asking me to come and interview with the Mayor and City Council for the position. They said they would reimburse me for my travel expenses. I purchased a round trip ticket to fly from Chicago to Rochester, MN and lined up a rental car to drive the 40 or so miles to Waseca.

I told my Village Manager, Bob Pierce, that I was going to Waseca to interview. He did not give me a lot of advice, but one thing he said was that if I don't know something when they ask me a question, don't try to BS them. They will know when you are doing so. That was great advice. When I got to Waseca and met the Mayor and six City Councilmembers at the Powell House restaurant across the street from City Hall, they interviewed me during and after the meal. I don't remember many of the specific questions, but I was able to answer them honestly and in a professional way.

About three-quarters of the way through the interview, they talked about a wastewater treatment plant expansion that they were working on and wanted to know my experience in that area. I thought of Bob Pierce's advice and told them I had no experience with a wastewater treatment plant. I told them I had experience with wastewater collection systems (sewer lines), water plant experience, and my work in the foundry where operating very large machinery and equipment was necessary to get the job done. Then I added that one thing I do know about wastewater

treatment is that everything better run downhill, or we are all going to have a big problem. They all laughed. I think they saw I was honest and that I had a sense of humor. Several days later after returning to Park Forest, I got a call from the Mayor offering me the job.
I took the job at a salary of $10,000 per year. That was almost a 40% increase from what I was making in Park Forest. Of course, the job responsibilities were much greater as the City Manager than the job I had as an Assistant to the Village Manager. I started on the first Monday in November of 1970.

I drove the 400 miles plus from Park Forest to Waseca on the Sunday before starting work. The Mayor, who was part-time, owned the Twi-Lite Motel in the City. I stayed there for the first few weeks on the job. In the meantime, I commuted back home to Park Forest on the weekends. I would leave a little early on Friday afternoons and get home about 10:00 PM in Park Forest. We only had one car at the time, so Gaye and I did all the shopping necessary for the week ahead before I headed back up to Minnesota on Sunday.

After my first couple of weeks in Waseca, Gaye accompanied me back to Minnesota to look for a home. We found one and put down an offer which was accepted. We then, in turn, had to sell our home in Park Forest. In the meantime, one of the banks in Waseca gave us a bridge loan to get a mortgage on our new home until we sold our home in Park Forest. Gaye took care of selling our home in Park Forest, and I was able to bring a few things with me on my Sunday night drives back to Waseca so that I could live in our home in Waseca.

Towards the end of November, Gaye and Maureen took a flight up to the Minneapolis airport on a Sunday afternoon. Meanwhile, I loaded up the car with Maureen's crib and a few other things which would allow us to live until the full household of furniture and other belongings were moved up to Minnesota. I dropped off all of the stuff in the car at our new home. Then I headed up to the Minneapolis airport and picked up Gaye and Maureen. It was a long day, but we were back together again. About three weeks later, the moving truck arrived, and we had all of our household goods and could start living a more normal life.

Maureen was only 14 months old when all this moving took place. One thing I will always remember is that when the movers brought our living-room couch into our new home, as soon as the movers put the couch down in the living-room, Maureen went and hugged the couch. Home was getting to be like home again.



Maureen getting reunited with our living room couch.

Waseca as a City and a Municipal Organization

Waseca, a city of about 7,500 population was thriving in 1970. There was a very strong industrial base. Businesses in the city employed close to 3,500 people. We drew employees from 40 and 50 miles away to work in our city. The biggest employers were E. F. Johnson Co. which made CB radios, which were very popular at the time. Another large employer was Herter's which made, warehoused, and shipped a wide variety of hunting and fishing equipment and clothing around the country. Brown Printing published a number of professional and technical magazines, journals, and manuals. And Mishek Office Supplies was one of the first mail-order office supply companies in the country. There were also many other smaller employers which supported the larger companies in their equipment and maintenance needs.



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But the Mayor and one of the City Council Members had agriculture related jobs. The Mayor, Carl Swanson, who also owned and operated the Twi-Lite Motel, had a job as an artificial inseminator of cows. I had no idea something like that existed. As I found out, he would put on a long, rubber glove, take semen in a tube, insert his arm in the uterine canal of the cow, and then release the semen to fertilize the egg. Whenever Carl was late for a meeting, the usual comment was that he got his arm stuck. Also, people thought it was funny that the Mayor had a job as an artificial inseminator and owned a motel. The opportunities for jokes were just too tempting.

The City Council Member with an agriculture related job had a business breeding horses. He would stop in my office from time to time to discuss city business. But often, he told me some stories about breeding the horses and some of the unusual things that occurred during the breeding process. As a city boy, I found the stories interesting and, in some cases, very funny. He got a kick out of someone being amazed by and laughing at his stories.

The rest of the City Council Members were local businessmen. One owned a drug store. One worked for E.F. Johnson Company. A second one worked for E. F. Johnson, and he and his wife also owned and operated a music store. Another one owned a laundromat and car wash business.

To me, they were just regular guys trying to do a good job for the city. We got along very well. They wanted what was best for the city. No one was political from a partisan perspective or was positioning themselves for a run for higher office.

As a municipal organization, the city provided a broad range of services to its residents and businesses. The city provided all the usual municipal services of police, fire, and public works (engineering, snow removal, street maintenance, and garbage collection), as well as all of the administrative functions related to issuing licenses and permits, assessing property, sending out tax bills and collecting and accounting for the funds, planning and zoning activities, etc.).

In addition, the city had its own water and wastewater utilities; its own electric utility; an extensive park system, including two good-sized lakes; and somewhat uniquely, its own city hospital and related medical clinic. And because of the businesses in town which did business around the country, we had a pretty active airport.

Many of the employees were unionized including the police, public works, electric utility, and nurses at the hospital. That wasn't a problem as far as I was concerned. I came from a union family, and I had helped form a union when I worked for the federal government in Chicago. Now I was on the other side of the bargaining table representing management. But I was familiar with the dynamics of bargaining. I always thought in collective bargaining, people on both sides of the table had legitimate issues which needed to be resolved. My job was to keep moving the bargaining process forward and come to an agreement, so we could all get on to doing the work that needed to be done.

Intellectually, learning about this breadth of operations was exciting and fun. It was also a little intimidating because the people who ran these various operations in the city were more experienced than me and had more in-depth knowledge of their areas of responsibilities.

But one thing I found out rather quickly was that even though most of the people I managed were 20 or more years older than me and had considerably more specific knowledge and experience than I did in the various city operations, they all wanted some administrative and management leadership to represent them to the Mayor and City Council and to help them manage people and solve problems in their departments.

I could do that. And they found out quickly that I could help them get their jobs done better, more efficiently, and more effectively. It did not take too long of a time until we started to develop a real management team. It was fun!

As far as learning things you never expect to learn, during the first winter in Waseca, I got a call from a citizen one morning that the ducks were freezing in place in one of the lakes in the city. He thought we should do something about it. My first reaction was to laugh. Big mistake. I laughed because my first thought, since it was the middle of winter in Minnesota where the temperature regularly plummeted to 20 degrees below zero, that ducks were smart enough to fly south when it started getting cold. I only chuckled briefly, and pretty much to myself. The caller then went on to say that in one section of the lake, the city kept an outboard motor running off of a pier in order to keep some open water so the ducks could stay there all winter. I told him I would check into it. I called over to our Parks Department and told them about the call I received. They said that happens from time to time and they would get right over and fix or replace the outboard motor. They did so quickly, and the person who called was pleased we acted so quickly. Later that day, I drove by the park, a motor was running in the water, and the ducks were swimming around happily. From that moment on, I never was surprised when someone called me with a complaint. I took people seriously, and the city worked quickly to fix the problem.

Another thing I learned while City Manager in Waseca was a take-off on the old saying by Abe Lincoln that "You can fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time." I amended that saying to the following after a City Council meeting one night, “You can please some of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, but you can never please all of the people ever.”

One night the City Council passed a resolution thanking the Girl Scouts in town for something they did for the community. When I got home after the meeting, I told my wife that I think we did something at the City Council meeting that would please everyone in the community. The next morning when I got to work, I got two calls from people complaining somewhat angrily that we had passed that “Thank you” Resolution. They said that the Boy Scouts do a lot of good things for the community, and the City Council never passed a Resolution thanking them. I told them that next time, when the Boy Scouts do something positive for the community, to let me know, and I would prepare a Resolution for the City Council thanking the Boy Scouts. My conclusion from the incident was that old Abe was wrong. I changed the last line, at least in my own mind, “That you can never please all of the people any time.” That understanding has served me well over the many years to never expect total agreement from everyone no matter what I or the city I served did. Someone would always be unhappy. I needed to always recommend and implement policies and programs which I thought would be best for the overall city. I would talk with people who thought differently, and, when possible, make changes to meet their objections. But if I could not meet their objections, I still needed to recommend what I thought would serve the overall well-being of the city.

After I was in Waseca for about 6 months, I went up to the Twin Cities to attend the annual Minnesota City Managers’ Association conference. It was a chance to meet other city managers

in the State as well as to learn about new issues and solutions to problems which cities were trying. Since I was a first-time manager, I looked for an older manager who had been in the business for a while and with whom I could sit down with at lunch and learn from him. I saw an "old" manager (I was 28 and he was probably in his mid-50's, so he looked old to me) and sat down with him at lunch.

The first thing I asked him was as an experienced city manager, what advice he would have for a first-time manager like myself? He thought a few seconds and then said: "If it weren't for the people, this job would be easy." I laughed. I sure did not expect that. But he was serious. He said everything we do in our job involves people. The people we manage, our elected officials we work with, the citizens in our city, the business community, the schools, other governmental bodies, and so on and so on. In everything you do as a city manager, you are working with people. So, keep that in mind and learn to deal with people in a positive and constructive way.

What good advice. I had seen that in all of my previous jobs. I learned a lot of that from Bob Pierce in Park Forest. I was learning that every day in Waseca. One of the key things I was starting to learn was that I needed to listen better so that I would understand what other people think before I tell them what I think. So, I tried to be a better listener instead of the guy who knows what is best. I did not have any particular practices to help me do that. But being from a big family and being married to a very intelligent woman who often looked at things differently than I did, I was learning to do that.

Waseca was a very complete community for a city of 7,500 people in a county of about another 7,500 people. In addition to all of the municipal departments and services listed previously, there was a daily newspaper in town and an AM radio station. The newspaper was the Waseca County News. The radio station had a very agriculture-based set of call letters. The station was either KOWZ or KORN. As the City Manager, I was interviewed by both of them on a regular basis. I was getting well-known in the City pretty quickly. Of course, being a public figure, that has its pluses and minuses.

A somewhat small thing while working in Waseca is that the City had a billing system that was run on a paper tape driven machine which was made by Burroughs at the time. It was not a full computerized operation. But the billing Clerk who ran the machine only had to input current utility usage for each customer and the machine would automatically do the calculations and print out a bill to be mailed. It was nothing like the Commonwealth Edison computer I saw in 1963. But it was a sign that many organizations, businesses, and governments, were very interested in how new technology could get work done more efficiently and cost-effectively.

One of the really nice things about working in government in the early 1970's was that most people saw government as a positive contributor to their well-being. People saw a legitimate role for government, particularly local government. We were looked at as one possible part of a solution to a problem rather than being the problem. Over the previous 100 years in Waseca, when people wanted something for themselves and their community, they worked together to make it happen. When they needed electricity back in the early 1900's, they started an electric utility. When they wanted and needed more and better medical care, they built their own

hospital. As airplane transportation became more important for local businesses, they built an airport. All of these were started by many people coming together in the community, most often with the City as the coordinator of discussions and programs. When things got started, the City was often given responsibility to run the operations. But very importantly, all of these programs and operations had advisory boards which provided considerable citizen input on how they should be run. As City Manager, I met with these different advisory boards on a regular basis.

I was truly having fun. Keeping everything running smoothly was one job. But very importantly, the city had plans to improve and expand quite a few of its services. The Airport Board wanted to replace the grass runway with a paved runway. The sanitary sewer department needed to expand and upgrade the wastewater treatment plant to handle more industrial development. The Hospital Advisory Board had worked very closely with a citizens' group to bring three new, young doctors to the city. The group built a clinic. But they also wanted the hospital to expand its capacity and upgrade its facilities. The Housing Authority wanted to build a senior apartment complex in the downtown area. And the Park Board wanted to build an indoor hockey rink.

Everybody knew all of these projects would take some money to make them real. In those days, there were federal and state grants and federal revenue sharing which could pick up some of the costs for some of the projects. I wrote grant applications for many of them and got a number of grants approved. But everyone knew they would have to pony up some local tax money, and the great majority of citizens and businesses were happy to do so to improve the community.

One of the biggest, most expensive projects while I was in Waseca was the expansion and renovation to the hospital. This improvement would be funded totally by local dollars. Most of the money would be raised by a local bond issue and would be paid off by a combination of hospital charges and revenues and by a local property tax. Since it was an expensive proposition, the City Council decided to put the project on as a referendum. My job was to make presentations in person and on the radio to promote the project. I don't recall the exact vote in the referendum, but it was somewhere around 75% for the hospital project and 25% against it. People wanted good things for their community, and they trusted the city to work as a key partner with everyone in the city to get things done.

One aspect of being responsible for a hospital was that I had to weigh my own moral thoughts in relationship to medical services and medical ethics issues. For the most part, that was not a very controversial matter at the time. Doctors at the hospital were doing birth control/sterilization surgeries for quite a while. Men were getting vasectomies, and women were getting tubal ligations. The Catholic Church, to which I belonged, was opposed to any type of artificial birth control. At that point in time and as I wrote about previously, I thought the Catholic Church was wrong on this matter. Plus, the City hospital was a public hospital. Even if I had wanted to somehow impose my beliefs on the medical and hospital administrative staff, which I did not, I didn't think it was my right to do so. Birth control was an accepted medical option for many people. That the City hospital provided those services to patients never came up as an issue during my tenure in Waseca.

But in January of 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court in the Roe v. Wade decision, made abortion an acceptable medical procedure in the U.S. Frankly, I had no idea of whether or not any abortions were taking place in the City hospital. When the court decision was handed down, no one within the community raised the issue of abortion from either side of the question. I did start to think about it myself. I wondered what my position on the matter should be or even if it was within my purview as the City Manager to weigh in on the topic. Frankly, up to that court decision, abortion was not a very controversial subject for most people. It certainly wasn't something I had given much thought to. So, as I thought about what position, if any, I should take regarding abortions at our City hospital, Gaye and I had made a decision to return to the Chicago area in the summer of 1973. In the meantime, the issue never came up for discussion at a City Council meeting or Hospital Board meeting. I have thought about the abortion issue a lot since then and will discuss it later in this book when I ran for elected office in Wisconsin in 1990.

Two other issues were starting to be considered by municipalities in general with which we had to start to grapple with in Waseca. One was cable television. Up to that time, in many parts of the country, all television was broadcast over the airwaves. Every home and business had a TV antenna on its roof. There were basically three TV networks: ABC, CBS, and NBC plus most areas of the country had a public TV station. A few larger cities such as New York and Chicago had a local, independent TV station. In the early 1970's, cable companies started promoting paying for TV instead of getting it free. They sold the idea based on better reception and picture quality using a cable connection. They also sold it as having special broadcasts of various sports and entertainment specials which were not going to be broadcast by any of the three networks. Since the City owned the electric system in the City, the cable TV company wanted to use our combination electric and telephone poles for their cables to access individual homes and businesses. My recollection is that we did strike an agreement with the cable company for them to pay us to use our poles.

The second issue was the rise of Walmart. We were approached by Walmart regarding locating one of their stores in Waseca. Many of the merchants in town were opposed to having Walmart locate a store in the City. They told us about other cities where Walmart had located and how the Walmart stores caused many of the retail businesses in those cities to go out of business. We had a very strong retail base in Waseca, but it was mainly single proprietor stores. As a City government, we could not prohibit a new business developing in the City as long as they met all of the zoning requirements. After some discussion with a Walmart representative, they decided not to build a Walmart in Waseca at that time.

On the home front, we settled into the community quite easily and quickly. The neighborhood in which we lived had some young families with young children. One of the lakes in the city was about a mile away, so during the summer months, we could go down to the lake after supper or on a weekend and go swimming with Maureen (by now, we always called her Mo). Gaye stayed at home with Maureen. We only had one car, and I needed it to get back and forth to work and to meetings around town. We joined Sacred Heart Catholic Church. Gaye made some friends through the Church. She joined a bridge club and met with them from time to time.

Since we moved up to Minnesota as winter was beginning, we found out very quickly that winters in Minnesota were much colder than those in Chicago. The first winter we were there, there was a stretch of about 20 days when the temperatures went down to 20 to 25 degrees below zero at night and warmed up to minus 5 degrees during the day. One night we were sitting in the TV room watching television when we started to hear some very noticeable popping sounds. We had no idea what it was. I mentioned that to some of the people at work the next morning. They said not to worry about it. Sometimes when it gets very cold, the nails in the studs in the walls of the house shrink up in the cold and start partially popping out of the wood. They wouldn't pop out entirely, but they would loosen up a little. When it warmed up again, the nails would return to normal size and our house would stay standing.

During my first year as the City Manager, I got approval from Roosevelt University to base my thesis on a one-year diary as a new city manager. The title of the thesis was "Diary of a City Manager." I made diary notes most days on what happened that day in terms of management issues, policy changes and recommendations, human resource problems, city council interactions, and just about anything significant which occurred which I had to deal with that day. The idea was not only to catalog those issues and actions, but also draw together and analyze how they impacted me as a new city manager, how I dealt with them, and what lessons I learned. I was awarded a Master's Degree in Public Administration in June of 1972.

After about a year and a half in Waseca, Gaye decided that she wanted to get a second degree in accounting. Mankato State University, about 25 miles west of Waseca, located not surprisingly in Mankato, MN, offered an accounting degree. She started taking some classes at the University. She did not have the chance to finish her accounting degree while we lived in Waseca. But she got started.

In the summer of 1972, my sister Margaret married Ron Hershey back in Chicago. We went down for the wedding. Shortly thereafter, Margaret and Ron moved to Waseca, rented an apartment, and got jobs in town. It was nice to have some family up there with us.

Two big picture political and cultural things that happened in 1972 were gathering strength. One was the women's movement which resulted in Congress proposing a Constitutional Amendment called the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The second was the Watergate break-in Washington, DC.

Though women got the right to vote in the 1920's, there were many areas in which women were still treated as second class citizens and/or were discriminated against, particularly in the job world. The prevalent cultural norm was that a woman's place was in the home. Her primary job was to have babies, have responsibility for raising them, and to make her home a welcoming and relaxing place for her husband, the family breadwinner.



better than women when it came to running things
omen were capable of doing jobs which

traditionally had been done by men. Job opportunities were very limited for women growing up in the 1950's and 1960's. Those women who went to college and got degrees were most frequently expected to be either teachers, nurses, or social workers. Women without degrees were expected to be secretaries, work in retail, be telephone operators, or similar lower level and lower paying jobs. "Help Wanted" ads were listed in separate sections of the newspapers: Help Wanted – Male and Help Wanted – Female. And not coincidentally, these cultural, and in many ways religious limitations made most women economically dependent on their husbands.

However, starting in the 1960's, as more women wanted a broader range of work and life commitment choices, the women's movement began to grow in acceptance and in power. As the ideas promoting women's equal rights began to attract more and more support from women as well as men, I remember thinking that this is a good idea. When I thought about it, I was thinking about all of the strong and capable women I knew as I grew up. My two grandmothers were as strong and capable as any men I knew. They may not have been as physically strong as most men, but from a personality and strength of character perspective, they were equal to or better than a lot of men I knew. My Mom, a mother of ten children, was one of the best people I knew. She was a great organizer. She was smart. She was hardworking. She loved her immediate and broader family in an exemplary way. Some of my Aunts were also very strong people.

So, when the idea of an ERA was proposed, it seemed like a no-brainer to me. The Civil Rights Act of 1965 spelled out what rights minorities could and should enjoy just the same as white Americans. That law was being implemented, more slowly than I and many had hoped for; but it had codified how minority populations should have equal opportunities which had the force of law behind them. It made sense to me that a similar set of laws should be in place to support equal opportunity for women.

In March of 1972, both houses of Congress passed legislation by more than the required 2/3 vote calling for a constitutional amendment supporting equal rights for women. Under the US Constitution, 3/4 's of the state legislatures had to approve the Constitutional Amendment. Eventually, 35 states approved amending the Constitution. But 38 needed to approve it in order for it to become the law of the land. That never happened.

The second major political happening in 1972 was what became known as the Watergate scandal. A group of national Republican Party funded political operatives, known as "The Plumbers," broke into the Democratic National Committee Offices on June 17 and were arrested at 2:30 a.m. while in the process of burglarizing and planting surveillance bugs in the Democratic National Committee offices at the Watergate Building Complex.

When it first occurred, it did not seem to be anything earth-shattering. It was pretty much accepted as a regular thing that political parties would do what they could to cause problems for and try to gather information about the other party. But several days after the story broke, word was spreading that the orders for the break-in came from the President's Office. As reporters started digging into the story, President Nixon and his main White House Staff denied having any role in the break-in. But no official investigation into the connections between the Plumbers and the White House was undertaken. Instead, I remember John Mitchell, the U.S. Attorney

General at the time, saying that his office would not undertake an investigation until after the election in November. He said that such an investigation might influence the election. My reaction was "Duh, Ya think?"

Richard Nixon was re-elected by a landslide to the Presidency that November. But shortly after his Inauguration on January 20, 1973, the Watergate Plumbers were convicted. And in the process, some of those convicted started telling the Court that they were coerced into giving false testimony about who was behind the break-in. The FBI started an investigation. In May, the U.S. Senate started a special investigation into the Watergate scandal.

Over the next 14 months, the investigation continued, and the Senate Committee conducted live, televised hearings on Watergate. Also, during this time 25 Nixon White House aides were found guilty or pleaded guilty to criminal charges related to the Watergate break-in. The House Judiciary Committee voted in July of 1974 to recommend to the full House that Nixon be subject to impeachment hearings in the Senate. Before that process began, Richard Nixon resigned on August 9, 1974. He was the first President to resign his office, and he has remained the only President to do so.



The entire Watergate scandal riveted the country for over a year. Democracy won out in the minds of most people, including me. But what I thought might be a longer-term problem as a result of the Watergate scandal is the loss of faith by people in their government. Watergate combined with all of the lies and misinformation related to the Viet Nam war under both Nixon and President Johnson eroded people's confidence in the federal government. Unlike people like me who were born and raised during the 1930's and early 1940's when the federal government was a positive force which helped lead us out of the Great Depression and through victory in

World War II, young people raised during the Viet Nam war and Watergate were raised in a time when the federal government was something not to be respected and trusted. I saw that reaction in my younger sisters and brothers, and I thought it was a pretty common reaction by people who grew up in the late 1960's and early 1970's.

In the summer of 1972, we found out that Gaye was pregnant, and the baby was due in February of 1973. Again, we had no idea of whether we would be having a baby girl or boy. Unlike the practice when Maureen was born, I was able to be in the delivery room with Gaye when she went into labor and stay with her until the baby was born. Our second daughter, Alice Gaye (Ali as we soon began to caller), named after her Mom and Grandmother, arrived on February 18, 1973.



Maureen, Ali, and Gaye

Ali, like her sister Mo, was a beautiful baby and was healthy in many ways, but she had some digestive difficulties which, at the time, doctors did not know what to do to make her feel better. Sleep for Gaye and I was not something we got much of. After several months, we decided it would be best to move back to Chicago where we could be near more family who could help us work through helping Ali get better. Also, Gaye wanted to get a job, and there was not too much opportunity for her to get something more professional in Waseca.

I gave notice to the City that I would be leaving my position as City Manager at the end of May. The Mayor and City Council were very gracious in accepting my resignation. We had accomplished a great deal in the almost three years I served as City Manager, and a lot more was already in the pipeline to be continued and completed in the next couple of years.

After I gave notice in May, Gaye, Maureen, Ali, and I drove down to Chicago. Gaye and the girls temporarily stayed with my parents while Gaye looked for an apartment in Chicago. I went back to Waseca, sold our home, and finished up what work I could before my end date with the city. In the meantime, Gaye found and rented an apartment in the Rogers Park neighborhood of Chicago. I rented a truck and with the help of a few friends loaded it up. I then drove to

Chicago and our new apartment. As we were all used to doing for each other, my family helped us move into our new residence.

Chapter Sixteen

Back in Chicago

As much as we enjoyed the small-town experience in Minnesota, we were happy to be back in Chicago. Gaye started looking for a job and got one very quickly working for the Illinois CPA Society in the relatively new IBM Tower in downtown Chicago. Gaye's job was to plan professional conferences for CPA's working in Illinois. She enjoyed being back in the work world. I stayed at home with the children while we figured out what I could do to earn some money while we also took care of the kids.

I looked for some evening jobs so that I could watch the kids during the day and then go to work when Gaye got home from work. I thought maybe I would drive a cab or work retail for a while. Or maybe get a second shift job at the Post Office.

No local government was looking to hire a part-time city manager or assistant city manager. But I remembered the advice of Mr. Tomsho about taking your resume with you and knocking on doors. I got someone to babysit Mo and Ali one day and headed down to Roosevelt University where I had received my master's degree. Dr. Teresa Carr King was head of the public administration program. I took a class she was teaching as I did my coursework. She was then my thesis advisor.

Teresa told me that one of her adjunct faculty members in the Public Administration program was a guy named Paul Reaume. Paul had served as City Manager in Lake Forest, IL. She said that he had started a municipal management consulting firm in 1972. It started as a one-man operation, but Teresa thought he might be looking to hire someone on a part-time basis as the business started to grow.



Paul Reaume as he headed out to meet with a local government client.

His suit coat was always on a hangar in the back of the car.

Paul had started his municipal management consulting firm as part of Callaghan & Company in Chicago. Callaghan & Company was a law publishing company which specialized in municipal law. Callaghan had a national clientele, many of which were local governments and attorneys who served the local governments.

The owner of the company was Michael Cudahy. Mr. Cudahy had served as Mayor of Lake Forest, IL for part of the time that Paul was City Manager of Lake Forest. Paul and Mr. Cudahy became good friends. When Paul was looking for some new professional challenges in his career, he and Mr. Cudahy started talking about starting a municipal management consulting firm to provide some of the professional consulting services to local governments which Mr. Cudahy thought were very helpful in the private sector, but which were not being offered in the public sector. Most importantly, Paul wanted to promote professional and effective local government around the country. He had done that as a city manager in his own city. Having a consulting company gave him the opportunity to promote that on a broader scale.

One area they thought would be helpful to local governments was providing executive search services to cities and counties when they wanted to fill vacancies in city manager, police and fire chief, public works directors, city engineers, city planners, etc. They also thought that local governments could benefit from organizational effectiveness and efficiency studies, consolidation of municipal services, and management training and counsel.

When I heard that Mr. Reaume was considering hiring a part-time person, I asked Teresa if she would contact him and recommend that he talk with me. She did that. I sent Paul my resume, and we scheduled an interview at his office. The interview went well. He then wanted to have a second interview, but this time he wanted to include a friend and professional colleague of his to be part of the interview process. The friend was Bob Saunders who had been a city manager in the Kansas City area who went on to get a PhD. in psychology.

Paul did not say it, but the career path I was on, a combination part-time management consultant and part-time stay-at-home dad was a little weird in those days. Men were supposed to be the main breadwinners in the family and women were supposed to be home with the children. What Gaye and I were doing was just the opposite of what was the cultural norm at the time. Even some of my larger family thought what we were doing was not a good idea, particularly putting Mo in nursery school. But it was what we thought would be best for our family. So, we did it.

I think Paul wanted to make sure I was not some nut case. Apparently, I passed the psychological examination. After Paul and I worked together for a number of years and became good friends as well as colleagues, I told Paul that rather than Paul having Dr. Saunders evaluate me to see if I was sane, I should have asked Dr. Saunders if Paul was not some crackpot. Outside of my large family of brothers and sisters and cousins, Paul became my best friend over the years. I could always rely on him, and he could do the same with me.

After that second interview, Paul hired me to help him grow the business. I started working for him in September of 1973 on a part-time basis. I worked Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of each week.

Since neither I nor Gaye would be home for those three days of the week, we enrolled Maureen in the Busy Beaver nursery school in Rogers Park. We also hired an in-home babysitter to care for Alice at home on the first three days of the week.

The first thing Paul wanted me to do was to take the first three days of every week and make cold calls on local governments in the region to introduce our services and firm to the mayors and city mangers/administrators in those cities.

Since we had only one car at the time, and I would be on the road for the first three days of the week, I needed to rent a car so that Gaye would have transportation for her and the children while I was gone. Consequently, I had to rent a car. That is quite a simple thing to do today, but this was 1973 and credit cards were not very common. To rent a car for my first road trip of cold calls, I hopped on an "L" train to a rental car agency in downtown Chicago with Maureen in tow. I told them I wanted to rent a car for three days. I filled out the paperwork, and then they asked me for a credit card to process the rental agreement. I did not have a credit card. I had a checkbook with me. I told them I would write them a check. They were kind of hesitant to accept that. They were worried that I might run off with the car and never return it to them. The person behind the counter asked me how I could guarantee to them that I would return the car. He said to me "Are you sure you will be bringing the car back?" Maureen, who was sitting on the rental car counter quickly piped up, "My Daddy is coming back on Wednesday night." Maureen was almost 4 at the time. The rental clerk was convinced I was coming back after Maureen's assurances.

The next day, I headed up to Wisconsin and Minnesota and made cold calls on about 30 cities explaining our services and who we were. Over the first several months on the job, I made cold calls on cities in Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri and Indiana. That was quite an experience.

After I made some sales calls, Paul hired a sales consultant to give both of us some training. There are several things I learned from that training that I still remember and served me well at the time. One was to always be a little early for any appointment.

Another was to look for something in the potential client's office that you could ask about. It might be a picture of them hunting or fishing, or maybe their college and graduate school diploma, or maybe a picture of something in their city (i.e., a project the city was working on or had completed, an award the city won for something they had achieved such as a Tree City, USA designation, etc.). The point was that if you can get them talking, they become more relaxed and enjoy the conversation rather than thinking they want to get through this sales call as quickly as possible.

But even more important than making them comfortable, it was very important to listen to what they said, particularly what they wanted to accomplish in the future or problems they were encountering at the present time. Because once you understood that, you could find ways to suggest to them that the consulting services we were selling might help them get the job done.

After making cold calls for several months, we started to get requests to submit proposals to do consulting work. If it was executive search work, Paul would usually prepare those proposals. If it was HR related work (pay and classification, performance evaluation, or management effectiveness and efficiency studies), I would usually prepare those proposals.

After submitting written proposals, we often had to follow-up with in-person presentations to the appropriate city elected and/or appointed officials. Again, Paul did the executive search presentations, and I did the other ones.

After making cold calls and writing proposals, we started to get some jobs. I did not travel as much because I was not making as many cold calls. So, I started going into the Callaghan & Company offices in Chicago right off the Edens Expressway. It was about a 20-minute commute which for Chicago is a relatively short time. Again, I would go into the office Monday through Wednesday. But once we got consulting jobs, I would have to go to the client city to work with people as the consulting project I was working on required. I would usually leave on a Sunday evening, so I could start work the first thing on a Monday morning. I would then get back home on Wednesday evening. While I was gone, Gaye would wait in the morning for the babysitter to come to our home to take care of Ali. Then she would get Mo off to nursery school. And then she would hop on the Howard Street "L" and head downtown to her job.

On Thursdays and Fridays, we would all get up together. Most days, Gaye would just walk from our home to the "El" stop. But on some mornings, we would pack the kids into the back seat, and we would all drive downtown along Lake Shore Drive and drop Gaye at her work.

Once our consulting work picked up, I would still work Monday through Wednesday either on the road or in the office. I would also do most of the report writing related to our consulting assignments in the evenings and weekends.

One day in 1974, I was working at the office near the Edens Expressway in Chicago. I went to lunch with Paul and another guy. As we got back to the office building parking lot, I saw a roll of money sitting partially under a car. I picked it up, took off the rubber band, and counted the money. It was about $1,700.00. My first thought was that someone who serviced the vending machines in the complex of several office buildings accidentally dropped the roll of bills. I figured I would hold on to it and see if someone came to claim it in the next few days.

Paul suggested that we call the police and make out a report in case someone reported some missing money. We called the police, and when they arrived, they were very apprehensive. There had been a lot of bribery scandals involving some Chicago police officers in the last several years. The police officers who came to take my report thought they were maybe being tested and/or set-up to see if they would just take the money for themselves and never report it

missing. Also, they were suspicious because it wasn't within their realm of experience that if someone found $1,700.00, that they would call the police about it.

Once they thought I was legit with my request, they filled out the report on the missing money. They told me that the standard procedure for lost items was that they would be put on a list and people had 30 days from the time it went on the list to file a claim. The police officers did not think anyone would put in a claim because they thought it was a wad of money which was lost by a bookie. They did not think a bookie was going to show up at a police station to claim a lost wad of bills. The police gave me a receipt and took the money with them. When the 30 days were up, no one had claimed the money. So, I went to the main police station and claimed the money. I got it without any trouble.

Gaye and I decided to give 10% to a charitable organization. We decided we would use most of the rest of the money to go on a vacation to Jamaica which we did in early 1975. My folks were happy to watch Mo and Ali for a few days while we escaped winter Chicago weather and spent several days in Jamaica. We stayed at a lovely resort and could look out at the Caribbean Sea from our hotel room. It was a dazzling blue-green color.

Starting in 1974, Gaye decided that she wanted to get some training as a Para-Legal to improve her job possibilities for the future. Roosevelt University offered such a program. Gaye graduated, with honors, from the program in May of 1975. She specialized in Probate, Wills, and Estates. She then started looking for a job as a paralegal. It did not take too long, and she got a job at a LaSalle Street law firm in downtown Chicago.

In the Fall of 1975, Maureen entered Kindergarten at our parish school, St. Ignatius, in our neighborhood. It was right across the street from the Busy Beaver Nursery School where she was already going. When her school day was over, she went across the street to be at Busy Beaver until Gaye or I came to get her. On Thursdays and Fridays, I would pick up Mo as she got out of school, and she would spend the afternoon with Ali and me at home. Sesame Street was still in its early years, so we enjoyed watching Big Bird, Bert and Ernie, Oscar the Grouch, and all of the other characters. Mister Rogers was also after school, so we enjoyed watching that as well. As Mister Rogers would always say, "It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood." And it was in our neighborhood and home.

<u>Back On Spaulding Avenue</u>

We continued in this mode until the summer of 1976, when we moved from Bosworth Avenue in Rogers Park in Chicago to 3821 N. Spaulding Ave in Chicago. We moved mainly because we wanted Mo and Ali to be closer to their grandparents, Ludtke cousins, and their Aunt Sophie.

I was born and raised at 3752 N. Spaulding, less than a block from where we moved. My Mom and Dad still lived in the same home, as did my Aunt Sophie and Uncle Ed. My cousin Edwin and his wife Kathryn along with their seven girls, Deborah, Elizabeth, Mary, Caroline, Felicia, Helen, and Constance lived a block away on Christiana Ave.

We rented a second-floor apartment from the Scianna family. We were right across the street from the Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School and Church. That is where me and all my sisters and brothers went to elementary school. Besides being close to the family, we wanted Mo and Ali to go to a good Catholic elementary school with their cousins.

Gaye was still working downtown as a paralegal at the law firm. Now she caught the "L" at the Addison stop which ran down the middle of the Kennedy Expressway. She was doing very well there and really enjoyed the work. I continued working for Paul. About mid-year, he detached our consulting group from Callaghan and Company and set up an independent firm which he called Paul A. Reaume and Associates (PARA). I was still his only Associate. But we did start hiring some independent contractors to help us on some of our consulting work. Business was growing, and we were busy. I continued working three days a week in the office or on the road at a client. The other two days, I was home with Mo and Ali and sometimes worked in the evenings and weekends when Gaye was home.

Mo started first grade at IHM in the Fall. She was in the same grade as her cousin Constance (Connie from now on). After school, Mo would go to the Ludtke's home when I was working. Debbie the oldest of the cousins, was the chief, after school baby-sitter. Ali spent Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday with Aunt Sophie; and then, as she got a little older, at the ABC Nursery School on Elston Avenue. When Mo got out of school in the afternoon, she went to the Ludtke's home on Christiana Avenue on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Gaye or I would pick up Ali at ABC Nursery School. On Thursday and Friday, I was home with Ali and Mo would join us after school. But since they both got along so well with their cousins, they would often head over there after school. Frequently, on the days I was home with Ali, we would go out to breakfast after we saw Mo off to school. We usually went to the Harris Restaurant on Irving Park, a long-time neighborhood restaurant. Gaye, our girls, and I would also occasionally all go out for dinner at Manzo's Pizza Parlor, another neighborhood restaurant which was a family favorite going back to the early 1950's.

In October of 1976, Gaye and I celebrated our 10th wedding anniversary. We went out to dinner. I still remember part of our conversation that night. First of all, 10 years was a long time in our lives. When we got married in 1966, I intended it to be forever, but forever is a long, long time. I couldn't see that far in the future. But I figured I can give it everything I had for 10 years, and I'll see where we were at. We had done a lot in ten years. We lived in four different apartments and two homes we had purchased. We had completely re-organized our lives and our roles in our marriage during that time. We both grew as people. We had become even better friends over the 10 years. And we thought and hoped that the next ten years would be good for us as a family and professionally.

Sometime in 1977 I got appointed to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish School Board. One of my jobs was to help organize the weekly Bingo at the Parish Hall as an on-going fundraiser for the school. My Mom and Aunt Sophie were regular Bingo players. We had a machine which tossed all of the Bingo numbered balls in the air. I would take a ball out of the machine and call out the number. One time, my mother who was sitting up close to the front, caught my eye during a game. She needed "B6" in order to win. So, before I pulled out the next numbered ball,

my mother held up 6 fingers and mouthed the letter “B.” Of course, my Mom was an honest woman, so she was just kidding around. It did cross my mind to pull out the next ball and call B6. But I didn't. Mom would not have been pleased if I did. But we did get a good laugh out of it. I can still picture her holding up the five fingers on her right hand and one finger on the left and mouthing the letter “B.”

1978 was an eventful year. Some things were still the same. Gaye was working at the law firm in downtown Chicago. Mo was in 4th grade at Immaculate Heart of Mary School. Ali started kindergarten at IHM. Ali would go to Aunt Sophie's after her morning in kindergarten and then would go with Mo to their cousins' home on Christiana Ave. at the end of the regular school day around 3 PM. Gaye or I would pick them up at their cousins’ home around 5:30 PM.

I continued to work as a municipal management consultant with Paul A. Reaume Associates. The consulting business was growing, and we were getting more clients than ever before. I continued a part-time schedule, but the overall hours I worked was getting close to 40 hours per week. But since I could work from home, I think I was one of the first people to be a flex-time worker.

There were two firsts that I did as a consultant that year. Both gave me some very good experience which I continued to build on in the years ahead.

One very important first for our consulting company and for me was that during the Summer, our consulting company partnered with a business school professor and a political science professor from Lake Forest College to conduct a broad-based, strategic planning process for the City of Waukegan, IL. It was a very innovative approach to giving people in their community a role in identifying goals and programs which they thought would be good for them and their city. We involved over 125 people from the city including elected officials, city staff, business and community leaders, the educational community, as well as a number of interested citizens. We held 1.5 hour listening sessions which involved 12-15 people each. We did about 12 sessions over a couple of months period of time. In the end, we developed, and the Mayor and City Council adopted, a strategic plan to implement the policies and programs that the broader community wanted to see get done in the next five years. Based on that experience, we started offering that type of consulting service to our clients. When we got the jobs, I was the one who worked with the clients to facilitate the process and come up with a written, strategic plan.

A second very important happening in 1978, was that I taught my first supervisory management class. I did it as part of the consulting company. It was a six-week course for first and second level supervisors working for the City of Waukegan, IL. I found that I enjoyed teaching, especially to an older group of workers. I also found that being responsible for teaching a class in management, I had to learn a lot more about management theory and practices. I had learned some of that as a student when I went to graduate school. But in that case, I learned things so I could pass a test, get a good grade, and get my Master’s degree. At this point of my career, I had been a worker and first line supervisor reporting to higher management as well as a manager at the top of the organization. I had seen some things that worked and some that didn’t work as far as managing is concerned. I tried to copy the good that I had seen and avoid the bad and the ugly. But when I started teaching some management classes, I started to think about and analyze

what management theories, behaviors, and practices could make a manager and the organization effective.

One more thing about consulting was that I got to travel to and work with many different cities. I always enjoyed learning about the different communities including their history, in many cases the immigrants that built them, as well as their economic base: What kind of jobs did they have in the community? What did the jobs pay? What was the cost of housing? I also learned to converse with many different people in many different communities around the country. I was continuing to learn how important it was to really listen to people with whom you are working so that you can assist them and involve them in coming up with solutions. As a consultant, you are supposed to be the "expert." And as a consultant, I gained some expertise and experience working with multiple cities. So, in a way, I had a broader base of knowledge than many to the clients we worked with. But a consultant who comes into a city and just tells people what to do in order to have a more successful and effective organization, will find that like many consultant reports, they look good, but end up gathering dust on a shelf somewhere. I was learning that the people and organizations I was consulting with, had some good ideas of what challenges they faced and how they might address them. A big part of my job was to really listen to these people, pick out the best of what they thought should be done, and add my own recommendations as part of the final report to the community. That awareness and knowledge has served me very well over the years.

One of the most interesting cities we worked with in the late 1970's was Hibbing, MN. Hibbing is in the far north of Minnesota. Hibbing is located in an area called the Iron Range which got its name from the many large, open pit iron mines in the area. When I thought of who lived in northern Minnesota, I always thought of Swedes and Norwegians living there. There were some Scandinavian people living there, but I was surprised how many people with Italian last names lived in Hibbing. After being there for a couple of days interviewing people who worked for and with the City, I asked the Chief of Police, who had an Italian surname, why there were so many people of Italian extraction in Hibbing. He said that many Italian people had immigrated to the area in the 1920's and 1930's because of the iron mines. The people who immigrated came from northern Italy where there were quite a few coal mines. They started immigrating to the U.S. in the late 1800's to work in the coal mines in Pennsylvania. Then, when the iron mines started in the Hibbing area, many of those same Italian immigrants moved to northern Minnesota to work in the mines. Who would have thunk?

Another interesting part of the history of Hibbing was that as the open pit iron mines grew and grew, the mining companies began to understand that some of the best iron ore was under what was then the City of Hibbing. So, the mining companies, working with the City and the local schools, moved the entire City about two miles south. New schools, a new city hall, and many other public structures and infrastructure was also rebuilt. What was most impressive to me was a tour I got of Hibbing High School. Just walking in the front door was impressive. It was like walking into a cathedral or art museum. There were huge murals on the walls. The architecture inside and out was first-class. And, when they showed me the school auditorium, it reminded me of walking into Symphony Hall or the Lyric Opera in Chicago. The auditorium was huge. It was

decorated with murals and sculptures. And the acoustics would match any professional level performance space in the country.

Amazing what wonderful things can be accomplished by business, government, and people in the community can do when they work together.

And finally, what I learned about many communities I worked with, was the number of famous people who came from those communities. In the case of Hibbing, the two most outstanding names at the time were Bob Dylan (born and raised as Bobby Zimmerman) and Roger Maris, the New York Yankee ballplayer who broke Babe Ruth's single season home run record.



Bob Dylan



Roger Maris

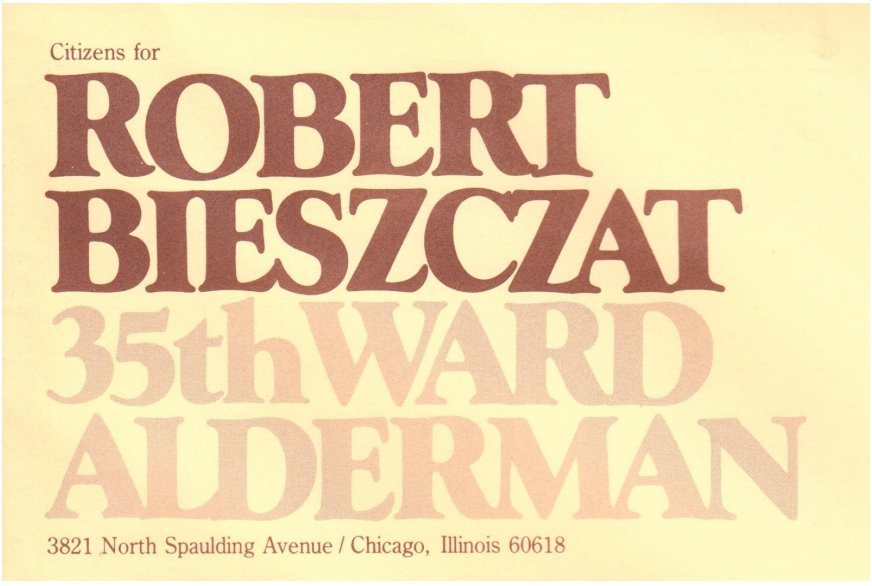
Famous People from Hibbing, MN

Chapter Seventeen

My First Crack at Politics

I had been interested in running for elected office ever since the Presidency of John Kennedy. President Kennedy's call to all of us "To ask not what your country can do for you; but ask what you can do for your country" was a very inspiring call to public service. I thought government at all levels had a role to play in making people's lives better. I had served in appointed positions. But I thought I could make even a broader contribution in an elected position, not only at the local and state level, but maybe even at the national level someday.

But you have to start somewhere. So, sometime early in 1978, I decided I wanted to run for Alderman in the 35th Ward of Chicago.



There is an old saying attributed to Ald. Paddy Bauler from the north side of Chicago: "Chicago ain't ready for reform yet." Paddy Bauler was Alderman of the 43rd ward of Chicago from 1933 to 1967. He was also a saloonkeeper. He He was known as a controversial and colorful Chicago political boss and is famous for that quote, which he exclaimed many times over while dancing a jig in his saloon upon the news of Richard J. Daley's first election as mayor of Chicago in 1955. Mayor Daley banned Bauler from attending public functions for a time shortly after the quote was published.

I thought that maybe in 1978 Chicago might be ready for some reform. Several independent aldermen had been elected from a few of the north side wards along the lakefront and from the area around the University of Chicago on the south side in 1964. I thought that a northwest side, primarily Polish ward might be ready to join the independent movement. Because of my city manager background and municipal management consulting experience, I thought I might have a

chance as candidate to change the way the City of Chicago did its business, particularly more honestly, openly, and professionally. Another reason I thought it might be time for a change in Chicago politics was that Mayor Richard J. Daley died in 1976. The mayoral election in 1979 was going to be more wide open which held the promise of more real Independent and Republican voters turning out for the election.

But before getting into my campaign which began in 1978 and concluded with the mayoral and aldermanic election in February of 1979, let me present some information on politics in Chicago at that time.

In 1978, Chicago's population was just a little over 3,000,000 people. The city was divided into 50 wards. So, each ward had approximately 60,000 people. And each ward contained 30,000 to 35,000 voters.

Aldermanic candidates ran and were elected on a non-partisan basis. Every alderman was elected not as a Democrat or Republican, but as an Independent.

But in reality, the Cook County Democratic and Republican parties supported candidates who ran for the City Council. Generally, of the 50 Alderman, 45 plus were supported by the Democratic party, 1 or 2 by the Republican party, and 2 or 3 were genuine Independents who were supported by neither party.

I thought that if I were going to bring some positive changes to the City by being an Alderman, I needed to run as an Independent without the support of either party.

I was pretty familiar with how party politics worked in Chicago. My uncle and godfather Mathew Bieszczat was a very powerful member of the Cook County Democratic party in 1978. He was a member of the Cook County Board, which is the County which encompasses Chicago. He was also the Ward Committeeman of the 26th Ward in Chicago which was just northwest of downtown Chicago. But most importantly from a political power standpoint, my Uncle Matt, who I loved and respected, was Secretary of the Cook County Democratic Party Central Committee. The Central Committee was made up of the Democratic Ward Committeemen of each of the 50 wards. (The Republican party had the same political structure but was nowhere near as strong as the Democratic party in Chicago).

To give you an idea of how strong my Uncle Matt's position was in Chicago and Cook County, The Mayor of Chicago, Richard J. Daley, was the Chairman of the Democratic Central Committee. George Dunne, the Cook County Board Chairman, was the Vice-Chair of the Central Committee. And my Uncle Matt was the Secretary. A Ward Committeeman’s power on the Central Committee was determined by how many votes his ward turned out in support of Democratic candidates in primary elections. Uncle Matt consistently turned out the highest number of votes among the primarily Polish wards in the City. Consequently, he held the position of party Secretary for many years.

When I decided to run for Alderman, but before I announced that I was going to run as a true

Independent candidate, I went to see my Uncle Matt. I did not want him to be embarrassed and caught off guard that I was running. I told him what I was planning to do and why. He told me he thought I was making a bad decision. He said I would get beat for sure. He thanked me for coming to tell him. And I thanked him for taking the time to meet with me.

My wife, brothers and sisters, my cousin Ed Ludtke and his wife Kathryn, and my cousin Terry all pitched in to help in the election. I do not recall how many names we had to get on nominating petitions, but it was a substantial number (a thousand plus for sure). We all went out and collected the necessary signatures. We started putting campaign materials together and started scheduling events and fund raisers. We all knocked on doors and I worked many of the "L" and subway platforms in the 35th Ward.

The first big news of 1979 was the second biggest snowstorm in the history of Chicago: 20.3 inches fell on January 13-14. It was a mess and threw the local political world into an uproar.

The original Mayor Daley died a couple of years ago, and the Alderman from Daley's Ward, Michael Bilandic was appointed Mayor to fill the unexpired term. Mayor Bilandic was coasting along to election as Mayor for a full term when the storm hit. He was being challenged by several candidates including Jane Byrne (an Irish candidate) and Roman Pucinski (a Polish candidate). But Bilandic was the candidate of the Regular Democratic Party (aka, "The Machine"), and most everyone thought he would win.

Chicagoans are used to snowstorms, so for the first few days after the storm, everything was pretty snarled up and everyone took it in stride. But after several days, very little progress was being made in opening streets for vehicle traffic and the "L" lines for rapid transit. People started getting very angry, and Bilandic did not seem to understand how upset people were. He totally lacked a sense of urgency that people thought he should have. That gave Jane Byrne and Roman Pucinski a real opportunity to possibly beat the Regular Democratic Party organization.

That impacted my campaign because many people, including myself, thought that independent (non-Machine) candidates might have a better chance of getting elected.

So we all went out (close to 100 of us: family, friends, neighbors, other Independent politicians, etc.), trudging through unplowed streets and unshoveled sidewalks and knocked on doors. As our campaign started to gather steam, we became noticeable to the Regular Democratic Organization. They thought I might be a threat to the “Machine” dominance which ruled the entire City.

Dick Mell was the Alderman and Ward Committeeman in the adjoining 33rd Ward. (As an aside, eventually Ald. Mell's daughter married a guy named Rod Blagoevich. With Mell's support, Blagoevich became a Congressman and then Governor of Illinois. Like many Governors of Illinois, Rod Blagoevich is now serving time in a Federal prison).

Ald. Mell did not like the other two Regular Democratic Party candidates (Casey Laskowski and John Marcin) running for Alderman in the 35th Ward, so he had one of his people approach me

to see if I would like to run with the support of Dick Mell and his small army of approx. 150-200 Precinct Captains and workers. (To put things in perspective, the population in a Ward was approx. 60,000 people. Of those 60,000 people, approx. 60% were registered voters. So, there was one precinct worker for every 200-250 voters in the Ward). That is a lot of door-knocking power. And for many of those workers, their day jobs depended on them turning out the vote for the Regular Democratic Party candidates. That is why when I told my Uncle Matt that I was running against the Party as I described previously, he told me that I was going to lose the election.

I met with David Axelrod who was representing Ald. Mell. (Axelrod was just getting started in Chicago politics. He rose up over the years and served as one of President Obama's key campaign strategists and advisors during the Obama Presidency). Mr. Axelrod said that Ald. Mell would like to support me in the upcoming election.

But I knew that Ald. Mell's support would mean that I would be indebted to him and the Regular Democratic Party. I did not get into the election race to be just one of the boys. I wanted to try and make some changes and so did my family and the volunteers who lived in the Ward and worked on my campaign. So, I declined his offer.

Word got around the Regular Democratic Party that I refused Ald. Mell's help and that I looked like a pretty strong candidate. So, the next thing they did was to start collecting signatures for another young, supposedly Independent candidate with a Polish name to get on the ballot. That is another frequently used tactic that the Democratic Party used then and still uses today. The purpose of this candidate was to draw votes away from me so that anyone inclined to vote for an Independent would see my name and the other candidate's name and pick between us.

As the election neared, I started to get endorsements in the Chicago newspapers, including Mike Royko's endorsement of me in the Aldermanic election. Here are the words Royko wrote: 35th Ward. "What we have here is a Polish civil war. John C, Marcin, the ward boss, was dumped as city clerk and now wants to be Alderman. Ald. Casey Laskowski, an undertaker, wants to keep his job. And young Robert Bieszczat has leaped in. He is the nephew of Matt Bieszczat, a mean machine ward boss, but Robert is independent. When he told his Uncle Matt he was running, Matt said "You are nuts." (My Uncle Matt did not say that to me. But Royko was not beyond embellishing a story to make his point). Since Marcin lives in Wisconsin, and Laskowski is a drone, young Bieszczat is probably the best choice. His Uncle Matt will have a stroke if the kid wins."

The voting results were "close, but no cigar." I missed the runoff by 35 votes. There was an official canvas of the vote because it was so close. But unless I wanted to spend several thousand dollars on a full recount, the results stood. Plus, we had poll watchers at every polling place as did several of the other candidates. I think it was one of the closest watched races in the City and was watched very closely by our poll watchers as well as those of other candidates.

One of my cousins told me jokingly that if I was too dumb not to buy 35 votes, I didn't deserve to be an Alderman in Chicago. I told him I was trying to change things for the better which he

knew.

It was quite an experience. I am so grateful for all of the people who helped me during the election, particularly all of my large and wonderful family.

In the summer of 1979, my brother Frank married Arlene Fraulini. Since Frank was Ali's godfather, Ali was selected to be the Flower Girl at the wedding. We got some great photos of Ali enjoying that role. We also got some great pictures of us nine siblings with our Mom and Dad, both of whom were still in pretty good health. Dad had retired the previous year when he turned 65. As he left his job, they gave him an exit physical. They found some traces of what they thought might be prostate cancer. But in 1979, he was still strong and healthy.

He and my Mom spent most of their time living in Twin Lakes, WI. They still owned the home on Spaulding Avenue in Chicago, but now that Dad wasn't working in Chicago, they could spend more of their time in Twin Lakes. They had bought a summer cottage in Twin Lakes some time in the late 1950's or early 1960's. Over the years, Dad, who was a Journeyman carpenter, redid the whole cottage inside and outside to make it a year-round home. All of us boys helped Dad do that. But Dad did the bulk of the work.

As the summer wore on, and I had taken a shot at my dream of running for office where I could hopefully do some good, it was time to take a shot at one of Gaye's dreams.

Gaye always loved gardening and really wanted to grow organic food for the marketplace. During the summer of 1979, we drove up to Wisconsin several times and found a home with 9 acres of land in Burlington Township, just outside of the City of Burlington. We moved up to our new home in late October of 1979.



Chapter Eighteen

The 1980's - Time for More Adventures

1980 was a very interesting year. Gaye and I were both city folks, born and raised in Chicago. She was from the southside of Chicago, and I was from the northwest side.

Gaye quit her job with the law firm in Chicago. I was continuing to work for Paul A. Reaume Associates. Its headquarters were in Northbrook, IL. I would drive down from Wisconsin several days a week, depending on how much traveling I was doing to work directly with clients in the Midwest and other states as well. I was working full-time at this point. I would also just stay up in Wisconsin some days and work from home. Though I never thought of it at the time, I was probably one of the earlier tele-commuters from a work standpoint.

We spent the first part of 1980 getting settled into our new home and getting Mo and Ali started at their new school in Burlington, St. Mary's School. Ali was in 2nd grade and Mo was in 6th grade. Gaye started doing research on organic gardening and decided that we would use about 5 of the 9 acres to plant organic raspberry and blueberry plants. There was also about an acre of land in asparagus which are a perennial and which come up every year.

Living in a rural area near a small city was very different for us. But it was not something we could not deal with. People were still people. We got to know a number of people, primarily parents of children with whom our children went to school. We joined one of the Catholic parishes in the city. It was the same parish which ran the local Catholic elementary and high school.

The basement in our home was unfinished. But that year I decided to finish part of it for a bedroom for Gaye and me. The children had the two bedrooms on the main floor of the house. Since we no longer were living in a City like Chicago, with a great public transit system and because we were about 3 miles out of town, we got a second car. It was an old Buick. One of those gigantic cars from the 1960's. That was Gaye's car for getting around Burlington. I had a yellow Subaru which got great gas mileage which was important considering how many miles I put on going into Chicago regularly as well as to clients in Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota and Iowa. I was also flying a lot more to clients. One nice thing about being in Burlington between Chicago and Milwaukee was that I could fly out of either airport depending on the times and cost of flights.

1980 was our first full year living on a small farm in Wisconsin. In the late Spring of 1980, we put in 300 organic raspberry and 200 organic blueberry bushes. After having a local farmer plow up five acres, I roto-tilled it and dug a hole for each plant. Then Gaye, Mo, Ali, and I started planting the bushes. Before planting each bush, we put some amendments (peat moss and compost) in each hole before putting in the plant. We got an initiation into how dependent farmers are on the weather. You can only plant when the conditions are right, like no rain while planting, the soil not too wet, no chance of frost anymore that Spring, etc. Gaye was the project

manager. I and the children helped her with the grunt work. We got everything in on a timely basis. The weather cooperated, and the plants took root. It was hard work, but we had fun.

I continued to work with Paul Reaume and The PAR Group. Our business was really growing. Paul added some retired municipal managers to our team as part-time, independent contractors. I was working full-time, going into the office in Northbrook, IL when necessary; traveling to and working with clients mainly in the Midwest, but also around the country; and working from my home office.

Diversity in the executive search business was becoming an issue. When I got into the municipal management business in 1969, probably 95% or more of municipal managers were white men. Most were WASPS (white Anglo-Saxon protestants). There were a few members with ethnic names, like my Polish name, Bieszczat; and I did not meet any other Poles or Italians, or other easily identifiable ethnics. There were also few, if any women or African-American, or Hispanic people in the business. That wasn't unusual in the top management ranks of any profession at the time. But fortunately, that started to change in the late 1970's and early 1980's.

As we did work with communities around the country, there was a growing interest in having more diverse pools of candidates which matched the demographics of the different communities from which those communities could select their next municipal manager, or Chief of Police, or Fire Chief or any top management position. Being an executive search firm, we were in a good position to promote diversity because we could pro-actively recruit people to be interested in a particular position, whereas the cities looking to fill positions just advertised their vacancies and hoped they would get a diverse pool of candidates. It was not a formal prohibition, but most cities did not actively recruit talent from another city. It was viewed as unprofessional. And, you did not want other cities trying to "steal" your top talent.

In the early 1980's we did a search where a woman was selected as the municipal manager. We also did a search where an African-American man was selected as the municipal manager. There were some new groups starting to form which Paul Reaume and The PAR Group supported such as the National Forum for Black Public Administrators. A few years later the Local Government Hispanic Network was formed. And subsequent to that the Woman Leading Government group was formed. One of the steps forward in Paul's and my mind was that an openly gay man was appointed to a high-level management position in a major metropolitan area when we were helping that organization find a new leader. It was good business to support these groups; but the main reason we did it was because we believed that everyone with talent and commitment to local government should have the opportunity to be considered for top jobs. And by supporting these groups, we had access to and were trusted by professionals in these emerging groups when we did searches throughout the country.

One of the projects which I helped start and manage was a group of 50 Chicago suburban communities costing out not only salaries of some benchmark positions in cities, but also determining the cost of employee benefits. It was really something very few organizations in the public or private sector had done up to then. For the first few years, I did all of the calculations on a calculator. But it was around 1981 that computers were becoming more and more a part of

the business world. We connected up with a company called TekCom in Woodridge, IL. I worked with their staff to computerize all of the data and calculations. It seems like nothing now, but back in the early 1980's, that was quite a breakthrough in how organizations in business, government, and not for profits were moving into the computer age.

As part of working with these groups of cities, we conducted workshops where representatives from the different communities got together and reviewed the total cost approach to salaries and benefits. The workshops usually ran for half a day. I had never put on a workshop for 50 or more professional managers and HR staff. It was interesting preparing for these programs. I worked with the technology in use at the time for making group presentations. Information was presented to the group using an overhead projector and using transparencies which were placed on the overhead projector base and were then projected on to a screen. That was interesting in and of itself. But one very practical thing I learned from Paul, which seems pretty mundane, is that when you have rented space to make a presentation, get there at least an hour before the program is scheduled to start, because you never know if everything is set up correctly. If it is not, you then have some time to work with hotel and restaurant staff to make adjustments to the seating, projection equipment, etc. before people start arriving. It is a simple thing but some thing I have never forgotten. I have made numerous presentations to a wide-variety of audiences at a wide-variety of venues. No matter how much you think is already settled by phone about the meeting logistics, get there early. It is worth the effort.

Because of the success of this program in the Chicago suburban area, we also created similar groups among downstate Illinois communities as well as in Minnesota. I also tried to establish a similar group in the Detroit metro area. I met with a number of municipal managers in the Detroit area at a restaurant called the Machus' Red Fox restaurant. The interesting thing about this restaurant is that it was the last place Jimmy Hoffa was seen before he disappeared in 1975. Most people at the time figured Jimmy was buried in concrete in some highway, sports stadium, or other building project. Turned out his body was found in an oil drum in New Jersey in 2013.

It was also during the early 1980's that I started doing some supervisory and management training at the community college level. I taught a course in communications at several campuses of Gateway Technical College.

Mo and Ali continued at St. Mary's School in Burlington, WI. Mo was 12 and was in 6th grade in the Fall. Ali was 9 and entered 3rd grade in the Fall. Each year, the Burlington Parent Teacher Organization held a citywide Spelling Bee. Ali was in 3rd grade and participated in the 3rd and 4th grade division. She was one of the youngest children in that group. It was no surprise to us that Ali won first prize in that age group and received a $50 US Savings Bond. The winning word she spelled was "chaos." When we asked her after the spelling bee how she knew the correct spelling, she said it came from reading Archie comic books. Apparently, Archie and his friends were always creating chaos, which appealed to Ali. You never know where you might learn something. My sister Mary Kay married Mike Lorsbach in September. Mo was honored to be a bridesmaid. Again, we got some great family pictures with all of us, plus all of our in-laws, and all of our nephews and nieces. Dad was still doing pretty well health-wise.

We continued to live in Burlington, WI. Gaye was managing the growing of fruits and vegetables. Unfortunately, organic raspberries can get some type of disease or fungus. Everything was blooming like crazy in the Spring. We began to notice that as the raspberries ripened, some of the little raspberry surfaces started to dry up like a raisin. We had no idea what was happening, so we went to the local University of Wisconsin Extension office with some berries and asked them what was happening. They said the raspberries were getting sunburned and parts of the berries were drying out. As a city boy, my reaction was "Sun burn?" Raspberries like just about anything else that grows needs sun to do so, and we had plenty of sun, so what was the problem? When we inquired further, they told us that the raspberries had picked up a plant disease/fungus which caused the leaves of the raspberry plants to start to curl up and expose the raspberries which were growing under the leaves to get more direct sunlight than was good for healthy, juicy fruit. There was not anything we could do about it at this point. To keep the problem from spreading, we pulled up as many of the plants that had the disease and burned them.

Gaye also worked part time at the beginning of the year doing taxes at an accounting firm in Burlington. I continued to work with Paul on the municipal consulting business. Business was growing steadily, and we were working with municipal clients from coast to coast and north to south. I was travelling several times a month for 2 or 3 days at a time. Fortunately, I could fly out of Mitchell Field in Milwaukee for many trips and did not have to go down to O'Hare Airport in Chicago. In addition to working the fields for Gaye, and doing the consulting work, I decided to run for the Wisconsin State Assembly. More about that later.

One very positive thing we started when living in Burlington is that we were able to make time on a regular basis to do some exercise every day. Gaye had started walking for a half-hour just about everyday when we lived on Spaulding in Chicago starting in 1977. I was still playing basketball, tennis, and racquetball when I could. That was easier to do when we lived in Chicago. I still played those sports whenever I could, but I started walking with Gaye on a regular basis. It was a great habit to start from a physical fitness and well-being basis. It also gave us time to talk about all kinds of things that we encountered as a family, in our respective work lives, and our community.

We also both stopped smoking while living in Burlington. Gaye always reminds me that she stopped before I did, which she did. I stopped, mainly, because I was getting too many colds and sinus infections. One day, while driving into The PAR offices in the Chicago area, I rolled down the window and tossed out the package of cigarettes. I know it was littering, but I figured get rid of them right now, which I did. It was hard to stop smoking, but one of the things I did was go for a walk after lunch and dinner. Those are the times I most wanted a cigarette. By getting up and going for a 15 to 30-minute walk, my craving for a cigarette had passed. Plus, I was getting more exercise. Plus, I was feeling better overall with no colds or sinus infections. After about 6 months, I have not had any desire to smoke ever since then.

One other health-related thing we started doing in the early 1980's was to start incorporating a healthier diet into our daily lives. Around this time I read somewhere, probably a newspaper article, and they were quoting some doctor that what kills most people is what they put in their

mouth over the years. Smoking was one very high cause of death. So was alcoholism. And people were becoming more aware that sugar, salt, and fats in our diets, particularly in processed foods, was causing a rise in diabetes, heart, and cancer as causes of death. We didn't go crazy trying to change everything in our diets, but we did start eating more fruits and vegetables and using less salt when cooking. Ever since that time, we have continued to improve our diet whenever we could.

Another Run for Office

I always thought I could make a positive difference in people's lives through government. I think I have through my professional life of public service. But I also thought I might be able to do more by being elected to political office. After losing such a close election in Chicago in 1979, I thought I would give it a try in Wisconsin. I decided to run for the State Legislature in Wisconsin for a seat in the State Assembly. Unlike Chicago where who you know is very important in the political world, I thought Wisconsin would be more about what you know.

Also, I could see already that two years into the Reagan presidency, with tax cuts for all, but especially for the very wealthy, four things I considered to be bad were happening.

One was that the disparities in wealth, which have always been a precursor to national economic depressions in our past economic history, were starting to grow substantially. We were all told that cutting taxes on super-wealthy individuals and corporations would increase investment which would increase jobs. New terms like "Supply-side" economics and "Trickle Down" economics became part of the justification for those tax cuts. Part of the promise also was that deficits in the national budget would not increase because revenues from all of the new economic growth would offset any loss in revenue.

A second thing I was concerned about was that deficits had grown significantly in the first two years of the Reagan administration. So, the federal government borrowed money/sold bonds to fund the government through the times of deficit spending. Most of the bonds were purchased by people who were already very wealthy and could afford to buy the bonds. What started to happen was that the interest on the national debt started to grow substantially. Interest on the national debt was rapidly on its way toward one-third of the federal budget. What very few people seemed to recognize was the interest that was paid to the mainly very wealthy bondholders was paid by the majority of taxpayers in the country. Besides the tax cuts which substantially favored the rich, paying interest to them was another transfer of wealth from the majority of taxpayers in the country to the super-rich.

A third thing which I thought was going in the wrong direction in the early 1980's was the attack by the Reagan Administration on unions, starting with the air-traffic controllers. Strong unions were good to me and my family. My Dad had a good union job in the day time as a machinist, and also would work as a union carpenter on some evenings and Saturdays. Even with 10 children in our home, my Mom did not have to work outside of our home. We never had a lot, but we always had enough. On a larger scale, the growth of unions in the 1930's, 40's, 50's, and 60's had given working people some leverage to get a fairer share of the growing economic pie.

This improved salaries and benefits for the union workers, and it also forced employers who were not unionized to pay better wages and benefits to attract and retain workers.

The fourth thing which I thought was not going in a good direction was the idea, repeated over and over by President Reagan, that government in general was the problem in getting things done for the average person. He also often said that everything would be better if we just ran government like a business.

For my first fifteen years working in business and government, I saw firsthand how local governments and businesses worked together to address issues and challenges in their communities. By this time, I had worked for two municipalities as described earlier. I had also worked with about 50 local communities around the country as a municipal management consultant. In my experience, government had an important role to play in helping provide a good life for its citizens. Many, many times, I saw local communities, meet and decide what they thought was good for their communities. And to implement those projects and programs, people knew it would cost something. Local government political and administrative staff worked with businesses and citizens in the community to get good things done. Also, having now worked in business and government, in both situations, there were mainly good workers and a few not so good workers. I saw successful businesses and successful government and not-for-profit organizations. I also saw some of each of those types of organizations not be successful. "Trickle Down" economics and run government like a business were good political sales lines, but they had no basis in reality in my experience and knowledge.

So, I took the plunge again.

I ran as a Democratic candidate for the State Assembly against an incumbent Republican. We got volunteers together from our district. As always, my family (Gaye and our children as well as my brothers, sisters, and many of my cousins pitched in). We got off to a good start in May and June. But then we had some bad luck. The State was going through a redistricting after the 1980 census. It was about July 1 that they came up with a new State Assembly, State Senate, and US Congressional district map. The boundaries for the District I was living in and running for were changed, and I no longer was a resident of the District in which I had started running. I had a choice to either just stop running for office or move into the district where I had already knocked on many doors. I chose the latter. I moved into an apartment in the new district and kept the campaign going. I knocked on approximately 10,000 doors during the campaign. But the re-districting was a tough blow. I was now running in a September primary against a well-known, long time resident of the new district. I lost by several hundred votes to a good man named Ray Moyer, who went on to represent that district for a number of years and did a very good job for his constituents.

Leaving the Farm & Returning to Urban Living

As we moved into 1983, we could see that the organic farming was not something that was going to work for us. We could have torn out and planted new blueberry and raspberry stock, but there

was no guarantee that the fungus would not attack those plants as well. Also, we were way ahead of the curve when it came to a market for locally grown organic fruits and vegetables.

So, we put our home up for sale. Home mortgage interest rates were sky high, so it took us a while to sell our home. Plus, we had to lower the price below what it would have been in a better home sales market.

We thought about moving back to Chicago, but we had really enjoyed our time in Wisconsin. We started looking at some possible homes and apartments in Milwaukee. We found a townhouse on the East Side of Milwaukee. It was near the campus of UW-Milwaukee. It was bordered on the west by the Milwaukee River and on the east by Lake Michigan. It was a pretty trendy area. There were many coffee shops before Starbucks started building them everywhere. There were also some good bookstores such as Schwartz's Book Stores which were a local institution. And just north of us was one of several locally based food stores called Sendiks. They were forerunners of healthy food stores which eventually brought Whole Foods, Trader Joe's and similar food stores into the broader marketplace.

The neighborhood was very walkable. Gaye and I, and sometimes Mo and Ali, would join us for a walk. There were some grand, old homes in the area, particularly as we wandered further east towards Lake Michigan which was only about a mile away. Often, we would drive down to the lakefront, park the car near the beach, and walk along Lake Michigan. And in regards to walking, we lived only a few miles away from the BayShore Shopping Mall. It was an enclosed mall. So, if the weather was bad (not too unusual in Milwaukee, particularly in the winter), we could hop in the car, drive a few miles, and get in our half-hour walk every day.

One thing we did in 1983 was change the spelling of our last name from Bieszczat to Beezat. I wanted to do that because I intended to run for elective office one more time sometime in the future. And unless I was going to run for office in the City of Chicago, a last name that people could not pronounce, or spell, was not a help in getting elected.

Also, when I did run for office in 1982, the US was having a lot of high-profile conflicts with the Iranian government. People in this country did not have a favorable reaction to foreign sounding names, particularly ones that looked and sounded like they came from Eastern Europe or the Middle East. One Iranian leader's name which was in the news frequently was spelled Gotzbadeh. I thought...Gotzbadeh, Bieszczat...who would know the difference when they got in the voting booth sometime in the future? If an American voter did not know a whole lot about particular candidates and had to choose between candidates named Gotzbadeh, Bieszczat, or Smith, my guess is that a larger number of voters would vote for someone named Smith rather than either of the other two.

When we sat down as a family to discuss changing the spelling of our last name, we thought that a phonetic spelling of Bieszczat would be one possibility. When people could not pronounce or spell our last name, they would usually sputter around a bit, and I would tell them to just say Beezat. Which is pretty much what I was called in the business world. When I was doing business with clients and potential clients I had used the following routine to help people spell

my last name: B as in boy, i, e, s, z as in zebra, c as in cat, another zebra, a, t as in Tom. At that point, many people would say "Would you spell that again?" And off I would go again.

One of our daughters suggested that as long as we were changing our last name, maybe we should pick the name Kennedy. They seemed to get elected readily, and maybe it would work for me. We enjoyed a good laugh, but we decided to legally change it to Beezat which we did that Spring.

When we moved to Milwaukee in the summer of 1983, we had to find new schools for Mo and Ali. Mo started as a freshman at Whitefish Bay Dominican High School in September. We checked out several schools for Ali. Because Ali had done so well in school in Burlington, we decided to see if she could skip a grade and move from 3rd grade which she finished in Burlington to 5th grade. We spoke with the principal at St. Robert's Catholic School about the possibility. We put her in touch with principal of St. Mary's in Burlington. After a brief conversation between them, Ali was admitted to St. Robert's as a 5th grader that Fall. One of the things we got for us and the kids was the first computer we ever had in our home. I think it was a very basic Apple computer. As I recall, we bought a dot matrix printer to go with it. Had to keep up with times.

Gaye got a job with First Wisconsin Bank in downtown Milwaukee doing tax work. I continued to work with Paul Reaume on the municipal consulting business which was doing very well.

The most momentous event of 1984 was the death of my Dad, Frank Bieszczat. Dad died on August 22. He was 71 years old. He had fought prostate cancer for about 6 years. He had an exit physical when he retired from the City of Chicago for whom he had worked for many years. In the course of that physical, they found that he had prostate cancer. Over the next six years, he had some very good times as well as some very trying times due to the cancer.

Mom and Dad had moved permanently to Twin Lakes, WI a few years after Dad retired in 1978. Mom and Dad had the cottage in Twin Lakes for quite a few years. I would say at least the early 1960's and maybe back into the 1950's. First, they rented a cottage across the street for a few summers. Then they eventually bought the cottage at 819 Lake Street. Dad turned the summer cottage into a year-round home over a number of years. He enlisted the help of his children and their spouses to help him insulate the walls and ceilings, enclose the front porch screens with Jalousie windows, dig out part of the basement to allow for more overall living space, put in a bathroom in the basement, add a room with a fireplace off the back, etc., etc. Dad was a worker, and he expected us to work with him when we came up to TL.

Twin Lakes was the family mecca for most celebratory events as well as the weekend vacation spot for all of our growing families. All of Mom and Dad's grandchildren loved going up to the lake. Gaye and I and our two daughters would often go up on a Saturday morning during the summer months and come back home on Sunday afternoon. We barbecued in the driveway, played indoor and outdoor games, went swimming, and just had a wonderful time.

The last time Dad was really up and about for a celebratory event was on Mom and Dad's 45

wedding anniversary on June 10. Dad was getting pretty weak by then and did not go out much. But on June 10, which was a Sunday that year, one of the Masses at St. John's Church was a commemoration of Mom and Dad's 45th wedding anniversary. We were in Church waiting for Mass to begin. Dad was not there yet. But just as Mass was about to start, Dad walked into the Church (I don't recall which family member drove him there) and the entire congregation applauded. He sat down next to Mom and was able to stay for the entire Mass. After Mass, we all went back to their home and had a grand party.

Dad was a very good man. How he and Mom raised the 10 of us becomes more amazing to me as the years go by. Dad was an excellent athlete. He played 2nd base for Lane Tech High School when they won the Chicago City baseball championship in 1930 or 1931. When he graduated, he signed with the Chicago White Sox and was sent to play for the Duluth White Sox in the Northern League. He played for 1.5 seasons in Duluth. But between the Great Depression, not getting paid much, his father getting sicker, and some homesickness, he gave up trying for the major leagues. He continued to play semi-pro ball in Chicago. Sometimes the semi-pro team he was on would play games against major leaguers in a ballpark located around Addison and Elston Avenues on the northwest side of Chicago. The ballpark was about 2.5 miles west of Wrigley Field. Often, after the Cubs finished a day game, some of the Cub players and visiting team players would come to the local ballpark and get paid by local bars to play the semi-pro team my Dad was on. Dad played against Charlie Grimm, Frankie Frisch, and lot of other old-timers and Hall of Famers.

Somewhere along the line, Dad met Mom. I think they were both in the Church choir at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church on Spaulding Avenue in Chicago. Mom was a big baseball fan. She was the 7th child of nine in the Liss family which all lived in the neighborhood. Mom and her brothers and sister would often walk east on Addison Ave. to go to Wrigley Field for a ball game. As we grew up, Dad was always more of a Sox fan because he had played for the organization. Mom was more of a Cub fan. We always laughed that they had a "mixed marriage." But with ten kids and 45 years together, they seemed to find ways to make a good life for themselves, their children, and be part of a loving, supportive larger family of brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents.

Thank you Dad, for all the good things you gave us.


FRANK S. BIESZCZAT
1918
1984

Chapter Nineteen

Back to Municipal Management

In 1985, after working with and for Paul Reaume for 12 years, I decided I wanted to get back into municipal management with a specific community. By this time, I had worked with over 125 municipalities across the country. I learned a quite a bit by working with all of those communities. I learned some things that worked well and other things that did not work well. I wanted to take that knowledge and perspective and bring it to bear in one particular municipality in which I could play a key role in managing. Also, I had been traveling frequently as part of my work. And though the traveling was a broadening experience, I had gotten to the point that if I did not see another airport (or worse yet, never have to wait for hours in an airport for flights which were more frequently delayed), I would not miss that aspect of my work. In addition, our two daughters were either a teenager (Mo would turn 16 this year) or a soon to be teenager (Ali would turn 12 in 1985). I wanted to spend more time with them before they headed off to college and then out on their own.

The first thing I did was talk with Paul and let him know what I was thinking. As always, Paul was a good friend and a good professional. He understood where I was coming from. He wished me well, and I thanked him for all of the professional opportunities he provided for me as well as for his friendship. I learned so much from Paul, particularly from his impeccable professionalism and integrity, his commitment to local government, and his high standards of customer service.

I started applying for a municipal manager job. I limited my search primarily to Illinois and Wisconsin because most of my larger family were located in the area. I wanted to continue to have close, positive relationships with them, and I wanted my children to continue to have good relationships with their cousins, aunts and uncles, and their one remaining grandmother.

I interviewed for the position of Town Administrator in Mt. Pleasant, WI sometime in March or April. I did not hear back from them for a while. I figured they had selected someone else to fill the position. But when they entered into negotiations with the candidate they selected, they could not reach an employment agreement. So, around the middle of April, they contacted me about taking the position. I met with the Town Board. They offered me the position, and I accepted. I started working for the Town of Mt. Pleasant sometime in May of 1985.

Mt. Pleasant was a very interesting community in many ways. It had a population of approximately 25,000 people. It was a Town form of government which meant that unlike a city or village form of government, some of the more basic decisions, like approval of the budget and tax levy were brought before all of the people in the Town in an open, annual town meeting. And though there had been many city and village managers and administrators in Wisconsin for years, there had never been a Town Administrator position authorized by State Laws. That legislation passed sometime in 1984, so when I was appointed to the Town Administrator position in Mt. Pleasant, I was the first person to hold that type of position in Wisconsin.

Mt. Pleasant is located just outside of Racine, Wisconsin which is the home of SC Johnson and Case Tractor companies, among many other large and well-known companies. Many of the Johnson and Case company manufacturing facilities were located in Mt. Pleasant. Because of that heavy concentration of businesses, the Town had a substantial number of employees, particularly in the areas of Police and Fire personnel because of the value and importance of the businesses in the community.

We moved to Mt. Pleasant after the school year ended in June of that year. Mo was enrolled at St. Catherine High School in Racine. Ali entered 8th grade at Starbuck School in Racine. Gaye left her job in downtown Milwaukee and took a few months to help us all get settled into our new community.

From a professional standpoint, I had a very good Town Board to work with in Mount Pleasant. I also had a good team of Department Heads. In addition, there were a number of volunteer Board and Commission members who contributed to the running of the Town. I was pleased to work with so many fine people throughout the organization who worked to make the Town a good place to live, work, and raise a family. After working as a management consultant with 100 plus organizations over the previous 12 years, it was very enjoyable to work with all the people in one community on an on-going basis.

Getting back into direct management after consulting for 12 years, I found it to be a thought-provoking experience. The Town never had an overall administrator. Everyone worked quite independently of each other. One thing I found I had to do was create a different organizational culture which would bring everyone together. The idea of taking a team approach to management was just starting to be talked about in management literature. It made a lot of sense to me. I didn't think that I could impose an organizational cultural change. I figured that in order to create this team mindset, I could do some training, and I did that. But more importantly, I needed to model good team behaviors so that people could see how it worked for them and the entire organization. I knew it would not happen overnight. But gradually, I could see how the culture was changing in a positive way.

In 1987 or 1988, we started looking into getting desktop computers for many of the employees. Basically, there were IBM and Apple as the primary business computer providers in the marketplace. We looked into both and ended up purchasing Apple computers. For the first time, all of us in the organization could communicate with each other via email. That was something brand new at the time. There were also some basic documents which we could create in terms of correspondence and reports, as well as spreadsheets. We were heading towards the 21st century.

One thing I had an opportunity to do after working in Mt. Pleasant for a couple of years was to facilitate a strategic planning process for the Town, just as I had done as a consultant for several cities. Again, it was a very innovative process for a municipality to undertake. The process went well. Many people in the community were engaged in the process. When it was completed, the plan was presented to the Town citizens at its annual meeting in the Spring of 1988. In true Town government tradition, everyone who came to the meeting could vote on this matter. They did not have to be elected to any position. The plan was approved by the citizens of the Town.

One topic that came up in getting input from citizens is that they wanted to start doing some recycling. In the late 1980's, that was not a topic which had broad appeal and interest for people. Very few municipalities were doing recycling. We followed up on the citizens' request. The first thing we did was create a site for yard waste dumping. People had to bring their yard waste to the site. But we were not yet able to move beyond that in the next couple of years. However, the entire recycling movement was starting to get traction around the country.

Overall, interest in sustainability and environmental care was growing. One of the things we started working on in the late 1980's was to turn the methane gas produced at the landfill located in Mt. Pleasant into an energy source. Landfills produce a lot of methane gas. Methane gas is odorless, but the idea of having a lot of methane gas rising out of the landfill which was surrounded on three sides by residential neighborhoods was something we wanted to eliminate. We worked with the landfill owner to start burning the methane as it rose from the landfill. After doing that for a while, the Town started to work with the landfill owner and the S.C. Johnson Co. (makers of Johnson Wax and many other household products) to pipe the methane from the landfill to the Johnson Wax production facility across the road. Johnson Wax was able, then, to use the methane to create energy to run part of their production processes. That was a cutting-edge environmental step forward for the Town, the Johnson Wax company, and the landfill owner.

Getting back to the strategic planning process, it was so successful, that the elected Town Chair, Mary Carrington, asked me to conduct a similar process for a group called Wisconsin Women Entrepreneurs (WWE). As the name suggests, the group was made up of women around the State of Wisconsin who ran businesses, many of which they started themselves. This group was an outgrowth of the women's equal rights efforts which began in the early 1970's. One of their main reasons to get together and go through a strategic planning process is that they wanted to get off of the "society pages" in the local newspaper and be taken seriously as business people. The process went very well.

One of the things which some women suggested to get themselves recognized as professional business people was to get Oprah Winfrey to come up to Wisconsin and do a program focusing on women in business. Everyone chuckled when the suggestion was made. Nobody thought it would ever happen. But it went on the "to do" list as a possible opportunity the group should consider. Oprah was not as high a profile personage at the time as she later became. But she was growing in popularity and renown.

After facilitating that discussion and planning process, I did not have anything to do directly with WWE. I just knew through our Town Board Chair that the group was growing its membership and was starting to get the professional recognition they were seeking. Then, one day in the summer of 1989, I was driving by Case High School in Mt. Pleasant on a weekday evening. As I approached the high school, traffic had come to a standstill. As I inched along the highway, I saw one of our Police Officers directing traffic. When I got close to him, I rolled down the window and asked him what was going on. He said Oprah Winfrey is speaking to the WWE and many other businesswomen in the area who had flocked to Mt. Pleasant to hear her speak. I

thought to myself then, you never know when and where some good ideas might take off and be successful.

Having facilitated many more such strategic planning processes in the future as a city manager and as a consultant, I always use the example of getting Oprah Winfrey to come to our community. That sounded totally impossible at the time. But people made it happen. I tell people as they think about the future, don't neglect to propose an idea which may seem far-fetched. Sometimes, they do come true. And they only come true if people articulate those ideas to the group and the group revisits those strategic planning ideas on a regular basis.

And to make the story even better, the WWE, after gathering to hear Oprah talk, got more and more organized around the State of Wisconsin. Within a couple of years, they changed their name to the Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC). They have become a source of training and business loans for women's businesses, but also for businesses being started by minority entrepreneurs. I am very pleased that I had the opportunity to help empower women through this program.

While we lived in Mt. Pleasant, Gaye decided to go back to school to get an accounting degree. She had a BA in English Literature from Loyola U. in Chicago. She also had her paralegal certification from Roosevelt U. in Chicago. And though she had done quite a bit of accounting work in her previous positions, she wanted to get a degree in accounting for her longer-term career opportunities. She decided to get her accounting degree through Lakeland College whose main campus was about an hour north of Milwaukee. But they had a satellite campus in Milwaukee, so it was a reasonable commute to get there and back to Mt. Pleasant. While taking courses at Lakeland, Gaye also worked part-time at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside in Kenosha.

Maureen was a junior at St. Catherine's High School at the start of 1986 and became a senior in the Fall. Ali was in 8th grade at Starbuck Middle School at the beginning of 1986 and became a freshman at St. Catherine's in the Fall.

It was sometime in 1987 that I started to run. I had always been active in sports. But the older I got, it was hard to find regular partners to play racquetball, tennis or basketball with. Mo had some friends at St. Catherine High School who ran on the cross-country team. Some of the races were run at the cross-country course at the UW-Parkside campus just several miles south of the Mt. Pleasant Town Hall. It was a beautiful course with hills, trails and trees. It had a number of different length courses: 3k, 4k, 5k, 6k, 8k, and 10k. I started going at lunch time down to the cross-country course to just walk. After a while, I started running a little. I would walk five minutes, then run five minutes, then again, walk five minutes, and run five minutes, etc. It wasn't too long before I just started running. I brought my running shoes and clothes with me. I would go down to the Fire Department, change clothes, head down to UW-Parkside, run 5k, and then come back to the Fire Station, take a shower, and go back to my office. I would then eat my sandwich and some raw veggies for my lunch while working. I found I really liked running. In about a year, if I had the time, I could run the longer courses without any problem. The longest I ever ran on a course was two 10k's plus 3k which is the equivalent of a half a marathon. I

entered a few mini-triathlons which were fun. I didn't do any longer triathlons because they required more swimming than I could tolerate without getting nauseated.

Gaye continued taking some classes at Lakeland College towards getting an accounting degree. During the year, she started working at the Kenosha County District Attorney's Office in the Child Support Division.

Maureen graduated from St. Catherine's high school in the Spring of 1988. In the Fall, she started college at the University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh. We drove her up there around Labor Day and got her set up in her dorm room. Gaye had promised that she would not cry and embarrass Mo in front of her fellow students. She kept that promise until we got in the car and headed home. After the first weekend Mo was in college in Oshkosh, we talked with her by phone the following week. She informed us that she had spent her first weekend in college, not in Oshkosh, but at Marquette in Milwaukee. A number of her classmates at St. Catherine's in Racine went to college at Marquette, and they were throwing a party that first weekend. Mo caught a ride from Oshkosh to Milwaukee to attend the party.

Ali started as a freshman at St. Catherine's in the Fall of 1986. But she really missed the friends she made at Starbuck Middle School who were going to Park High School. So, at the winter semester break in 1987, Ali transferred to Park High where she continued until her graduation in 1990.

No big changes in 1988 and 1989. We did move from an apartment building on Graceland Avenue in Mt. Pleasant to a town home in Mt. Pleasant. Gaye continued her accounting courses towards a second Bachelor's degree in accounting. She was still working at the Kenosha County District Attorney's Office. Maureen was in her second year of college. She transferred to St. Norbert's College in De Pere, WI. Ali was at Park High School in Racine. I continued as Town Administrator in Mount Pleasant.

Mo got mono and we got something similar. We never got a good diagnosis on it. The best they could figure out was that both Gaye and I had some auto-immune disease. We were both more tired than we had ever been before. And our digestive systems were in a continuous state of turmoil. We lived with that medical situation for about the last two years we were in Mt. Pleasant. The doctors did not come up with anything that helped us. So, we just tried to, hopefully, outlive the condition.

Chapter Twenty

1990's – More Changes

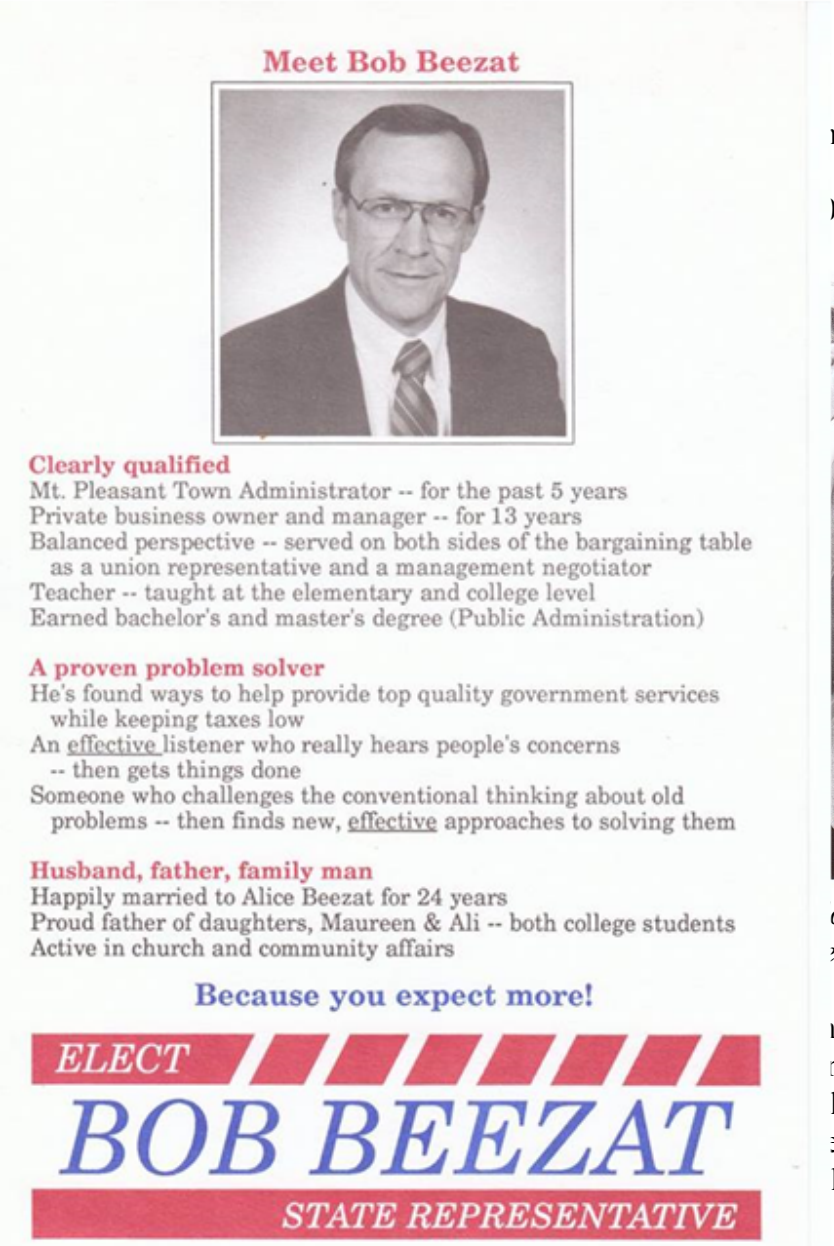
1990 was a very significant year in our lives.

Most importantly, Gaye survived thyroid cancer. She, like several women in her family, had thyroid health issues. She had been seeing a thyroid specialist for about 10 years. When she went for her yearly thyroid check up in the early summer, her doctor told her that she had developed thyroid cancer. She had surgery and radiation. Gaye was only 47 years old at the time. I am so glad and grateful that the cancer was caught early on and was dealt with so successfully. I always remember Gaye remarking as she fought the cancer: "You never know how much you want to keep living until someone tells you that you have a disease that could kill you." Fortunately, it did not kill her.

Gaye started working for a law firm in Milwaukee in late 1989. She was doing tax accounting work. Ali graduated from Park High School in June of 1990. She earned some scholarships as she completed high school. She then went off to start college at the University of Wisconsin in Madison in the Fall. Maureen transferred to the University of Illinois in Champaign in the Fall. She roomed with her cousin Connie Ludtke and a couple of other young women.

I started the year continuing to work as the Town Administrator in Mt. Pleasant. Things were going well. But I wanted to make one more try for elected office. I decided to run for the Wisconsin State Assembly which is the equivalent of a State Representative in other states. I had developed many good working relationships and a very positive reputation in the community. Again, I thought I could make a broader difference and contribution as an elected rather than an appointed official. I thought there were decisions being made at the state and national level which were negatively impacting working people in particular. A strong local job base in our area was eroding. Jobs were being moved out of the State and out of the country on a progressively rapid pace. The trend of wealth being accumulated at the top by a very few while the majority of people lost jobs and had stagnating pay was getting to be a problem. The "trickle down" economic theories of the 1980's were not working. So, I thought I would see if I could change that direction. As an appointed Town Administrator, I was in a non-partisan position which precluded me from speaking out on topics which could be interpreted as supporting one party or the other. And that was appropriate for the role I was in. But if I wanted to have a broader, positive impact for change, I would be able to do that more successfully as an elected official.

In order to run for elective office, I resigned my position as Town Administrator effective July 1, 1990. I then started campaigning on a daily basis up until the election on November 6. As always, Gaye served as Treasurer of my campaign. I knew I could never get anyone better to make sure we met all of the campaign finance requirements. Maureen and Ali also helped out in the campaign as did as my sisters and brothers.



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As far as abortion is concerned, I supported the Supreme Court's 1973 decision permitting abortion. I thought long and hard about abortion. I didn't think it should be something a woman should decide lightly; but in the final analysis, I thought it should be the woman's decision based on a range of practical, philosophical, and theological considerations. Ideally, it would be a decision a woman would make with and within her family. But in the end, it is the pregnant woman who should have the final say in my judgment.

My most basic reason for supporting a woman's right to have an abortion, particularly in the early stages of a pregnancy, was that while I was growing up, I was not taught by my Church (the Catholic Church), nor did I experience in my family's life, that a miscarriage early in a pregnancy was the loss of a human being. Coming from a very large family of aunts, female cousins, sisters, and a Mom who had ten kids, miscarriages were not uncommon, particularly

early in a pregnancy. My wife and I, who wanted children, had experienced one or possibly two miscarriages. All of us who experienced miscarriages were disappointed, but we did not consider that a daughter or son had died. And, very importantly, the Catholic Church did not teach that a child had died unless the miscarriage occurred within the last trimester of a pregnancy. There were many other reasons relating to women's roles in society that moved me to my position supporting a woman's right to choose an abortion: male physical and sexual abuse of women: moral teaching and individual conscience; moral teaching and uncertainty; and imposing a religious belief on a pluralistic and democratic society. In the end, I do not think my position on abortion was a plus or minus in the final vote.

As far as guns were concerned, I was not opposed to gun ownership. But I also thought there should be some reasonable regulation of guns. At the time, the issue was not as polarizing as it has become in the last 20 years or so. So, I don't think it played much of a role in the election results.

I made a number of campaign speeches in front of various groups. Here is photo from one of them. Gaye was with me at this one.



Election Day finally came. Unfortunately, I again came close, but did not get elected. I lost by a final vote of 7,266 (48.6%) to 7,691 (51.4%).

I knew from the beginning it would be an uphill battle. The Assembly District I was running in had a Republican Incumbent for a number of years. But the District had sometimes voted for Democratic candidates, particularly in Presidential and Governor races. The main reason I lost in my evaluation of the situation is that many people who usually voted for Democrats did not turn out for this election. One reason they did not turn out was because the Republican Governor, Tommy Thompson, was very popular at the time and headed up the Republican ticket statewide. The Democratic challenger for the Governor race was not a very strong candidate. Also, one of the strongest Democrats in the State Legislature, State Sen. Joseph Strohl who was from the Racine area, got into some ethics problems when he accepted tickets to a Packers game from a

lobbyist. He paid a fine of about $300. But it encouraged the Republican party to very strongly support a candidate to run against Sen. Strohl. Between those two factors, Democratic voters did not come out to vote as they had usually done in the past. Republican voters had a lot of incentive to come out and vote and defeat a Democratic candidate for Governor and State Senator.

So, I lost. There are a lot of variables in any election that are beyond a candidate's control. You, your family, and your supporters can work their butts off, which we all did. But sometimes, there are bigger trends and unexpected things that happen which can positively or negatively influence the final vote. For me, it was "three strikes and you're out." Running for office was off the radar for the future and has remained so ever since. But I do not regret for one minute having run for office three times. Each time I ran, I met many, many good people who wanted our city, our state, and our country to be a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

One of my best memories of the election is a story a friend of mine told me after the election. He was a lifelong, died in the wool Republican. When I served as Town Administrator, he served in a volunteer capacity on one of the Town Commissions. We worked together on addressing many issues confronting the Town. We were good friends and colleagues. When it came time for this fellow to vote, he told me he got into the voting booth and was planning on voting for me. I was going to be the first Democrat he ever voted for in his life. He told me how he reached up for the Democratic voting lever to vote for me, but his arm just got stuck. He said he couldn't get his arm any higher. However, he took a deep breath, hoisted his arm up and voted for me. We had a good laugh. It was a time yet when partisan politics was real but working together on common goals for the common good was still possible.

Finally, my last comment on my attempts to make a positive difference by being elected to office occurred about 2 years later. I was working as the City Manager in Rolling Meadows for about two years. Bill Clinton had been elected President in November of 1992. He was inaugurated in January of 1993. Since my home was only a few blocks from City Hall, I went home at lunch time to have a sandwich and watch his inaugural address. As I listened, some tears came to my eyes. I knew my time was past to rise to any higher level of political office. A new generation of leaders was emerging. I was not going to be one of them.

Chapter Twenty-One

Back to the Chicago Area

Since I had resigned from Mt. Pleasant in 1990 to run for the Wisconsin State Legislature, I needed to get a job. I started sending out resumes. My good friend Paul Reaume, for and with whom I had worked for 12 years before becoming the Town Administrator in Mt. Pleasant, was still doing executive search work. He called me about applying for the City Manager position in Rolling Meadows, IL. I interviewed for the position in December of 1990. I was the Mayor and City Council's second choice. But after a few weeks of negotiation with the candidate they had selected, they could not agree on the terms of employment. So, Paul called me and said they wanted to offer me the position. I took it and began a working for the City and with a fine group of public officials and public servants.



One of our water towers and parks in Rolling Meadows, IL.

Both Mo and Ali were in college. Mo was at the University of Illinois in Champaign, IL. Ali was at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. When we moved to Rolling Meadows, Gaye did not work immediately. She was still recovering from the thyroid cancer surgery and radiation treatments she had received in the summer of 1990. She got stronger as the year moved along. All of her follow up tests had good results, but she still needed on-going tests to make sure nothing was coming back.

One of the highlights of 1991 was that Gaye and I celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary. We rented a hall at one of the Rolling Meadows Park District buildings. We got caterers to provide a meal. We hired bartenders to keep the good times rolling. And we hired a DJ to provide music for dancing.

In 1992, I was in my second year as city manager in Rolling Meadows. Gaye started working part-time as the Office Manager for Boundary Technologies in Buffalo Grove. It was a small company but very scientifically advanced. One of their innovative products were heat-shield tiles

which were used on the US space program rockets and modules to keep them from burning up as they re-entered the earth's atmosphere. Eventually, her job became a full-time job. She really enjoyed the work and the people she worked with.

As I moved along through my first six months in Rolling Meadows, I began to find that it was a somewhat dysfunctional organization. The Mayor and Council had asked the previous city manager to leave. He had only been there a couple of years. The City had a long-term Mayor who liked to act as the city manager even though the positions of mayor and city manager had clearly defined duties and responsibilities in State Statutes, similar to the checks and balances in the U.S. Constitution. Fortunately, he did not run for re-election in 1990. So, there was a new Mayor who wanted to run the government as it was structured to be with a part-time mayor and city councilmembers, and let the city manager, now me, run the day to day organization.

One of the things I had learned in managing organizations and serving as a management consultant to many cities was that, as I assessed the Rolling Meadows city organization, I needed to bring about a culture change. What I meant by that is I wanted to get people working together in a very positive way. I wanted them to trust each other. I wanted them to come to work thinking about how they could make things better within the organization and the community we served. My job as city manager was to create an environment where everyone would get the best out of themselves and the people they managed.

I thought it would take a couple of years to do so. And it did. One of the first things I did was I started by meeting individually with each of my direct reports: Police Chief, Fire Chief, Public Works Director, Finance Director, Chief Building Official, and the City Clerk. I asked them what they would like to see improved in their own areas of responsibility. And I asked them how I could help them do that. Over the next few weeks or months, depending on the complexity of the problem, I worked with them individually to improve the situation they wanted to improve. After doing this for several months with my direct reports, I started to see the department heads start to do some of that with their direct reports. And within a year to a year and a half, that collaborative, team approach started to permeate the organization.

Another area in which I wanted to change the culture was to get everyone to respect, support, and care for each other both as professionals and colleagues, but also as friends. Again, I tried to model that behavior. There was a movement in general management practices at the time that used the idea of managing by walking around. The idea refers to a style of business management which involves managers wandering around, in an unstructured manner, through the workplace(s), at random, to check with employees, equipment, or on the status of ongoing work. The emphasis was on the words “walking around” projected an unplanned movement within a workplace, rather than a plan where employees expect a visit from managers at more systematic, pre-approved or scheduled times. The expected benefit is that a manager, by a random sampling of events or employee discussions, is more likely to facilitate improvements to the morale, sense of organizational purpose, productivity and total quality management of the organization, as compared to remaining in a specific office area and waiting for employees, or the delivery of status reports to arrive there, as events warrant in the workplace.

One example of how that could work and did work was a suggestion I had from my Director of Public Works. He suggested that if I was driving in the City and saw a work crew repairing a water or sewer line or filling potholes in the street, or anything else they may be doing, I should stop my car, get out and see what they were doing, and ask them questions about it. I did that a few times and people really liked it.

One other thing I did to create more of a co-worker/colleague type of working relationship was to follow stories in the local paper about the children of our employees who were participating in various school activities such as theater, sports teams, academic achievements, etc. When I read something like that, I made it a point to stop by their work station and talk with them about their children. It only took a few minutes to do so. It not only made the person I talked with happy to talk about that with me, it often led to other employees in the same area to talk with each other. It did not take a lot of time away from each person's work. And whatever time it did take was more than made up for by the closer and more supportive working relationships between the people who worked together every day.

Besides changing the culture of the internal City organization, I also wanted to change the culture of the broader community. Having done a number of strategic planning processes as a consultant and as the Town Administrator in Mt. Pleasant, WI, I wanted to conduct such a process in Rolling Meadows. In this case, we decided to not only conduct in-person planning workshops, but to also use cable television in gathering input from residents and businesses in the City. To my knowledge, that is the first time any city used that media tool to conduct such a project.

Cable television had significantly grown in popularity and usage over the 20 years when I first dealt with the issue in Waseca in the early 1970's. Cable TV was not only used to get a better picture on your TV, it began to add an ever-expanding array of newly created channels which had no advertising and met the interests of different audiences such as sports, movies, history, animals, etc. At the time, there was a cable TV company which served the residents and businesses. The City had awarded a franchise to Continental Cablevision several years before I arrived. One of the requirements of granting the franchise was that the cable company provide a free, cable access channel for the community. They also had to provide a TV studio where residents could produce programs to run on the public access channel. And they had to provide some staff to work with residents to use the TV recording equipment in the studio and at locations throughout the city.

The City's Public Information Officer and I met with the management staff of Continental Cablevision and told them about our idea to use cable TV to broaden the input of the strategic planning process by recording and televising our in-person planning sessions. The cable company thought it was a great idea. They thought it would increase their visibility in the market place, and they thought it would be a great example of their commitment to contributing to a positive role they could play in communities which they served.

The strategic planning process was a great success. We engaged a diverse group of over 100 people in face to face discussions over a two-week period of time in September of 1991. The

cable TV staff taped each of the 1.5 hour sessions. Our Public Information Officer then worked with the cable TV company to edit each session down to a ½ hour TV show which was run on the local public access cable channel.

Once the in-person sessions were completed, we prepared a mailing to every resident and business in the community asking them to share their priorities on what they thought would be good for the City to pursue. We received over 1,000 responses from people in the community. The information from the in-person and mail-in responses was then collated into a report which we called Rolling Meadows – 2000. It set forth 10 areas in which all residents and businesses in the City could work together to make Rolling Meadows even "A Better Place to Live, Work, and Raise a Family" which became our unofficial mantra as we started implementing the recommendations developed in the strategic plan.

One of the immediate results of using the public access cable TV channel was that we started doing a monthly ½ hour cable TV show which brought together leadership people from the Park District, Library, School District, and businesses to present information to the community about issues, challenges, and opportunities which the City as a whole was dealing with. At the time, it was a very innovative approach to creating a community-wide culture of mutual understanding and support. We worked with Continental Cablevision which provided a host and interviewer to lead us through the ½ hour program. The program was a mix of interviews and video clips from city, park district, library, school, and chamber of commerce programs and projects. We made a real effort to include a broad variety of topics as well as including many community people, including children, so that people would watch the program to see themselves, their neighbors, and/or their children and neighbor children on TV. It became a popular, local program.

After a few years of this deliberate attempt to change the culture, I could see the change happening both within the organization and in the community we served. We were building a real team approach to working together and getting our work done effectively and efficiently. Sometimes creating improvements in an organization can go well, and on the surface, at least, look like real change has occurred. But the test of the success we all worked to accomplish was a huge revenue loss the City experienced in 1993.

In Illinois, municipalities received a share of state sales tax of everything sold in the city. In addition, municipalities could add their own "home rule" sales tax. The citizens of Rolling Meadows, in a referendum, approved such a local sales tax some years before I arrived. Sales tax revenues, from both the state and local sales tax, made up about 1/3 of our operating revenues. In 1993, our largest sales tax producer, AT&T, decided to move its "point of sale" to Delaware where there were no state or local sales taxes. AT&T was still making its product in Rolling Meadows and its sales force still operated out of our City. But by the stroke of a pen, AT&T informed us and the State of Illinois, that they were changing their point of sale to Delaware. For us in Rolling Meadows, that meant that we would lose about $3 million in revenue in each fiscal year moving forward. That was about 15% of our total operating budget.

When we got the news and confirmed it, our management team met and started discussions on how we could respond to this substantial loss of revenue. We involved just about everyone in the

City organization in the discussions. We had to trim costs in every department of the City. And with such a substantial loss of revenue, that meant cutting some jobs. We put together a plan which phased in cuts in personnel over a two-year period of time, mainly by not filling positions as people retired or left the organization. We also slowed down our capital equipment replacement schedule. And, we trimmed other costs such as office supplies and equipment, telephones, non-essential training, etc. And since we did have the flexibility with the Home Rule sales tax, we raised that tax rate slightly to offset some of the revenue losses. Every department contributed some cuts in their budgets including personnel if possible. In some cases, we combined departments to eliminate some management positions. Overall, everyone pitched in to respond to the emergency. They trusted each other that each department would bear a portion of the cutbacks.

After working together for about a year, the department managers started to refer to themselves and their staffs as the "Dream Team." That was in reference to what everyone called the 1992 U.S. Olympic basketball team which won every game they played by an average of 44 points. The basketball "Dream Team" consisted of Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson, Larry Bird, Charles Barkley, Patrick Ewing, Scottie Pippen, and several other professional all-stars. For the time, it was probably the best basketball team ever put together; and it remains so today.

Our City "Dream Team" was rightfully proud of how they all worked together to address the huge problem we faced. Twenty-five years later, people who worked for the City of Rolling Meadows at the time still refer to themselves as the "Dream Team."

I think all of our work together to change the organizational and citizen culture paid off. I was very pleased to be part of it.

In regard to environmental programs, interest by citizens and governments was continuing to grow. The City of Rolling Meadows was somewhat unique among northwest suburban communities in the Chicago metro area because we had our own garbage trucks and crews. Most of the suburbs had started contracting for that service during the 1970's and 1980's. Rolling Meadows did that for a while. But when there was a strike by garbage collectors in the 1980's, garbage was not picked up in Rolling Meadows and any other community which contracted their garbage collection with private companies. The Mayor and City Council as well as the residents in the City were not pleased that garbage was not picked up for several weeks. They never wanted to have that happen again. So, the City got back into the garbage collection business.

An interesting aside as a result of having our own garbage collection program, I found out that the garbage crews were good economic prognosticators. They could tell when the economy was heading on an upward or downward curve based on the volume and type of garbage being thrown out and collected. The volume of garbage being thrown out reflected the changes in the economic circumstances of people before the economists started getting statistical reports of declining or rising economic activity. Very interesting.

I also found out, at least in the case of our garbage crews, that they were intelligent and skilled people. Like most people, I assumed being a garbageman was the bottom of the pole from a job opportunity standpoint. But at least in Rolling Meadows, our garbagemen were quite talented. As they picked up garbage of all kinds, they started sorting out pieces of wood and other building materials they collected so that the City could re-use those materials to build shelving and other office fixtures in City buildings. When the garbage crews finished their route for the day, they would often have time to build office fixtures and furniture which we then did not have to buy. Also, in talking with some of the crews, they liked being garbagemen for two reasons: it gave them a base income and benefits by which they could support their families: and, in many cases, it gave them time to be active volunteers in the community. Who'd have thunk! It was just another lesson for me that we should not make judgements about people based on stereotypes.

In 1988, three years before I started working for Rolling Meadows, the City became part of SWANCC (pronounced: swank. I always loved the name SWANCC for an organization dealing with solid waste/garbage. The groups official name was the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County). SWANCC is a joint municipal action agency comprised of 23 communities. The Agency was formed to provide a regional approach to the solid waste management needs of its member communities. By the time I got to Rolling Meadows, the City was looking at instituting a recycling program. We joined with the SWANCC communities in contracting with a private sector recycling company to have people start recycling. We gave every residential home two crates they could fill, one with paper products and one with metal, glass, and plastic. The program worked very well. We saw our garbage collection volume drop by about 1/3 after a few months. And the reduction in waste and increase in recycling continued to occur in the months and years ahead.

On a totally different topic, one issue which was starting to get national attention was sexual harassment in the workplace. We updated our personnel policy manual to address the issue. We did some training of employees to make them aware of the issue and the legal ramifications for them and the city if such behavior became a problem in our organization. About a year after the policy was adopted, one of our female employees came to me and said that she was experiencing what she considered to be sexual harassment from employees in one of our city departments. I listened to what she had to say. It appeared to me that what she was experiencing was sexual harassment based on verbal comments from some employees about her physical makeup. I followed up with a discussion with the department head of these employees. He was not aware of the problem, but he didn't dispute that it may be occurring. I asked him to talk with his employees about the matter. He did so. The employees said that their comments were meant humorously, but they understood that they were inappropriate. The employees met with the employee and apologized for making their comments to her. We did not have another problem after that in that particular department or any other department of the city. One of the pluses to having a relatively small organization (about 250 total employees) is that word travels fast throughout the organization. Everyone understood that sexual harassment would not be tolerated and that if someone thought they were being harassed, they would be taken seriously, and their complaint would be followed up on.

From a family standpoint, a lot happened while we lived in Rolling Meadows. Maureen continued her education at the University of Illinois. In the Spring of 1992, she received the Catholic sacrament of Confirmation at the Newman Center at the University. When you get confirmed in the Catholic Church, you select a confirmation name. Maureen chose her grandmother's name, Lucy, which made her grandmother very happy. Gaye, Ali, and I took Grandma with us when we went down to Champaign, IL for the confirmation. A couple of months later, Maureen graduated from the U of I.

Ali continued at the University of Wisconsin in Madison through her sophomore year. At that point, she decided she wanted to take a break from college, so she came and lived with us. She got a job with the Rolling Meadows Park District and then started taking some classes at Harper College, the local community college. She did that for about a year and a half, and then decided to go back to college and finish her degree. Instead of returning to the University of Wisconsin, she enrolled at DePaul University in Chicago.

From a personal standpoint, I started reading a lot of science. I was a liberal arts major in college and had taken some science classes, but I never had the time nor inclination to delve very deeply into scientific topics. My interest in science was piqued because of a scientist and author named Stephen Jay Gould. I first read him in Natural History magazine. He had a great way of writing about science from a rigorous scientific background, but he had a way of humanizing and relating the science of all kinds of things to who and what we are as human beings and how we live in the world around us.

I started to think back in the early 1990's that the conflicts between science and religion were not unbridgeable. One term Gould used was that science and religion are two different Magisterium's or teaching authorities. Simply put, science can deal with the physical/material aspects of reality and religion speaks to issues of value and meaning. Gould was a biologist and spoke mainly about evolutionary changes in biological creatures. I also started reading about physics in terms to the evolution and continuing change in the broad cosmos. I found both subjects fascinating. I also read authors who addressed both biological and cosmic evolution from a scientific and theological viewpoint. That reading broadened my whole understanding of reality. It was a little scary, but it was wonderfully challenging. And it started me on a 20 plus year inquiry into the inter-weaving of scientific and inter-personal knowledge and reality.

One of the things I read was a biography of Albert Einstein. There was a quote in the book which I have never forgotten. Someone once asked Einstein to define genius. He said, "It was the ability to see connections between that no one else sees." He saw the connection between the speed of light, energy, and mass, and it has changed the world in very many ways since his discovery in the early 1900's. I knew I was never going to be a scientific genius or any kind of genius. But what I started to do in my thinking and in working with many different people and organizations on a wide range of issues was to always be looking for connections between issues and people to solve a problem or make something better. I had started back in the 1980's to consciously try to be a better listener. This quote from Einstein gave those efforts a kick in the pants to even get better at it. I figured if I could get better at seeing the connections between ideas and people, I could empower people to get more done in the best way possible.

Another thing I started to do in the early 1990's was to take some yoga and tai chi classes at Harper Community College. I did it mainly to find ways to relieve some of the stress I was experiencing in my job. The political leadership in Rolling Meadows was changing. The leader of the change was someone I found to be very difficult to work with. What I found most interesting and helpful from yoga and tai chi was the importance of breathing correctly. It did not seem like a big thing, but breathing deeply, where we fill the diaphragm versus filling our chest and lungs, is a much better way to breath. It is healthier and very calming. After taking a few tai chi classes, which not only emphasized proper breathing, but also posture and bodily control which, among other things, brought power to how we move and impact things outside of ourselves when we use our centered power. Tai chi emphasizes is the power in the legs and hips to accomplish many physical activities. It made me think of Babe Ruth. He was a great home run hitter. Most baseball fans, including myself, thought the primary elements in hitting home runs were arm strength and connecting solidly with the pitched ball. But as I learned more about tai chi and remembered some films of Babe Ruth actually hitting home runs, a lot of his power came from his hips and upper legs. I doubt that "The Babe" ever heard about tai chi. But the way he learned to hit a baseball incorporated mush of the controlled power in the trunk of his body to hit home runs. It was not an earth-shattering discovery on my part but having been a baseball fan for most of my life, I found it very interesting and instructive.

Getting back to the City of Rolling Meadows, as we moved into 1994, a couple of long-time City Councilmembers decided not to run for election. They were replaced by new Councilmembers who were aligned with a longer serving Councilmember who I found very difficult to work with and for. The anti-tax and anti-government mindset were gaining strength in Rolling Meadows as it was around the country. Echoing the mantra of former President Ronald Reagan that "government was the problem, not part of the solution," the newcomers on the City Council were taking this approach to how our City should proceed into the future. Also, with the loss of the long-time members of the City Council who decided not to run, the remaining elected officials did not have the ability to keep City policy and program discussions focused on positive change and progress. Meetings became more acrimonious. Staff, including myself, were not sure in what direction we should be moving the City. However, we learned during the year that trying to move the City along in a positive and progressive manner was growing more challenging all the time.

As we entered 1995, there were more changes in the elected leadership. The incumbent Mayor decided not to run again in the April 1995 election. The Councilmember with whom I was having a difficult time working with decided to run for Mayor. He also recruited a couple more like-minded candidates to run for other City Council seats. I could see the handwriting on the wall. If the election turned out as I suspected it would, I would be faced with either getting fired or struggling to work with a Mayor and majority of City Councilmembers with whom I disagreed. So, I started looking for another job. I got one at just about the time the election occurred. I submitted my resignation shortly after the election. The City Staff, former elected officials, and many people from the community organized a party to thank me for my service. It was a wonderful party, a great reminder of all the fine people I worked with and for. But I knew it was time to leave. And as the newly elected Mayor and Councilmembers took their seats,

many of the department heads, over the next two years, also left for jobs in communities where they thought they could continue to manage in a positive and progressive manner.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Trying Some New Things

Shortly after the election, I accepted a position as Village Manager in Bayside, WI. Bayside is a Milwaukee area, north suburban community. It was a community of about 5,000 people. Its eastern border was Lake Michigan. Overall, it was a fairly wealthy community. One thing I liked about the job was that I was considering working on a Ph.D. in Political Science/Public Administration. I thought a smaller community would allow me some time to start taking classes toward the doctorate.

The Elected officials, staff, and community were very welcoming. We got off to a very positive start. I rented an apartment in Bayside, and we put our home in Rolling Meadows up for sale. Unfortunately, the housing market was in a slump. We had it up for sale for about 5 months and not one person come through looking to possibly buy the house. It was getting expensive and unpleasant maintaining two households and with Gaye and I living apart. So even though things were going well in Bayside from a work standpoint, Gaye and I decided I should resign my position in Bayside and return to Rolling Meadows. Professionally, leaving a position after such a short tenure was frowned upon by the International City Management Association (ICMA) of which I had been a member for 27 years. But I thought that in this case, that is a decision I needed to make. However, before making that decision and informing the Village President and Village Board in Bayside, I needed to line up a new job.

Fortunately, my good friend and long-time colleague, Paul Reaume, was still running his consulting firm, The PAR Group. I called Paul to tell him of my situation. I asked him if I could come back to the consulting firm. He did not hesitate for a second. He said definitely. Return. We will pick up where we left off ten years ago. I was very grateful for his enthusiastic welcome back to The PAR Group. He had been my good friend since he hired me back in 1973. And now, he was even a better friend.

The next day I informed the Village President, Village Board, and Village Staff that I was leaving. The Village Board was very gracious in accepting my resignation. I gave them a 3-month notice so that they could begin a search for a new manager. During that 3 months, I spent the first month working full-time, and then spent the next two months working part-time to wrap up the 1997 budget and a few other projects.

I returned to our home in Rolling Meadows. Ali had entered DePaul University earlier in the year and was living on campus. Late in the year, Maureen got a job as head of the Development Department at St. Catherine's high school in Racine. The four of us helped Maureen move into her new apartment in Racine. Gaye got a job with the Northwest Housing Partnership.

Late in 1995, I started working with Paul and his colleagues. I started doing some consulting jobs with a fellow named Steve Lloyd. Steve had been doing consulting work for Paul for several years. Prior to that, Steve had worked for about 25 years for a group called Public

Administration Services which was a non-profit consulting service operating at the University of Chicago campus. Steve was very experienced in HR consulting as well as in management consulting with police and fire departments. He and I started to bid jobs together. We got quite a few contracts. We worked together on a number of jobs. I learned a lot from Steve.

In 1996, I decided to apply to gain entrance to the Ph. D. program in political science at Loyola University. I was accepted. I took two graduate level courses which would eventually be needed to get my Ph. D. They were very interesting to take. I had two good professors. I found it funny that I was by far the oldest student in the classes. I was 54 at the time, and most of the students were in their mid to late 20's. I got "A's" in both classes. I was happy about that because it meant to me that my brain was still working okay. But after the two classes, I decided that I would not continue pursuing a Ph. D. The main reason I decided to end pursuit of a Ph. D. was because political science had become a subject area which focused on advancing learning inf the field of political science on numbers-based research. That certainly had its place in doing research in political science.

But there was not an avenue towards a Ph. D. which focused more on political theory and practice which is where my interest lay. For instance, ideas and political systems put in place in the U.S. as part of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Emancipation Proclamation, and many more important issues were not decided by crunching numbers. Those ideas and systems became realities based on thoughtful, intelligent, and deliberative discussions between and among a mix of philosophical and practical people who wanted to institute a new type of government.

I think our democracy was working pretty well, but I saw some political trends which made me wonder about the future of democracy. I have always wondered about what we were doing as a society now which seemed reasonable in our present time but would look totally wrong 100 years from now. The example I always thought about was slavery. A little over 100 years ago, slavery was very much an accepted part of reality. Even most religions considered slavery to be just part of reality that wasn't questioned. Over the long span of history, some people were slaves because they were conquered by a stronger foe. Some were slaves because they were considered to be less than full human beings. And some were not formally slaves but were not accorded full citizenship because they were considered to be incapable of making choices that a "free man" could be trusted to do.

My practical experience in government as both a manager and consultant had raised some questions in my mind about what direction democratic government at all levels was taking now and might be taking in the future.

One change that was taking place at all levels of government was the passage of what were called Open Meetings laws. Under open meeting laws, if a mayor and six councilmembers constituted the elected officials in a city, no more than two of the seven could ever get together and discuss anything whether or not it had to do with city business. Three of them could not meet informally because three members of a seven-person elected body constituted a majority of a quorum of the elected body. The open meetings laws were passed because some people were

concerned that too much public business was being decided in non-public settings. That was a legitimate concern in some ways.

But at least in my experience working with local governments as both a city manager and a consultant, all important decisions were made in public meetings to which anyone could come, and which were also attended by the press.

At the same time, what I began seeing at the local level was that the open meetings laws were preventing elected officials from getting together on an informal, social basis which helped elected officials see each other more as friends and colleagues rather than adversaries. With an elected body of seven, more than two elected officials could not go out for a drink after a city council meeting, or have a cup of coffee together, or go to a ball game or doing anything social. Though the intentions of those promoting very strict open meeting laws were good, the practical outcome was that elected officials could no longer talk with each other as fellow human beings or friends. When I went out with my Mayor and City Council after a City Council meeting in Waseca, we talked about everyone's families, jobs, businesses, their bowling league, the big fish they caught last weekend, where they were going on their vacation, etc. We had just spent several hours discussing issues, in public, at the City Council meeting and took a vote in public also. Sometimes you won. Sometimes you lost. The last thing anyone wanted to do after the Council meeting was to discuss city business. We all just wanted to relax and enjoy each other's company.

I think the unintended consequence of the open meetings laws at all levels of government is a major contributor to the political polarization which has become and continues to be a more serious problem over the years.

I could see this coming and wanted to study it with the hope of finding a better way to keep public business decision-making out in the public where it belongs but would not be so restrictive that elected officials could not have healthy and positive inter-personal relationships while carrying out their governmental duties and responsibilities. Unfortunately, that is not the type of issue which lent itself to research and study at the Ph.D. level.

A second trend that was growing which I hoped to study and bring about some changes was in the area of local and state referendums. Again, like open meetings laws, the intention to give voters the opportunity to initiate legislation on their own has its pluses. But what started happening is that large corporations and wealthy citizens began proposing legislation which benefitted them more than it benefitted the common good and those not as wealthy and powerful. Proposition 13 in California in 1964 was the first, high profile referendum which had a significant impact on cities, counties, and school districts in the state. Prop 13 arbitrarily limited property taxes on every property in the state without regard to many other cost factors and program needs in different communities.

With the success of Prop 13, many states started getting inundated with referendums to benefit rich and powerful special interests. Also, many local governments, when confronted with difficult policy, program, and spending issues started setting up local referendums instead of

doing the job they were elected to do. I thought this was going in the wrong direction. Our country, at all levels of government, is a representative democracy. It is not a direct democracy where special interests can manipulate voters by spending millions of dollars to get something which benefits them through a referendum. One of the big pluses of a representative democracy is that those who are elected to office can be held responsible and accountable for their decisions. In a direct democracy, which referendums represent, no one is responsible for or accountable if a decision that is made by a referendum turns out to cause more harm than good.

As part of my Ph.D. coursework, I did a research paper on the growth in referendums across the country. The growth in referendums was very significant. And that could be shown as a numerical, scientific fact. What could not be shown by research was how this trend was negatively affecting governance at all levels of government and how it was eroding citizen's confidence in representative democracy.

After taking a couple of classes, I came to the conclusion that a numbers-based approach to political science told me about the past and current trends, but it did not speak to the areas of political theory and practice which needed to be addressed. And those were the areas of concern and interest which had motivated me to think about getting a Ph. D. Therefore, I stopped pursuing the doctorate degree.

While taking the classes at Loyola, I continued to work for The PAR Group. The consulting assignments were diverse, interesting, and spread around the country. As always, I found the history and current circumstances of the communities I worked with to be most interesting. One particular community that surprised me was Fargo, ND. After spending a couple of days in Fargo and learning about the community, I was surprised to see and meet so many Vietnamese people. Fargo is almost as far north as you can go in the continental US. The winters can be brutal. I was surprised that so many southeast Asians lived in this climate. When I inquired about why there were so many Vietnamese people in Fargo, I was told that the Lutheran Church had brought to the U.S., many Hmong/Vietnamese people to the Fargo area after the Viet Nam war. Many of these people had helped the U.S. during the war and staying in Viet Nam was a pretty certain death sentence. So, many Lutheran churches banned together and brought the Hmong people to their communities. From what I could see and what I had learned in the past from my own family and other families, the Vietnamese immigrants were industrious, hardworking, and entrepreneurial. And they were mostly young people, which I thought then and still think today, who we need in our country.

Some time in 1997, Ali and I went to Milan, Italy. We left O'Hare airport on a Thursday evening, flew overnight, and arrived in Milan the following morning. We slept some on the plane, but we were beat when we got there. We were advised to do some sight-seeing during the afternoon, have an early dinner, and then hit the hay. We did that and woke up on Saturday morning ready to see the sights. Neither of us had ever been to Europe before. It was fascinating. A very different life-style than we follow in the U.S. People were out everywhere. There were gathering places spread around the city where people would come out, and depending on the time of the day, get an espresso, a gelato, or a glass of wine. People would then sit in and outside the cafes and all around the plazas and just visit with each other. How civilized. One thing I

found out that surprised me was that there were only 3 TV channels available, and they were not on 24/7. So, people were not used to becoming couch potatoes. They got out, rode their bikes, met their friends, and just had an enjoyable time. How refreshing!

On Saturday we saw the sights in Milan. We walked all over the place. In one of the art museums we saw one of Michelangelo's Pietas. I thought he only did one which I had seen in pictures and which, I think, is in Rome. But apparently, he was always working on a Pieta. The one we saw was his last one. It was unfinished. But it was just awe-inspiring to actually stand in front of a work by Michelangelo. I am sure that during the day, in addition to having lunch at some ristorante, we stopped for gelato in the afternoon. We were becoming addicted to gelato. The city shuts down for a few hours in the afternoon when people take time for a siesta. I always associated that with Spain. But apparently, it was a broader based custom in the Mediterranean countries.



The Duomo/Basilica of the Nativity of Mary and main plaza in Milan.

On Sunday, we took a train up to Lake Como, north of Milan. The train station was very, very busy. People took trains everywhere within Italy and to other countries. It was so different than our country where we drive everywhere. The train station was very impressive. It was built when Mussolini was the head of Italy in the 1930's before WWII. It was built to show the power of the Mussolini regime. A reminder that he was infamous in many ways, but one thing he is often remembered for was that he made the trains run on time. Lake Como was nestled in the foothills of the Alps. It was a beautiful city. Ali and I walked up and down the hills and streets of the City. We had lunch at an open-air café along the shores of Lake Como. I am sure we stopped for some gelato during the afternoon.

Ali graduated from DePaul in May of 1997. We rented a hall at the Rolling Meadows Park District and had a typical large family party. 50 plus easily. Ali got a job with a telecommunications company with offices near O'Hare airport. She got an apartment in Jefferson Park in Chicago which was within walking distance to the "L," so she had a pretty easy commute to and from work. One of the things Ali did in her job, because of her computer and math knowledge, was to site new cell phone towers, particularly in the southwest. She would fly down to Arizona or New Mexico and then meet a crew who would erect cell towers once she figured out the best location taking into account mountains which might block signals. I always thought it was interesting in a positive way that all of the male work crews had to wait on my daughter's research before they could begin their work. To me, it was just a good sign that the role of women in the workplace was changing. It still had a long way to go. But something like this would never had occurred 20 or 30 years ago.

When Ali moved out and Maureen was working up in Racine, WI, we decided to put our home in Rolling Meadows up for sale again. This time the housing market was booming, and we sold the house in a relatively short period of time. We then decided that when we sold our home in Rolling Meadows, we would move up to the Milwaukee area. We always had good experiences living in Wisconsin, whether in Burlington, Milwaukee, or Mount Pleasant. We didn't want to buy a home right away, so we ended up renting an apartment in South Milwaukee, a suburb, not surprisingly, south of Milwaukee. We were about 15 minutes south of downtown, 30 minutes north of Racine, and about an hour and a half from Chicago. The apartment complex we moved into was for seniors. I had turned 55 earlier that year. Gaye was still a non-senior, but since we were together, they let her in too. It was interesting being back in Wisconsin. One thing that had changed significantly since we lived on the Eastside of Milwaukee a dozen years ago was that the economy in Wisconsin and in the Milwaukee area had taken a huge downturn.

Manufacturing jobs were disappearing as businesses were moving their production to southern U.S. states where there were no labor unions. Or, they were moving the jobs out of the country because labor was very cheap compared to salary and benefits costs in our country, and environmental standards and controls were non-existent. We first started to see the change in the economy when we went to shopping malls. Neither Gaye nor I are big shoppers, but we liked to go walking everyday as part of our exercise routine to keep healthy. We could see that some of the higher-end women's fashion stores were closing. Also, the quality and breadth of clothing available in stores which remained had gone downhill.

In the meantime, Maureen left her position at St. Catherine's high school in Racine and started working in the Development Department for Marquette University. When her lease was up, she and a friend rented an apartment on the Eastside of Milwaukee. As always, the family helped her move. A new friend who lived across the street from her helped in the move. His name was Ted Schuerman. Ted and Mo had begun dating.

After a year in South Milwaukee, we moved up to Glendale, a north suburban community. We had always enjoyed the north suburbs of Milwaukee when we lived there from 1983 to 1985. The area had Schwartz's book stores which have since gone out of business, coffee shops, movie theaters which showed non-mainstream movies, Sendik's Markets which had an abundance of

stores with fresh produce, fish, bakery, etc., and many good walking paths along Lake Michigan with lots of beautiful old homes. And for those familiar with Milwaukee at the time, it was home to Winkies, a truly fun variety store that had just about anything you wanted to buy for your home, cooking, gifts, etc. We were also near a more upscale shopping center where Gaye and I could get in our daily walk if the weather was bad, which was not unusual in Wisconsin.

I was traveling a lot for The PAR Group. The consulting business was doing very well. One of the nice things about living in Milwaukee and traveling for work was that I could often fly out of Mitchell Field instead of O'Hare. But O'Hare was still a necessary option because of the much greater number of non-stop flights to places like Hartford, CT; Tampa, FL; Austin, TX; Fargo, ND; Oklahoma City, OK; Charlotte, NC; and many more parts of the country where we did our consulting work.

Amidst all of this traveling, I started to write essays on a range of topics I had been reading and thinking about for years. Questions like: Who am I? What am I? Why am I here? Is there a God? What makes a good life? These were things I considered to be important. I always found writing to be a real good way for me to learn. It made me think through what I was saying in a way that was clear, understandable, and, I hope, which were as close to the truth of reality as possible.

Because of the de-regulation of the airlines in the late 1970's and 1980's, flying became more of a problem. Flights arriving and leaving on time were becoming less and less the routine. I would arrive at an airport around 6:30 to 7:00 PM to catch an 8:00 PM flight back to Chicago or Milwaukee. Many, many times, I would still be waiting for a plane for several hours hoping I would get on a plane before midnight so that I could get home by 1 or 2 AM in the morning. So, I started to fill that time by writing essays on many topics.

Another thing I started to do during the early 1990's was to write to authors and/or speakers. I usually started my letter highlighting a couple of things which I learned reading their book or listening to their lecture. I would then share with them some of my ideas on the topic. I usually did not hear back from the author or speaker, but sometimes I would. But I was primarily writing essays and/or letters in airports, so I could clarify my thoughts. I wasn't sure what, if anything, I would do with the essays once they were finished. Writing helped me think, so I kept writing when I had a chance, usually in airports around the country.

One letter I wrote in 1999 was to Dr. Eva Fleischner. Dr. Fleischner was a Professor at Fordham University in New York. During the 1998-99 school year, Dr Fleischner was a visiting professor at Marquette University in Milwaukee. She was giving a lecture one evening about evil and the Holocaust, how something like that can happen and how we can help prevent something like that happening in the future. After hearing the lecture, I wrote her a letter over the next few days. I told her what I learned listening to her lecture, and I suggested some ideas about the question of evil which had occurred to me. I mailed it off and figured it would probably end up in her wastebasket. But three days later, I got a reply from her. She wondered if I was a trained theologian or philosopher, which I am not. She said that before she gave that lecture again, she was going to think about some of the ideas I shared with her. I was flattered that such a learned

person would think that my ideas were worth considering. It made me think that maybe I should take all of the essays I was writing in airports and turn them into a book. But I put the idea on hold because I was so busy with the consulting business.

In 1998, the most important happening of the year was that our Mother, Lucy Emily Liss Bieszczat, died on January 30th.

Mom had been sick fairly regularly for the previous few years. All of Mom's children were able to get together and celebrate her 80th birthday at Lakeland Hospital in Elkhorn, WI on December 13, 1997.



Mom's 80th birthday party at Lakeland Hospital in Elkhorn, WI.

The last time I saw and spent some time with my Mom was the Sunday before she died, January 25, 1998. She was in the hospital and I spent part of the afternoon and evening with her watching the Super Bowl in her hospital room. As a true Chicago girl, she was happy that the Denver Broncos beat Brett Favre and the Packers in the Super Bowl. We had a few laughs.

I could tell a million stories about our Mom. One of my favorite memories of Mom was when I was probably 12 or 13 years old. It was at the kitchen table at dinner time. In addition to Mom at one end of the table closest to the stove and Dad at the other end of the table, Rosemary, me, Tony, Frank, Margaret, Carolyn, Betty Ann, and Mary Kay were seated around the table. One of my brothers or sisters said that someone at school was giving them a hard time and being mean to them. Mom's response was "You don't know what problems they are dealing with. Just be good to them. They need a friend. You can be that friend." To me, that was Mom. She always

filled the role of peacemaker within our immediate family and our extended family.

She was also an amazingly strong woman. How she helped all 10 of us grow up to be good, educated, and productive people boggles my mind. She and Dad did it together. She set a good example for all of us on how to be a loving and caring person. And she really valued education. She and Dad both supported us getting good educations.

Thank you, Mom.

My sister Mary Kay married Robert “Bo” Wright on March 21 of 1998. Mary Kay was a life-long and rabid Cub fan, and Bo was a life-long and rabid Sox fan. We all wished them well in their "mixed marriage." Our Mom and Dad had a mixed marriage also. Dad played minor league baseball for the White Sox and was more of White Sox fan than a Cubs fan. Mom lived just off of Addison Street about 3 miles west of Wrigley Field and went to a lot of Cub games with her 7 brothers and one sister. Both of our parents enjoyed baseball as do all of we children. Mom and Dad’s “mixed marriage” lasted through their entire life-times. Unfortunately, neither of them saw the Cubs or White Sox win a World Series.

Finally, one last observation to close out the 20th century. As we moved into 1999 and approached the start of a new a new year and a new millennium, there was a great deal of concern about what would happen to all of the computerized systems on December 31, 1999 at midnight. The issue became called Y2K. Businesses and governments which had computerized so many aspects of their operations had installed systems for many years which would automatically continue as each year changed. The programming of many of the systems were generally to reset from year to year. For example, when an old year ended on December 31, 1995 at 12:00 AM and a new year started at 12:01 AM on January 1, 1996, the computerized systems continued to run without a glitch. But people were not sure what would happen when the computerized systems had to reset with a year beginning with the digits 20 instead of 19. Would water pumps keep pumping? Would electrical plants keep operating? Would hospitals lose power? People had no idea what would possibly happen at midnight on December 31, 1999.

Many companies were selling software and hardware systems to make the glitch not be a problem. Billions of dollars were spent to redo all types of computer systems so that there would not be huge problems as the year 2000 began. I did not know enough about computer programming to make an intelligent assessment of the potential problem. But what I do remember is that outside of the U.S., most countries were not worried about Y2K. They were not spending billions of dollars to solve a problem which might never occur. In the meantime, the fear in the U.S. became almost panic. It made me think how anxious we are in this country and how easily we are manipulated into worrying about things that may never occur, and which, at the same time, make some companies and people very rich. It happens in many areas of our national lives. And it is particularly effective when we are told that our national security is supposedly at risk.

The outcome of the Y2K “crisis” was a big nothing in the rest of the world. It was a big nothing in the U.S. as well, and more than likely, since it was not a problem in the rest of the world, our country wasted billions of dollars to protect ourselves from a manufactured crisis.

Chapter Twenty-Three

Spiritual and Religious Evolution

During the late 1980's and throughout the 1990's, my understanding of religion and spirituality started to change significantly. I was born and raised a Catholic as discussed previously. I always wondered about the truth of what the Church taught. By and large, I thought and believed that there is a God and that the Catholic Church had some good ideas/theology and practices/ethics which help us live good lives for ourselves and for those around us. But I also thought the Catholic Church was out of touch with many aspects of reality within which most people live their daily lives. To me, some of the moral teachings of the Church were simply wrong. The Church seemed to be focused on a limited scope of moral issues with most of them focusing on sexual or gender roles and practices. Also, the Church was one of the few religious organizations which had no women priests or ministers. Consequently, women had a less influential role in determining what is moral and not moral. And women, in practice as well as in Church theology, were considered less than men. By the year 2000, I think all of my sisters had left the Catholic Church, primarily, in my judgement, because they were considered inferior to and subordinate to men.

For me, personally, I began to think of my role as a human being as having the ability to and responsibility for living my life in concert with the Spirit of God. I had read the prayer of St. Francis many times over the years.

Prayer of St. Francis

Dear God, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy;

Dear God, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

I always thought of that prayer as ways that I should act to help bring goodness and peace into the world. And that is a good interpretation. But I started to think that I could work with the

Spirit of God to accomplish good things. I started to think that if I asked the Spirit of God to work through me, and I did the best I could do, the combination would have a better chance to get good things done as long as I did not get in the way of the Spirit because of my own shortcomings, i.e., anger, anxiety, stubbornness, etc. Understanding my role in reality as a partnership between the Spirit of God and myself started to become my basic way of living. God would do Her best, and I would do my best. Together, we could bring about maximum, positive change in the world. My very frequent prayer was and still is the following. It is taken from the Catholic Mass of Pentecost, the Feast of the Coming of the Holy Spirit:

Come Holy Spirit,
Fill the hearts of your faithful people,
And enkindle in us the fire of your love.
Send forth Your Spirit, and we shall be re-created.
And together, We shall renew the face of the earth.

Another prayer I came across around this time is called "The Great Spirit Prayer." It is a Native American prayer. It fits very well with how I was beginning to see my life and role in the world and trying to live accordingly.

"Oh, Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the wind,
Whose breath gives life to all the world.

Hear me;

I need your strength and wisdom.
Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.
Make my hands respect the things you have made and my ears sharp to hear your voice.
Make me wise so that I may understand the things you have taught my people.
Help me to remain calm and strong in the face of all that comes towards me.

Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.
Help me seek pure thoughts and act with the intention of helping others.
Help me find compassion without empathy overwhelming me.

I seek strength, not to be greater than my sister or brother,
but to fight my greatest enemy, Myself.

Make me always ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes.
So, when life fades, as the fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame.

I did investigate and attend other religious denominations' services. It was an interesting thing to do. It was good to see that some of these religious groups had women as priests or ministers leading congregations. But the more I investigated other religions, the more I thought that, on the whole, the Catholic Church had the deepest and broadest intellectual, theological, and philosophical base of knowledge which had developed over 2,000 years. The old men currently

and in the past in charge of the Catholic Church were wrong on some matters of faith and morals in my opinion, particularly as they applied to women. But the Church was correct on many matters as well. And it had the most depth and history of grappling with questions of faith and morals over the centuries. So, after a few years of investigating other Churches, I decided to stay within the Catholic church. I just did not accept some of their teachings. But then, I have never agreed 100% with any of the organizations in which I participated over the years.

Finally, my idea of God became hard to define as any particular thing or being. I used the pronoun "Her" a few paragraphs back. Growing up as a Catholic, the male and fatherly image and description of God was all we heard. Again, that imagery and language may have fit well in patriarchal societies over the years. But it was not descriptive of the reality of God. Our human understanding of reality of many things is very limited, including our knowledge and understanding of God. Using male names and pronouns in reference to God should be done away with in my judgement. I like to use female names and pronouns just to remind myself that God is more than we can describe.

Chapter Twenty-Four

2000 - A New Millennium

Gaye and I lived in Glendale, WI at the beginning of the year. We then moved back to the Chicago area during the summer of 2000. Both of us were doing a lot of work from home, and we needed more space. Also, there were many pluses living on the east side of the Milwaukee area. However, it was often colder near Lake Michigan than I was comfortable with. We also wanted a place where Gaye could garden, which she always enjoyed doing. And as our financial guru, Gaye thought it would be more economical to own a home rather than rent. After looking around the Chicago area for a couple of months, we found a fairly new home in Aurora, IL, a suburb west of Chicago.

Our daughter Maureen and Ted Schuerman got married on August 10 of 2000. The wedding was at St. Mary's Church in Burlington, WI. Mo and Ted met in elementary school about 18 years before. After we moved from Burlington in 1983, Mo and Ted did not see each other for about 16 years. They accidentally bumped into each other on the East side of Milwaukee in 1998 or 1999. They started dating and then got married. The bought a new duplex in Oak Creek with a friend of Ted's. We helped them move in as all of the family always did when anyone moved.



28 of us were able to attend Maureen's wedding. It was one of the last times so many of us were able to get together for one party. It was a wonderful party.

In 2001, we were settling into our home in Aurora, IL. I was still working with Paul as part of The PAR Group. Business was continuing to be good. It was about this time that Paul found out that he had a serious case of prostate cancer. It had spread beyond the prostate. He started getting some treatments of various kinds, but nothing seemed to be working very well. As the year moved along and Paul got sicker, we started talking about keeping the company going after he died. He had worked long and hard to build a business from scratch. The PAR Group was known as the "Gold Standard" among municipal management consulting firms. It was an asset that he wanted to sell in order to leave something to his surviving family. Paul and I began investigating a possible sale to a competitor firm. We contacted some firms in 2002 and into 2003 but did not find a satisfactory deal. But we kept looking.

Lewis University

In addition to working with Paul, I started doing some teaching at Lewis University in Romeoville, IL. I also worked with Br. James Gaffney, the President of Lewis University, as a Special Assistant to the President. Br. James and I spent three years together as Christian Brothers in training back in the early 1960's. Br. James stayed in the Brothers. He taught school, then became a high school principal, and then the President of Lewis University. Br. James wanted to do a strategic plan for the University. I was helping him do so. The University owned approximately 400 acres of land in rapidly growing Will County, IL, southwest of Chicago. The University was only using about 150 acres for educational purposes. The rest of the land was leased out to local farmers. The housing market was booming in the early 2000's. Many developers were approaching the University to purchase land and start housing developments. Like any private university, Lewis could always use the cash that the sale of land would bring. On the other hand, once the property was sold, the University would never get it back. One big part of the strategic planning process was to explore the question of selling some land or retaining it all.

Like so many of the other strategic plan processes, I involved a broad range of stakeholders in the planning process. We had over 200 people participate in the process including University management and administrative staff, professors, the Board of Trustees, University advisory committee members, students, and people from the community. Besides residential development other potential land uses were for a golf course and long-term future expansion of the campus for educational purposes. As the planning process moved along, another alternative started to become more interesting. That was the possibility of developing a continuum of care housing development on the campus. The University already had one of the largest nursing degree programs in the south and southwest Chicago suburban area. It was also developing a nursing curriculum around geriatric care. At the same time, the population was aging overall in the country and including the Chicago area. Many new private developers were building communities for seniors. The continuum of care concept was to have three types of housing and care options all linked together on one campus. One element of the senior housing would be for independent living. Another element would be assisted living. And the third element would be acute care/skilled nursing care which were starting to be called Continuing Care Retirement Communities.

In the end, the University decided not to sell its land. There were too many other development options in the long-term future which led the Board and top management staff to retain the land and develop it for a range of uses as the educational and overall market forces changed over the years. I really enjoyed my work with Lewis University. As a one-time Christian Brother, I strongly believed in their mission, and I was happy to have the opportunity to help them think about the future of the University. I was also happy to be part of an organization where prayer and a religious community were something I could be part of again as part of my every day work.

9-11-2001 Terrorist Attack

From an international standpoint, the biggest happening of the new millennium was the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Close to 4,000 people were killed that day as terrorists hi-jacked and crashed airplanes into the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, DC. Fortunately, our son-in-law, Ted Schuerman, who was at the Pentagon at the time was not injured or killed in the attack. Another plane was headed for another target, but that plane crashed in Pennsylvania killing all passengers on board. The terrorists in all three of the planes died in the crashes also.



The World Trade Center Towers on fire
with the Statue of Liberty in the foreground.

For me, as I think for most Americans, we will never forget where we were and what we were doing when those attacks occurred. I was driving from home to Lewis University. I heard some brief reports on the radio news. When I got to the campus, I was able to watch some TV of the attacks. Flying a plane into a building was just an unimaginable idea. But it really happened.

Our country was as stunned as it was when President Kennedy was assassinated. Everything ground to a halt for a few days while people tried to come to terms with the reality of the situation and what it meant for the future. There were memorial services being held all around the country. And, what I found very interesting was the U.S. was the object of much sympathy

from around the world. Some of the headlines from newspapers around the world basically said, "We Are All Americans Today."

For the next several days, then weeks, and then months, the 9-11 terrorist attacks were the focus of news coverage. It became clear after a while that a group of middle eastern, Islamic extremists were the ones who planned and carried out the attacks. They were led by a man named Osama Bin Laden. The search for Bin Laden started with the help of countries around the world. There was no success in finding Bin Laden, and in the meantime, several other terrorist attacks and attempted attacks occurred. Airline security was greatly increased. In November of 2001, the Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) was created to significantly raise the level of pre-flight check-in procedures. As someone who traveled often by airplane, I, as did other travelers, had to get to an airport an hour or two earlier than we previously had to do in order to get screened to make sure we had no weapons on us or in our luggage which could be used to highjack or blow up an airplane while in flight. In November of 2002, a new U.S. Cabinet Department was created. It was called the Department of Homeland Security. The TSA was made part of this new Cabinet Department.

While much work was done to beef up security in our country and around the world to prevent more terrorist attacks, no progress was made in finding Osama Bin Laden. At the same time, there was a growing effort by President George W. Bush, Vice-President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice to blame the leadership of the country of Iraq for being part of the planning and financing of the terrorist attacks of 9-11. There were many reports from the Administration that Iraq, besides being behind the 9-11 attacks, also had WMDs, weapons of mass destruction (aka, nuclear bombs) which they intended to use to attack the U.S. The Administration proposed that the U.S. lead an invasion of Iraq to prevent the use of the WMDs. I was all for going after Osama Bin Laden and having him brought to justice. An international effort was underway to do so. But starting a war was a whole, other question.

It was at that time that I wrote a letter to the President, my two U.S. Senators from Illinois where we lived at the time, my Congresswoman, and the Chicago newspapers. Basically, I thought starting another war in the Middle East was a very bad idea. There did not seem to be any solid proof that Iraq had any role in supporting the 9-11 attacks. Also, there did not seem to be any solid evidence that Iraq had WMDs, though the Administration said that Iraq had them and they knew where they were located in Iraq.

I thought instead of starting a questionable war, the U.S. should lead an effort among all of the countries of the world to start a Peace Fund. Here is the text of that letter:

Justice AND Peace

The best memorial for all of those who died in New York and Washington, DC on September 11 is to pursue both Justice and Peace in their memory.

We are ready to spend $40,000,000,000 to bring to justice and clean up after the killers of over 4,000 innocent victims. That is good. We need a better system of global information and policing. We need to find the killers who planned, supported, and carried out this horrible attack. We need to find ways to prevent as much terrorism as we can in the future. And we must do it on an international and cooperative basis.

But as a fitting memorial for all of those innocent victims, let us also spend $40 billion dollars for peace. Let us challenge all peace-loving peoples and nations of the world to match the $40 billion dollars.

Let us bring together all of the Nobel Peace Prize winners in the world and put them in charge of developing a plan and spending that $80 billion dollars.

Let that money be spent to find peaceful solutions to centuries old political, racial, and religious hatreds.

Let us build monuments of peace in New York, Washington, Northern Ireland, the Middle East, the Balkans, various locations in Africa, and everywhere else in the world where terrorists have struck and killed innocent people.

Let us use that money to give hope to the poorest and most desperate people of the world and their children.

We are the most powerful and richest country in the world. We make up 5% of the world's population and we use close to 50% of its resources every year. We can afford another $40 billion dollars.

A "War" on terrorism will never be won. There is no single enemy to find and destroy. All we can do is minimize the future incidents of terrorism.

A strong, international approach to bringing terrorists to justice and minimizing terrorism in the future is one essential course of action.

Let us not overlook a Peace initiative as another essential course of action.

All of us will then remember those who died in New York and Washington as the martyrs whose deaths spurred the beginning of a new era of peace and cooperation, rather than the first victims of an escalating world of terrorism.

Unfortunately, I did not hear back from anyone I wrote to. And the march to war, first in Iraq and then in Afghanistan, continued to build momentum and then became a reality. Since that time, our country has spent over $6 trillion dollars on both wars, and there will be several more trillions of dollars spent on health care for U.S. military personnel who were injured in both wars. We have lost over 5,000 U.S. soldiers fighting these wars. Over 200,000 Iraqi's and Afghanis have been killed, many by the U.S. And millions of people have become refugees,

particularly in the Middle East, because of these wars. At the same time, terrorist attacks by foreigners in the U.S. have been substantially reduced while they have increased significantly around the rest of the world.

I wondered then and still wonder today, how much a Justice and Peace initiative would have positively affected the entire world. I think pursuing peace at the same time as justice was a great opportunity after the 9-11 terrorist attacks. I think our country unfortunately blew that chance to create a new world dynamic and approach to international peace and cooperation.

Heart Attack

In March of 2002, I suffered a heart attack. It was a real surprise to me. I ran regularly (about 4 times a week). Since moving to Aurora, I was able to play racquetball at the YMCA in Naperville, IL. Every weekday, a couple of racquetball courts were reserved between 11:30 AM and 1:00 PM for old guys (seniors) for which I now qualified. There were always guys to play with. I didn't have to find someone to play with and schedule a time. I just showed up. Sometimes we would play singles, sometimes doubles, and if we had an odd number of players, sometimes we would play "cut throat." I really enjoyed it. Because I could still move around pretty quickly, the other old guys started calling me the "Rabbit." It was fun.

But one morning, I woke up with a pain in my left shoulder. I thought I just slept funny. I got up and started to put on breakfast, but the pain did not ease up. In fact, it got worse. I woke up Gaye and told her I think we should call 911. We did. The City of Aurora paramedics arrived in a few minutes, hooked me up to oxygen and some medication, and headed off to a hospital. They did a variety of tests and found out that of the three major arteries flowing to the heart, the right one was completely blocked. The other two were wide open. But the big plus was that I had developed collateral arteries which were still bringing blood to the right side of the heart. The heart attack I experienced was the dying of a small part of the heart muscle. But because of all of the collateral arteries serving the heart, I did not need surgery. They kept me in the hospital for several days while they gave me medications to thin the blood and treat other aspects of the heart attack and they monitored my condition. I was then discharged and told to take the four drugs they gave me and to take it easy for a few weeks. After a few checkups, the doctors told me to start a physical rehab program for 30 days. I did that. I then stopped taking the medications. I started walking on a regular basis. And within several months of the heart attack, I was back to running.

The doctors had no idea what caused the one artery to close up while the other two were wide-open. Later that summer, I was doing an HR study in a community in Missouri. As part of that work, I had lunch with the head of the paramedics in that community. When I told him the story of my heart attack, he asked me if I had ever sustained an injury to the heart muscle. I thought for a minute and then recalled an incident when I was playing quarterback on our high school freshmen team. During one practice, I took the snap from center and dropped back to pass. As I started to pass, with my chest totally exposed to the on-rushing defensive linemen, one of them rammed their helmet into my chest as they tackled me. I remember lying on the ground wondering if I would be able to breathe again. I had the wind knocked out of me several

times while playing sports. But this seemed more serious. However, after lying on the ground for a few minutes, I got up, walked over to the bench and sat down. In a short time, I was ready to play some more.

When he heard that story, the head of the paramedics said what might have happened when I got hit in the chest was that the right artery was exposed to the helmet which hit me. It probably caused some slight damage to the artery, and as the heart artery healed, it probably created some scar tissue. Then over the years, plaque built up very gradually around the scar tissue until the artery totally closed in 2002. But because I have always been very physically active over the years, as the right artery gradually closed, collateral arteries gradually expanded to serve the right side of the heart. So, when I had the heart attack, only a small part of the heart muscle died. Ever since then, I have had only two arteries serving my heart. I continue to run, swim, bicycle, and play racquetball and tennis. I don't think I am a total rarity, but as I have been given various medical tests over the years since the heart attack, the doctors doing the examinations have said they never have seen anything like that.

One thing the heart attack did was to have Gaye and I continue to improve our everyday diet. One of the doctors who was treating me for the heart attack suggested looking into the "Mediterranean Diet." It is a diet which focuses on eating vegetables, eating healthier, non-processed grains, using less fatty oils in cooking, limiting the amount of meat, and eating more fish. We started doing that and have stuck with it ever since. I think it has been a great contributor to having better than average health as we got older.

Lucy's Children's Fund

Later that year, we started a family foundation called Lucy's Children's Fund. It is named after my Mother. It is something I had been thinking about for a while. And after a heart attack at 60 years old, who knew how much time I had left? With nine siblings, there were always things to celebrate: birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, Christmas, Easter, etc. We would all buy each other gifts on these occasions. I suggested to my sisters and brothers that instead of giving each other gifts, most of which we did not really need, we should put the money we would spend on gifts for each other into a fund that would help poor children have better opportunities to grow up strong, healthy, and educated. The sisters and brothers agreed that we should do this. Gaye, with her accounting and tax background, set up Lucy's Children's Fund as an IRS approved charitable organization. The contributions to Lucy's would be tax deductible.

Everything was up and going by the end of 2002. Each of the families put some money in the pot to get the Fund going. We decided that each family unit would get one child-oriented charity every six months to which they could designate to receive a grant from Lucy's. The grants were several hundred dollars to begin with. They have continued to grow since then. Here is some of the information on our website which was set up by several of Lucy's grandchildren.

LUCY'S CHILDREN'S FUND



WELCOME TO LUCY'S CHILDREN'S FUND

WHO WE ARE

Lucy's Children's Fund is a not-for-profit corporation which focuses on assisting and providing opportunities for poor children around the world. It is a family foundation, organized in 2002, as a way to both grant assistance to needy kids and to provide our own family with an opportunity to work together and foster a culture of giving. Please look through our site to learn more about the many worthy organizations we've given to and how we've taken our foundation from a good idea to a successful family endeavor.

OUR MISSION

Provide financial grants to organizations which give children who lack opportunities and resources the assistance and support they need to grow and develop into healthy and happy young people and adults.

One of the best, and at least in my mind, one of the unexpected pluses of starting Lucy's was that all of my nieces, nephews, and children wanted to be part of the Board to help raise money and make grants. For several years prior to starting Lucy's, the "Cousins" as they called themselves, would have a separate Cousins' Christmas Party. As part of that celebration, they would find a family or two who did not have much money to celebrate Christmas, particularly with gifts for their children. They usually found out about these families through a church or social service organization they were a part of. They and their parents (my sisters and brothers) would pool some money to buy gifts for these families. The cousins would meet on a Sunday afternoon before Christmas. They would then all go to a department store, usually a local Target Store, and buy the Christmas gifts. They would then go to the apartment of our daughter in Chicago, wrap the presents, and then deliver them to the organization which provided the names of the families in need. They always had a great time doing this. So as Lucy's became a reality, they wanted to

be part of it. All of my sisters and brothers stepped away from being on the Board of Lucy's so that their children could be actively involved. By being on the Board, our children learned to carry on the legacy of those who came before them by helping people who needed help. Over the 16 years Lucy's has been operating, we have collected over $225,000 from family donations and disbursed about $150,000 of that money. If left to my own devices, I would have given away all of the money we have gotten. But fortunately, there are a majority of Board Members who wanted to take some of the money and invest it in very safe mutual funds. Those investments have been very productive in terms of increasing the money we have available to give to charities.

And another side benefit with so many of the next generation of our family participating in Lucy's that we get to meet with them twice a year to approve grants. We used to meet face to face, but many of them have moved to different parts of the country in the last 16 years. So, when we now conduct our semi-annual meetings, the majority of the Board Members Skype or use other digital platforms to join in virtual meetings. What a different world!

Gaye continued to help Maureen get her business, Accelerated Fundraising Solutions, Inc. up and going. She also was keeping track of the finances for my company, Robert A. Beezat, Inc. which she had incorporated a number of years ago. All of the consulting work I did with The PAR Group and with other clients was done as an independent contractor with my own company. There were many accounts which needed to be kept and reports which needed to be filed. Gaye is excellent at that. Me, not so much. Gaye also started tutoring at the Dominican Literacy Center in Aurora where she worked with young, Hispanic immigrant women who wanted to learn the English language. Gaye did a wonderful job in that volunteer work for several years.

Ali was living and working in Chicago. I don't remember the exact year she started, but somewhere in this time frame, she started working in the Development offices of Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago. At a couple of their fundraising events, they had representatives of the Chicago White Sox baseball team. Ali was a baseball fan, and a Chicago White Sox fan in particular. The White Sox were big supporters of Children's Memorial Hospital. So, at some of the fundraising events, she got to meet Ozzie Guillen, the Manager of the team; A. J. Pierzynski, our favorite Polish baseball player, and Steve Stone, one of the team's television broadcasters. It was a fun time.

<u>Buying The PAR Group</u>

As 2003 arrived, Paul was getting sicker. I was still trying to sell the company for him. But in Paul's and my judgment, the companies which showed some interest were not of high enough quality and professionalism to carry on the PAR name. So, as Paul's health continued to deteriorate, I decided I would buy the company from him. I never wanted to own the company. But I did not want my friend of 30 years dying, thinking that his company would come to an end.

Paul Reaume died on July 29. I still miss him. Outside of my immediate and large family, he was my best friend. We could rely on each other, we trusted each other totally. And we always had some good laughs together.

From our family's standpoint, it marked a significant change. I became the owner and President of The PAR Group and Gaye became the company's Chief Financial Officer. Both new roles thrust us into a much busier work-related lifestyle.

As owner and President of The PAR Group, I was involved not only in consulting work, but also managing the company. Fortunately, we had two people in the office in Lake Bluff, Sue Barca and Pam Maloney, who did most of the administrative work, which was considerable. Before I made the decision to buy the company from Paul, I talked with both Sue and Pam about my intentions as far as buying the company. I wanted to make sure that they would continue to work for The PAR Group. Otherwise, I would have been very hesitant to buy the company. They both said that they would continue their roles in the company. I breathed a big sigh of relief and concluded the sale with Paul.

We were living in Aurora at the time, and our offices were in Lake Bluff. Generally, I would drive up to the office a couple of days a week when I was not on the road with clients. On a good traffic day in Chicago (an oxymoron), I would make the trip in about an hour. I would leave home by about 5:15 AM so I could get past O'Hare Airport by 6 AM. If I was able to do that, it was clear sailing from there up to the office in the north suburbs. I would then head back home either before or after the evening rush hour, which in the Chicago area extends from 4 to 7 PM.

Gaye began filling a bigger role in the company regarding finances. This freed up Pam to work more on marketing and sending out proposals to prospective clients. We had a wonderful year business wise. We did over a million dollars in billings which was a first for the company. Gaye started to say that two of her favorite activities were sending out invoices and depositing checks. Fortunately, she was able to do a considerable amount of that in 2004 and subsequent years.

One last and important happening in 2004 was that my “big sister” Rosemary died. She had been wrestling with breast cancer for about 10 years. It finally got her. She was only 63 years old. We all still miss her. She was the oldest of we 10 siblings. I was #2. I always looked up to Rosemary. She was a leader, a good student, and a person of integrity. She cared for all of us all our lives. Since I was #2 of the ten of us, Rosemary and I did a lot of things together over the years, particularly when it came to taking care of our younger sisters and brothers. We often laughed that we changed more diapers by the time we were 15 than most people change in a lifetime. And they weren’t Pamper diapers where you could just take them off the baby and throw the diaper in the trash. The old diapers were cloth. If there was any poop in the diapers, they had to be rinsed out in the toilet and then rinsed in a sink. We also learned how to cook so that our Mom could get a little break now and then. Rosemary taught me how to dance as I got into seventh and eighth grade. And since a number of my friends were not lucky enough to have a big sister like Rosemary, she taught them how to dance also.

Thank you, Rosemary.

As we moved into 2005, business with The PAR Group was booming. We added more consultants. I was traveling quite a bit to clients from coast to coast and from Texas up to Fargo,

ND. Gaye's role as CFO for the corporation kept her very busy as well. But since two of her favorite activities continued to be sending out invoices and depositing checks, she had the chance to do that very regularly.

Maureen took the position of President of the Dominican High School in Whitefish Bay, WI. She became pregnant earlier in the year. Our first grandchild, Andrew Robert Schuerman, was born on December 24 at about 11:50 PM.



Andrew was healthy and so was Maureen. Andrew Robert Schuerman filled our lives with lots of joy and fun. And even though we were very busy with the consulting company, we were not too busy to see Andrew whenever we got a chance. Our daughter Maureen called us frequently about "babysitting opportunities" in Oak Creek, WI. So, we drove up to spend time with Andrew whenever we could. Ali was living and working in Chicago.

Selling The PAR Group

I knew when I bought The PAR Group from Paul that I would not own it for a long time. I just wanted my friend to know that all of his hard work and the high standards that he set would carry on. I wanted to get everything stabilized after his death, and then look for another buyer. Fortunately, one of our consultants, Heidi Voorhees, a former municipal manager and who had been working for us as an independent contractor was interested in buying the company. She was not in a position to buy it herself, but she had a good friend she had known since college who had his own political consulting firm, who was interested in purchasing the company. Part of the deal was that Heidi, though she would not own the firm, would be the President and Chief Operating Officer. A sale was concluded in late 2006. I continued to work for the company as did all of the other employees and independent contractors.

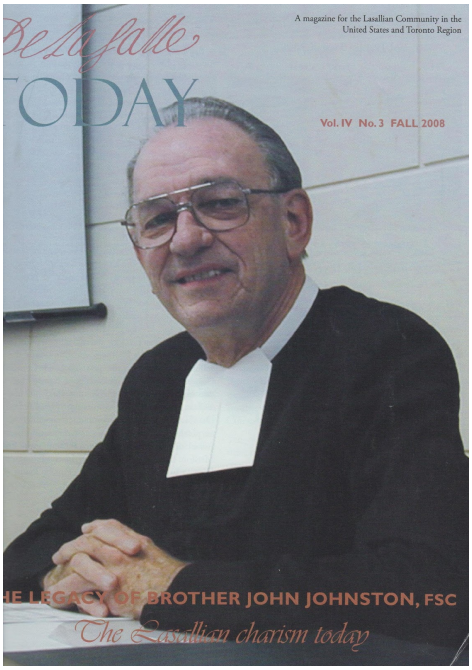
During 2007, we decided to move back up to Wisconsin. We wanted to be closer to our grandson Andrew to both enjoy his company and help out with babysitting when needed, such as when Ted traveled for his work, which he did fairly frequently. His travel was not only to clients in the U.S., but also around the world.

In April if 2007, when I turned 65, I got my first Social Security check. Having paid into Social Security for 40 plus years, it was nice to start getting that monthly check. Gaye turned 65 in July of 2008, so she qualified for Social Security and Medicare as I did the year before. After buying health insurance for ourselves for the last 10 years which was extremely costly, it was great to get into a system that had excellent medical coverage for reasonable costs. Thank you, LBJ. One of the very positive things about getting a monthly social security check and having a lot of the medical expenses covered through Medicare was that I could now do more volunteer work in areas which interested me. That meant I was able to cut back my billable hours as a consultant.

We put our home in Aurora up for sale in July. It sold very quickly. The real estate market was still booming. We put money down on a home to be built in Sturtevant, WI. Because the home would not be completed until later in the year, we rented an apartment in Mt. Pleasant while the home was to be built. Unfortunately, the builder went bankrupt, so we extended our lease at the apartment building while we looked for another home. Eventually, we contracted with another builder to build a home in Mt. Pleasant. Construction on this home did not start until early 2008. One bit of good news from the bankruptcy of the builder is that a class action lawsuit was filed, and we eventually got our down payment back. We moved into our new home on July 3, 2008 which happened to be Gaye's 65th birthday. How many guys buy their wife a home on her birthday?

Alice was working at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago. She got a promotion in 2007. She also decided to get a Master's degree in Public Services Management at DePaul University. She worked full-time while taking some classes at night. Maureen continued as President of Dominican High School in Whitefish Bay, WI. Maureen asked Gaye to help out with some grant writing as a volunteer. So, Gaye began to do that. Over a few years, Gaye wrote grant proposals which brought in close to $500,000.00 to support the school.

My Wonderful Mentor and Good Friend Died



Brother John Johnston was a Christian Brother who I first met when I was a senior in high school in Glencoe, MO in 1959. He joined the faculty as an English and Music Teacher. I wrote about Br. John and the role he played in helping me figure out what my vocation in life is. After I left the Christian Brothers in May of 1963, Br. John and I stayed in touch over the years.

He came to our wedding in 1966. He became a high school principal and head of the Christian Brother community in Galesburg, IL. Gaye and I visited with him in Galesburg. Br. John then continued to rise within the world-wide Christian Brother religious order. Eventually, he became the Superior General of the order and served in that capacity for 14 years from 1986 to 2000. As Superior General, he was stationed in Rome. We still stayed in touch. But heading up the international Christian Brother religious order was a very full-time job. However, while filling that role, Br. John played a significant part in working to improve the lives of poor children around the world. He was one of the strongest proponents and contributors to having the United Nations General Assembly adopt the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* in November of 1989 which is still in force today.

Br. John returned to the Chicago area in 2001 after serving as Superior General. I visited with him once upon his return. He was still the same wonderful man, friend, and mentor. Thank you, Br. John.

Chapter Twenty-Five

Retired? What Does That Mean?

Now that I had sold the business, I was retired, I guess. I still did some consulting work for The PAR Group. But as I have wanted to do all of my life, I wanted to use my knowledge and skills to help people have a better life.

After I sold the business and we had moved to Mount Pleasant and while we waited for our new home to be built, I was looking for a way to help promote legislation and programs which assisted people in need so that they would have better opportunities to succeed as individuals and as families. There were many organizations from which to choose. I was talking with Gaye one day about this. She said we got donation solicitation letters very frequently. We would send money to different ones from time to time. She said there was one group she was particularly impressed with. The group was called NETWORK.



So, I went on line to get more information about them. I found out that it is a National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, headquartered in Washington, D.C. The organization focuses its lobbying efforts in the areas of economic justice, immigration reform, healthcare, peacemaking and ecology.

Network was founded in December 1971 when 47 Catholic Sisters involved in education, healthcare, and other direct service activities gathered from across the U.S. at Trinity College in Washington, D.C., with the intent to form a new type of justice ministry. This was a time when the Catholic Church was undergoing dramatic changes in response to Vatican II reforms and calls from the Vatican and U.S. Bishops to seek "Justice in the World". Individual women religious had already become involved in the Civil Rights Movement and anti-war activism. Now they had an organization in D.C. which could bring together many individuals and religious orders around the country to address these important issues and challenges.

Sister Simone Campbell is the executive director of NETWORK. I sent her an email in November of 2007. I told her that I was very interested in what NETWORK was doing and that I would like to help them out if I could. To my surprise, I received an email the next day from Sr. Simone. She said she was going to be in Milwaukee to speak at a conference the coming weekend. She asked if I would be able to meet with her while she was in Milwaukee. I said I could, and we arranged a time and place to meet.

I visited with Sr. Simone for about an hour. She talked about one of the projects NETWORK was getting set to launch in preparation for the 2008 national election. The project was to create a Platform for the Common Good. The nuns wanted to hold listening sessions across the country to hear what people thought was important about the Common Good as well as what they would like to see happen at the national level to improve the Common Good.

I told Sr. Simone about my consulting and management experience bringing together a number of diverse people to address community issues and challenges. She thought that would work very well in helping NETWORK conduct listening sessions and developing a Platform for the Common Good. Shortly thereafter, I flew to Washington, DC to meet with Sr. Simone and her staff as well as other faith-based social justice organizations to plan the listening sessions. When I got back to Wisconsin, I started contacting a variety of organizations which might be interested in hosting a Common Good listening session. I heard back from about a dozen groups including church-related organizations, colleges and universities, and some community groups interested in doing so. I worked with them to set up dates, times, and locations to conduct such listening sessions. I conducted those listening sessions in the Spring of 2008. Most were held in Wisconsin (Milwaukee, Green Bay, Racine, Madison, and Sinsinawa). I also facilitated some discussions in Dubuque, IA and in Chicago and suburbs. My sisters Margaret and Mary Kay helped in facilitating some of those discussions.

A total of over 200 people participated in those listening sessions. Approximately 2,000 more people around the country participated in creating a Platform for the Common Good. All of our input was forwarded to the NETWORK offices, and a Platform for the Common Good was drafted.

The next step which NETWORK and their affiliated organizations took was to hold a Convention for the Common Good which occurred in July of 2008 in Philadelphia. About 1,000 people, including me, came to Philadelphia to discuss, approve, and promote a Platform for the Common Good. The purpose of adopting a platform was to be able to present to candidates of both parties a set of goals and practical steps to achieve the Common Good during the next several years. After a day and a half of discussion, we adopted a Platform for the Common Good.

After we approved the Platform, we all returned to our home bases and started to line up groups with whom we could discuss the Platform. I went back to almost all of the organizations who had participated in developing the Platform so they could see what resulted from their input. I also spoke to some other organizations who did not participate in the listening sessions, but which were interested in hearing about the Platform. Finally, I also made presentations at a number of Catholic Colleges and Universities in the region including Marquette, Loyola (Chicago), St. Norbert, Clarke College, and several others.

A one-page summary of the Platform is on the following page.



Platform for the Common Good

INSPIRED BY FAITH AND BUILDING ON OUR NATION'S FOUNDING IDEALS

Summary

Enlivened by the Gospel message of hope and the wisdom of Catholic Social Teaching, we, as people of faith, have come together with deep urgency to help make our nation "a more perfect union" focused on the common good. ***In the words of the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution,***

We the People of the United States are called to:

ESTABLISH JUSTICE

To ***establish Justice*** we are challenged to protect *life* and to address disparities between "haves" and "have-nots" in this country and around the world. We are called to support policies that promote *economic equity*, ensure *human rights*, and eliminate all forms of exploitation and discrimination. We must address the root causes of migration and reform our flawed *immigration* system. And we need to change laws and mentalities that support institutional racism, sexism and classism, and discrimination based on disability, age or other factors.

ENSURE DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY

To ***ensure domestic Tranquility*** we need infrastructures and programs to build up local *communities* and businesses and to provide access to *education*, *jobs*, needed *services* and *green space*. Local businesses are important in developing strong communities that support families. Government, business and community partnerships must provide needed opportunities for children and families to flourish in an environment free from violence and criminal activity. We need to *reform our criminal justice systems* and focus more attention on rehabilitation programs and transitional support services for re-entry into communities.

PROVIDE FOR THE COMMON DEFENSE

To ***provide for the common defense*** we need to develop an ethical U.S. foreign policy that emphasizes conflict resolution through *diplomacy* instead of military force—and that promotes stability abroad through fair trade laws, debt cancellation and increased responsible international *development aid*. Our nation must engage with other nations to develop creative solutions to common problems such as migration, human trafficking, drug trafficking, crime, weapons proliferation, global poverty, and climate change. Our country needs to do more to foster constructive relations with and improved understanding of other cultures. Supporting the *United Nations* is critical as is participating in and abiding by international treaties.

PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE

To ***promote the general Welfare*** we must promote and protect life and all of the systems and supports that are required for *life and human dignity*. This includes embracing the goals of both the U.S. and the global campaigns to eliminate poverty and to increase access to quality *education*, *living wage jobs*, *safe housing*, *nutritious food*, and *comprehensive*, *quality healthcare*. We must create the essential conditions for a consistent culture of life that respects and promotes life at all stages.

SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY TO OURSELVES AND OUR POSTERITY

To ***secure the Blessings of Liberty for ourselves and our posterity*** we must organize our economic development and production to provide for long term sustainability. Ecological responsibility requires that we manage and distribute material resources across all humanity and into future generations. We envision a social and economic order that is sustainable and ecologically responsible; places human dignity above profits; harnesses renewable and clean sources of energy; balances corporate interests with the *global common good*; addresses the need to strengthen our *infrastructure*; eliminates *debt* that will harm future generations; recognizes and seeks to address discriminatory practices; promotes fair trade policies; and neither exploits persons and communities, nor abuses our *stewardship of the earth*.

Call to Action

We the People must continue to work together—as government, business, communities and individuals—to create a nation and world rooted in justice. We must speak, act, insist, demand and ensure that the common good is at the heart of all decisions and actions. These times call for renewed engagement across our differences. Political engagement is not just our right, but our responsibility.

—The Delegates and Steering Committee of the Convention for the Common Good, and all who shared in this process

For more information and the complete Platform for the Common Good:
www.catholicsinalliance.org or www.networklobby.org

©2008 Convention for the Common Good

Once I started to conclude my work on the Platform for the Common Good in 2008, I started doing some volunteer consulting for the Racine/Kenosha Community Action Agency (CAA). I helped them review their compensation plan for their employees. I also worked with them to put together a succession plan for their management staff. Shortly after I completed that plan for them, the CEO of the CAA parted ways with the Agency. I was called by the Board Chair of the Agency and was asked to serve as Interim CEO while they searched for a permanent replacement. I agreed to do so for a six-month period of time beginning in January of 2009.

The Racine/Kenosha Community Action Agency is the two-county organization which began in the 1960's as part of the War on Poverty. It was the kind of local, anti-poverty organization which I wrote about earlier and had helped get started in Michigan in the mid-1960's.

It was a very interesting time. The Great Recession started to significantly and negatively impact a many people starting in 2008 and continuing into and through all of 2009 and the following two years. Many people in the area lost their jobs. Many people also lost their homes. The Community Action Agency was where people in Racine and Kenosha Counties came for emergency food, heating, and rent assistance. Many people came to the Agency's offices who never had to ask for help before in their lives. They had always been able to support themselves and their families. But when both adults in their household lost their jobs, they had to ask for help. I still remember the looks of embarrassment and anger of many of these people as they came into our offices to ask for help. The staff did everything they could to help them. But it was still a very traumatic time for many, many people. Most of the staff helping these people were women. When guys came in and were angry, I often had to come out of my office and walk around to lower the confrontational anger of some of the men.

In addition to helping people with food, rent, and heat, the Agency took proactive steps to create jobs related to local healthy food. We applied for and received a little Federal Government Stimulus Money and started working with local farmers, small food processors, restaurants, schools, and other food consumer groups to develop a local, healthy food supply chain. We created a not for profit corporation called SEED - Sustainable Edible Economic Development, Inc. It was the start of a very successful effort that helped start an incubator kitchen program at the local homeless shelter. In a matter of a few years, there were more than a dozen small food processing businesses working out of the incubator kitchen.

RUGN
Racine Urban Garden Network



We also helped start a number of community gardens in some of the poorest neighborhoods in the City. We did this by helping develop a group of volunteers which called itself the Racine Urban Garden Network (RUGN). When we helped start this urban garden effort, we used about $500.00 of federal money from the Stimulus Program which President Obama promoted at the national level to combat the job losses which were brought on by the "Great Recession" of 2008. We used some of the stimulus money to pay for a special use permit from the City of Racine so that a vacant industrial property could be used as an urban garden. We got that approval. But before having people start gardening, we needed to get the soil tested so that the food people would grow would not be contaminated with any leftover industrial waste in the soil. Again, using some stimulus money, we paid the State of Wisconsin to do soil testing. It turned out that it would be okay to grow vegetables and fruits on the urban garden site. But to be extra careful, RUGN decided to have all of the food growing being done in raised garden beds. Over the next several years, approximately a dozen new urban gardens were started in the City of Racine. Most of them were in the lowest income areas of the City. Some were developed on vacant lots, some on church properties, and some on school properties. There were close to 500 people growing food in urban gardens several years into the program. The program continues on.

We helped create some farmers' markets where local, fresh food could be sold in the urban areas. And we got computerized systems into the farmers' markets which gave low-income people the opportunity to use their food stamps to purchase fresh produce. And we helped build relationships between small, local, healthy food farmers and food stores and restaurants.

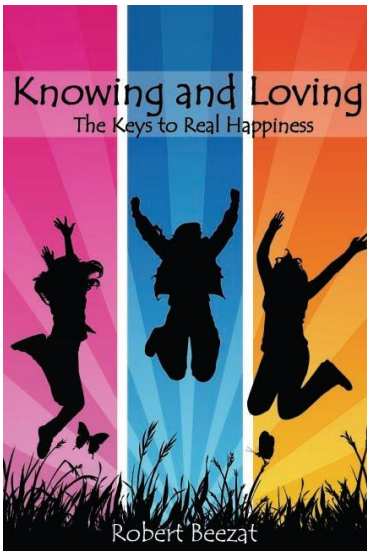
I assisted the CAA Board in the search for a new CEO. After a few months of running the Agency, the Board asked me to consider taking the job on a permanent basis. I declined their offer. I was glad to help out on an interim basis. But I was not interested in a full-time management position. And not that it was the deciding factor, but one thing that surprised me while working on a full-time basis after a few years of consulting and teaching on a part-time basis was how tired I was after putting in a 9 or 10-hour day. I have always been blessed with a lot of energy. But now, after working all day, coming home and having dinner, I would sit down to watch a little TV or read, and I would fall asleep. At 67 years old, I guess I was not a kid anymore.

A new CEO, Sharon Schulz, was appointed by the Community Action Agency Board. She began working in early July. I continued on an as needed, hourly basis to help her transition into the organization.

Chapter Twenty-Six

The 2000's Continued - Writing Two Books

The first book I wrote is titled Knowing and Loving: The Keys to Real Happiness.



One of the things I started doing in 2007, after selling The PAR Group was to seriously think about writing a book. As I mentioned previously, I had been writing essays about a variety of topics, mostly in airports waiting for airplanes. The essays were frequently about ethical, philosophical, and theological questions and ideas. And I was also writing to authors and speakers, occasionally getting a response back from them. So, I thought my ideas on some topics might be worth some consideration by other people. Gaye often commented when we were just talking about a variety of topics that I had good ways of taking complex ideas and making them understandable.

I probably got good at doing that because one of my jobs as a municipal manager and management consultant was that I had to take some fairly complex issues and make them understandable to elected officials who were often bright, but not knowledgeable about many topics regarding which they had to make decisions. For example, what non-professional knows much about wastewater treatment systems, electric system transformers, human resource laws and practices, and many other topics which as elected officials, they would have to make decisions? One of my roles as a municipal manager and consultant was to take complex and specialized language about diverse topics and present them clearly, briefly, and in everyday language to busy elected officials who in most cases were serving their community on a part-time basis while also having a full-time, non-municipal job.

One reason I decided to write a book was that I wanted to share with my immediate and larger family what I had learned from so many good people over the years, starting off with my large

family when I was a kid. As I mentioned earlier, it was not unusual to have 40 to 50 people in our home in Chicago for various family gatherings for holidays, graduations, birthdays, etc. At those family gatherings, I learned a lot just listening to what people of all ages, different jobs, different educational backgrounds, and different family situations were saying and sharing with others. And when the adults started talking a little softer about something or someone, we kids knew they were talking about very interesting stuff, so we listened even harder.

Though my large family still gathered regularly, it was not as often as was the case when I was a kid. I didn't think my children, as well as my nephews and nieces, would have as much of a positive experience as I had growing up, learning from others, and having role models you could follow. I thought if I wrote down what I had learned, it would be a help to them somewhere in their lives to know what the people in their family thought was important and how to live your life, so you could enjoy the good things and overcome the bad things that we all face from time to time in all of our lives.

A second reason I wanted to write a book was that one of the topics I was always very interested in reading and learning about was the connection between faith and reason. I wanted to propose a new world-view to help resolve the conflict between faith and reason. All my life, I have tried to bridge the gap between faith and reason. Reality has so many elements and complexities to it that I always thought that the more perspectives I brought to any matter under consideration, the better chance I had of understanding the totality of reality.

I respect and pursue the knowledge that we gain through reason. But I also think that reason alone is inadequate to fully explain reality as I think it truly exists. I think, primarily because of my experience of love as expressed and lived through interpersonal relations, that there is something about each of us as human beings which goes beyond the physical. So, I have pursued knowledge of all kinds, including spiritual and theological knowledge, because I think I will have closer understanding of what reality is, and, consequently, how to best live my life in a way that is both a good life and a happiness producing life for myself and those with whom I interact and share my life.

For the last 250 years in western culture, there has been a huge, unresolved conflict between the long-ascendant Christian world-view and the Enlightenment-inspired world-view. It is basically a conflict between faith and reason.

The basic questions raised by this conflict center around the following:

- Is there a God or not?
- What and who are human beings?
- What is the basis of morality?

In addition to this basic conflict of world-views in Western culture, change was happening so fast in the late 20th Century and into the 21st Century that it is exacerbating the tensions between and within different world-views in the west and around the world. Some of the major changes of the past and some of which are still changing for the future are the:

- Industrial Revolution and Post-Industrialization

- Scientific Revolution including Evolution
- Globalization–Meeting of Western and Eastern Cultures/Religions/Economies/Power
- Growing awareness of the importance and centrality of individuality and personhood
- Instantaneous and continuous Information Age technologies and media
- Environmental changes and impacts

All of these changes have introduced many elements into our lives with which we did not have to deal with in the past. As a result, confusion, confrontation, anger and turmoil seem to be on the rise locally, nationally, and internationally.

I think we need a new synthesis of how we view reality and how we as individuals and as societies fit into that reality. How and what we think about the important questions of reality impact almost all aspects of individual behavior and societal structures and organizations, including, but not limited to:

- The type of governmental structure and the role of government
- The beliefs, roles, and organizational structure of religions
- Economic theories and systems
- Gender roles
- The balance between individual good and the common good

I wrote this book in an attempt to contribute to the development of a new synthesis which integrates and balances the following ideas and themes:

- Rationality
- Science
- Belief
- Material and spiritual realities
- Experience and reality of personhood
- Reality and power of love

No set of ideas, no religious belief system, no economic theory, or no approach to government has all the correct answers. I knew I did not have all of the correct answers. No one does. But I think it is important for all of us now and moving forward to the future to try and arrive at some basic understanding and agreement regarding the fundamental questions that need to be asked and then have a respectful dialogue regarding the answers we come up with.

My book examines and develops this new world-view and translates it into practical principles and examples of how to incorporate honest intellectual inquiry and an active, transcendent, and generous love into the midst of ordinary, day to day life from individual, family, societal, and cosmic perspectives.

My third purpose for wanting to write a book was that I wanted to propose that love is an equal partner with reason in developing a new synthesis for action in the 21st century and beyond.

Knowing and loving. Head and heart.

On one hand, we are taught by our culture, particularly with the rise of scientism, that hard facts and rational thinking are the keys to understanding all of reality. Certainly, science and fact-based reasoning are significant contributors to our understanding of reality. But it is not the only basis of our knowledge and understanding of all of reality. We also learn and know through our relationships with reality, particularly our love-based, interpersonal relationships.

Some people say that love is strictly a biological and emotional phenomenon. And certainly, biology and emotions often are a part of love. But as human beings, we are more than our biology and emotions. We are capable of choosing to enter into and be part of loving, interpersonal relationships which are as "real" as the hard facts of science. Those relationships and the bonds they create and nurture are real things. They exist. They have physical manifestations. But they are also spiritual realities. And it is this physical/spiritual reality that we experience and call love.

And, when we decide to do something as human beings, we usually take both types of knowledge into account. We do "think" with our heads and our hearts. Sometimes in our decisions we lean more on our heads and sometimes more on what our hearts are telling us to do. In order to make good decisions for ourselves and within the societies in which we live, we need to take into account what both our heads and hearts tell us about reality and how we should most appropriately respond.

In addition to helping us make good decisions, creating and sustaining loving relationships is a choice we can make and an action we can take to build and create a better world. We can create and expand the reality of love in the world. Everybody and everything we encounter can flourish if we approach them with love.

There is a wonderful quote from Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a deceased scientist and Jesuit priest who said, "Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for a second time in the history of the world, human beings will have discovered fire."

We are on the way to mastering the winds, the waves, tides, and gravity. Science is wonderful. And, it is also time for us to take the challenge and co-create the better world we want for ourselves, our families, our communities, our country and our world, using our abilities to know and to love.

So, around July of 2007, I started gathering up the essays I had written previously and see if they could be worked into a book. I arranged the essays in what I considered to be a logical order as one idea progressed from one essay to the next. After I did that, I rewrote parts of many of the essays so that there was a good flow to the topics I was trying to address.

By the end of 2007 the book was complete, and I started looking for a publisher. The title of the book would be Knowing and Loving: The Keys to Real Happiness. I researched a number of publishers to see who might be interested in the type of book I had written. There were about a dozen possibilities. As 2008 rolled around, I started writing "Query Letters" to a number of

publishers. Basically, a query letter to a publisher includes the following parts, ideally summarized on one page:

- Brief description of the book
- Why you wrote the book
- Audience you hope to reach
- Your qualifications for writing the book

Along with the one-page letter, you are asked to enclose the Introduction to the book, the table of contents, and a few chapters of the book. I did that for about ½ dozen publishers. I had some follow-up from a few publishers, but no solid offers to publish the book.

While working for the Community Action Agency, I continued to do a little consulting for The PAR Group. Unfortunately, as the recession got worse, the consulting group went into bankruptcy. However, Heidi Voorhees, created a new corporation titled Voorhees and Associates which kept everyone from the old company working, including myself.

Gaye was busy getting us settled into our new home. She was also continuing to write grant applications for Dominican High School in Whitefish Bay, WI where Maureen was President. Alice continued working for Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago as well as going to graduate school at DePaul. Later in the year, she resigned her position at the hospital in September and went to graduate school full time to complete her Master's Degree as quickly as possible.

Gaye and I spent as much time as possible with our grandson Andrew. Maureen and Ted both had full time jobs, so we were able to help as needed. Gaye also began volunteering as a Eucharistic Minister at the County Nursing Home in Racine called Ridgewood.

Maureen resigned her position as President of Dominican High School effective at the end of the 2008-09 school year. She then re-opened her fundraising consulting business. She changed the name from Accelerated Fundraising Solutions to Success in Philanthropy. Gaye helped her with the corporate and financial transitioning.



On July 11, 2010, our granddaughter, Katherine Anne Schuerman was born.
Two Grandpas, two Grandmas, Maureen and Ted, Andrew and Katherine at her Christening.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

2010's - Book Publishing, Promotion, Presentations

As 2010 rolled around, I got back to working on getting my book, Knowing and Loving: The Keys to Real Happiness published. I sent out another ½ dozen query letters. I also contacted some writers' agents to see if they were interested in representing me and my book to publishers. The responses I got back were not encouraging. As I started looking more deeply into the book publishing business, I found that only about 1/3 of books are actually contracted for by publishing houses who would bear the cost of printing and selling those books. Unless you had a "platform" (a former president, or movie celebrity, or a long history of successful writing and publications), publishing houses were not interested in finding and contracting with new, unknown authors.

I then started looking into self-publishing my book. One option was to do all of the publishing work myself e.g., getting it type-set, finding a printer, getting the book printed, getting the book copyrighted, getting it distributed to book sellers like Amazon and Barnes & Noble, and a number of other aspects of publishing and selling a book.

One of the services self-publishing companies offer is that they will do a book cover design for you. Fortunately, I already had a book cover design which I really liked. It was done by a student at the University of Wisconsin – Parkside. He had done some design work for the University of Wisconsin Extension office in Kenosha, WI. While he was doing that, I asked him to design a logo for the SEED group I mentioned previously. He did an excellent job on that design. I asked him to do some cover designs for my book and told him I would pay him for his work. I gave him a copy of the table of contents for my book as well as the first chapter. He came back in about a week with several designs. One design really captured the content of the book. Gaye and I decided that is the one we would use.

Since about 2/3 of books are self-published, I started researching companies which provide a broad range of services to authors. I ended up contracting with Dog Ear Publishing located in Indianapolis, IN. It took about three months from the time I contracted with them to get the book published and available to be purchased, which was in early July of 2010.

While I was working with the publisher to get the book available in print and ebook formats, I also started working with the daughter of a friend of mine to develop a website for my book. Jennifer Mitchell had a business developing and maintaining websites. She set one up for me. The web address is www.knowingandloving.com

After the book was published and available in print and ebook formats, I started promoting my book. As I mentioned earlier, book publishers do not do a lot of promotion for your book unless you already are well known as a person or writer. Before I started promoting the book, Gaye and I met with Greg Borowski, one of the editors of the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. Our daughter Maureen knew Greg from some of her work at Marquette and at Whitefish Bay Dominican High

School. Greg said that unless you are a writer with a big "platform" and are already well-known, you will not get much promotional help from publishers. So, one thing you need to do is make presentations to groups of readers. And very, very importantly, he said don't try to create audiences where you can make presentations. Go to speak at places where audiences already exist. He provided me with some lists of libraries and media outlets in Wisconsin and I started contacting some of them.

But what really took off as far as making presentations, and which fit in perfectly with Greg's advice, came as the result of my sending emails to a number of my friends and professional colleagues. Having been in municipal management and consulting for a total of about 45 years, I had many people who I had worked with as a consultant who were members of local service clubs such as Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, and Optimists. I just sent an email to several hundred people who were primarily municipal managers and administrators telling them I wrote a book. A few smart alecks, who I, of course, thought were very funny, wrote back to me that they were surprised to hear from me that I had written a book. They were surprised they said because they didn't think I could read.

One of the village managers I wrote to said that some of the ideas in my book would fit very well with the mission of Rotary Clubs. The motto of Rotary Clubs is "Service Above Self." And they try to live by their "Four-Way Test" of things they do in all aspects of their lives. The elements of the Four-Way Test are:

- "Is it the Truth?"
- "Is it Fair to All Concerned?"
- "Will it Build Goodwill and Better Friendships?"
- "Will it Be Beneficial to All Concerned?"

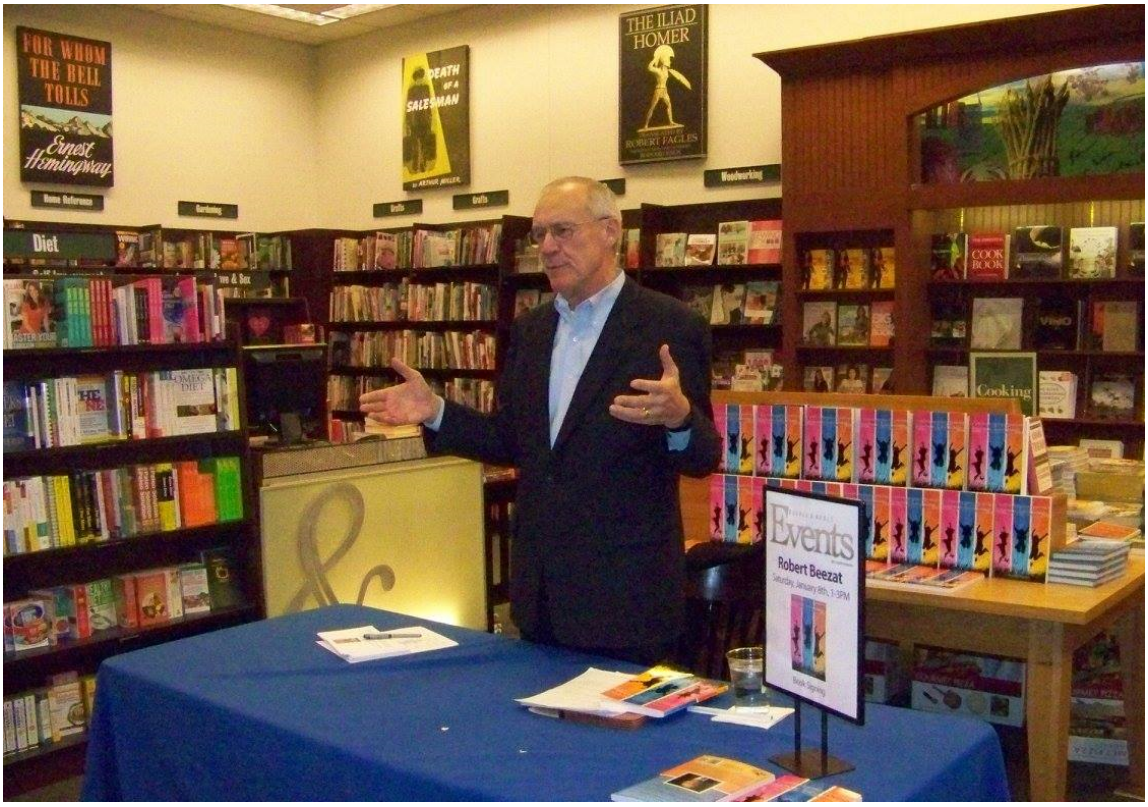
I had been a Rotarian back in the early 1970's when I was the City Manager in Waseca, MN. When I left that position, I did not join another Rotary Club when I got back to Chicago. But when I got the email from, Tom Mick, one of my Rotarian friends, I looked at my book and figured I could develop a 20-25 minute PowerPoint presentation which would tie some of the ideas in my book to the motto and mission of Rotary. Very importantly, getting that email reminded me that Rotary Clubs around the world almost always have a speaker at their weekly meetings. And there were about 150 Rotary Clubs in southeastern Wisconsin and northeastern Illinois.

My first presentation was to the Park Forest, IL Rotary Club. Tom Mick who invited me to speak to their Club was the Village Manager in Park Forest. His two predecessors, Bob Pierce and John Perry were also Rotarians. Bob still lived in the area and John was now serving as Village Manager in a nearby suburb. Both Bob and John were able to attend that meeting. I got to visit with them and make my first presentation. While I was in Park Forest, I was also able to make a presentation on my book to a broader audience at the Park Forest Public Library.

During the first year after publication, I made about 35 presentations on my book to a variety of groups including book clubs, libraries, colleges and universities, service clubs, and a senior

community. Each year after that, I averaged about one presentation per week, again to a wide variety of already existing audiences. After Rotary Clubs, the next larger group of pre-existing audiences which I tapped into were senior citizen independent living residences and senior citizens clubs and organizations.

One other notable event during the first year of publication was a book signing at the Barnes & Noble Bookstore in Racine. It was held on January 8, 2011 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. The bookstore was set up so I could do a presentation on my book. Then people had a chance to purchase the book, and if they wanted, I would sign the book for them. About 50 plus people attended the book signing. I think I signed about 25 to 30 books. Having a book signing is not something I ever thought that I would be doing some time in my life. I was very pleased and honored to have the opportunity to do so.



Speaking at a book signing at the Barnes & Noble Bookstore in Mt. Pleasant, WI

I was also elected by my fellow volunteer Board Members to the position of President of SEED: Sustainable Edible Economic Development, Inc. Finally, I had prostate cancer surgery in August. Everything went well. I had to take my time in getting back to exercise regularly. But I was running again by October.

Gaye was continuing to do the finances for my corporation and Maureen's fundraising consulting company, Success In Philanthropy. Gaye had arthroscopic knee surgery to repair a torn meniscus in her right knee. The surgery was successful, but it limited how much Gaye would be able to walk as a source of daily exercise. Gaye had walked almost every day since about 6 months after

Alice was born in 1973. She needed to find some new ways to exercise, so in addition to some physical therapy exercises she was given, she was told that swimming would be a good way to exercise and have minimum impact on her knee. Gaye did not know how to swim. But she took lessons at the local "Y" and learned how to swim. Janet Evans of Olympic swimming fame, and author of a book on swimming, became her new hero.

Alice finished graduate school and started looking for a job commensurate with her academic background. And our grandchildren, Andrew Robert and Katherine Anne Schuerman were growing up and we had a lot of opportunity to spend time with them.

In 2012, I turned 70 and Gaye turned 69. Both of us had surgeries the previous year. Me for prostate cancer. Gaye for a torn meniscus in her knee. As my mother got older, she would occasionally say in Polish "Sarosc nie Radose" (the phonetic pronunciation is something like "sah rooosh neh rah dooosh). I asked her what that meant. She said it means "Being old is not a joy." An alternate translation in Polish slang is "It’s Hell getting old!"

We used that Polish term more and more as we rehabbed from our surgeries, slowly but surely. At some point, we were struck by the fact that it took much more time to take care of our health as we got older than we expected. It seems like every new health issue that came along was something we would have to try and minimize and keep from getting worse. We decided that the word "chronic" had become one of our least favorite words. Overall, we were still reasonably healthy, but it took more time and effort to stay that way. The good news is that we were relatively healthy and could still be active in a number of ways.

I was busy in five areas. I continued to do some management consulting work for GovHR USA as well as for Maureen's consulting company, Success in Philanthropy.

SEED - Sustainable Edible Economic Development, Inc. was picking up steam. One of the things that happened through the SEED program was that we helped get an incubator kitchen started at the HALO homeless shelter in Racine. A number of small, food processing businesses (baking, sauce and salsa makers, a fudge making company, etc.) all started up small businesses at HALO. We were also able to get a VISTA to work with SEED, RUGN (the Racine Urban Garden Network), and the HALO kitchen.

The third thing I did was continue to make presentations on my book "Knowing and Loving: The Keys to Real Happiness" to a diversity of audiences in southeastern Wisconsin and northeastern Illinois. I also spoke at a number of Catholic colleges and universities on behalf of NETWORK, the group of nuns in DC which I discussed earlier in this book and who work for social justice and peace at home and abroad.

The fourth thing I was able to do was to start a discussion group around topics of religion, politics and culture which have always been important topics to me. I have read about those things all my life, but they are not always the type of topics you can find people to discuss with who have similar interests.

One magazine I have read almost continuously since I was in formation in Glencoe, MO to become a Christian Brother is Commonweal. Commonweal is a bi-weekly, progressive Catholic magazine founded in 1924. It is the oldest independent lay-edited Catholic journal of opinion in the United States. The magazine has an ongoing interest in social justice, ecumenism, just-war teaching, liturgical renewal, women's issues, the primacy of conscience, and the interchange between Catholicism and liberal democracy. I thought maybe I could find a group or start a group which already read the magazine, and we could get together on a regular basis to talk about those topics. I wrote a letter to Commonweal back in 2003 suggesting such an idea. I never heard back from them at the time. However, I think I planted a seed back then, because in June of 2013, Commonweal notified it readership that it wanted to start Commonweal discussion groups.

I worked with Commonweal staff in New York to identify and contact Commonweal readers in southeastern Wisconsin. About 20 people responded that they were interested. I contacted them, and we met at a coffee shop on the southeast side of Milwaukee. We had our first gathering on September 22, 2013.



Since our first discussion in 2013, we have grown our group to over 60 people. Some attend regularly and some sporadically as their schedule permits. One group meets about once per month in Milwaukee. The other group meets once per month in Racine, WI.

The fifth thing I started doing was to join two other groups. One is a book club which meets about once per month and discusses books about spirituality, social justice, and mindfulness. The other group is called the Ecumenical Spirit Group. It meets quarterly up in the Milwaukee area. They put out a monthly Newsletter titled Ruminations of the Spirit. I regularly write articles which appear in the newsletter.

In 2014, I did several consulting jobs for GovHR USA, kept the SEED - Sustainable Edible Economic Development, Inc. moving ahead on several projects, and made about 30 presentations on my book. 2014 was also the 50th anniversary of the start of the War on Poverty. Since I have been involved with poverty issues and organizations in one way or another over the 50 years

since the War on Poverty started, I was asked to be the keynote speaker at the annual Wisconsin Poverty Matters Conference in Appleton, Wisconsin in September. It was an honor to be selected for that role. I also spoke to other groups about the War on Poverty. I talked about what worked in the past and what could work in the future.

As I mentioned earlier, one of the most successful anti-poverty programs which seldom gets talked about as an anti-poverty program is Medicare. Over the 50 years that Medicare has been in place, the percentage of elderly people who are poor was reduced from 40% of the elderly in 1965 to less than 10% of the elderly in 2015.

On the other hand, the lack of affordable medical care for millions of non-elderly people in our country had caused them to become poor because of medical costs. Medical debt was the number one cause of bankruptcies in our country and continues to be so today.

In 2015, I was still doing some management consulting work, making presentations on my first book, starting to work on a second book, serving as President of SEED, and doing public speaking at colleges and not for profit organizations about the common good, justice and peace. In September of 2015, I started a series of 38 radiation treatments for prostate cancer. The PSA numbers following the surgery a few years earlier were starting to rise which meant something was growing somewhere. So, I drove up to Milwaukee every weekday for about 8 weeks to get zapped. We found out at the end of the year that the radiation did not kill off any cancer cells. The PSA numbers were still very low, and my doctor thinks I still have a number of years before the cancer gets to a size where they can better locate it. Then we will probably do radiation again. In the meantime, I feel fine, continue working, volunteering, and running, walking, and swimming to stay in shape.

Finally, after all of my years as a U.S. citizen, I got to serve on a jury. In previous years, I would get a notice to serve on a jury. However, when I showed up to serve on a jury, I was always dismissed from serving because of my current or past jobs. Being a city manager, I had two things working against me in order to be considered for serving on a jury.

One was that as a city manager, the police department was under my ultimate management. There were very capable chiefs of police who ran their departments on a daily basis. But in my role as city manager, I appointed the chiefs, and they reported to me within the overall chain-of-command of the city organization. If I was called to serve on a jury in a criminal case, I would usually be dismissed from the jury by the attorney representing the accused person. They figured with my police-related background, I would lean toward finding an accused person to be guilty. I thought I could be fair and impartial, but the attorneys for the defense did not want to take a chance on me.

The second thing that was working against me in being selected to serve on a jury was that as a city manager, I was responsible for purchasing liability insurance for the city and working with the insurance company when the city was sued. Every city, including the ones I managed, were often sued for a wide range of things that people thought caused them harm and the city was responsible for. Sometimes people sued the city because they tripped on a crack in the sidewalk.

Or maybe a traffic light failed to work properly, and someone was involved in a car accident. Or someone experienced some flooding on their property for which they thought the city was responsible. The list can go on and on. Litigants named the city in their lawsuit to claim monetary damages. But in some cases, they also named me, as city manager, in the lawsuits. So, when I got called to serve on a jury regarding a civil matter, I was also dismissed by the plaintiff's attorneys because they thought I would tend to vote against their client's case.

When I was notified in 2015 that I should fulfill my jury duty responsibilities as a U.S. citizen, I showed up as requested. I thought I would be dismissed as usual. However, probably because I was no longer serving as a city manager or a consultant to cities, I was not dismissed by the attorney for either side. The plaintiff was suing a health provider for what they considered inappropriate medical care. The trial lasted two days. I found it to be fascinating. What I was most impressed with were the discussions among we jury members after the trial portion of the proceeding was completed. We had a very diverse jury made up of women and men, older folks like me, younger folks, African-American, and Hispanic people. The discussions among all we jurors were respectful of each other's opinions. Everyone had some positive contributions to make to the deliberation process. By the time we reached a verdict, it was unanimous. Again, I was just struck by what a great process it was. At least in this case, my only real experience with a trial, I thought the provisions in our system of government which require a jury of our peers to issue a verdict worked. What a great system it was to have as part of our self-government.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

Meeting the President

As a result of the 2008 election, an African-American man, Barack Obama, was elected to the Presidency. Back in the 1940's and 1950's, when I was growing up, the thought of a Black man being President was just not something anyone thought was possible. A Black man would not be elected dog catcher in those days. I was pleased to see that our country had progressed to the point were a Black man could be elected President. Though my contributions to this change in attitudes did not make headlines, I was pleased that the many efforts I made in government, business, and the communities I lived and worked in had helped this change to come about. About 2 years after his election, I had the opportunity to meet President Obama. I was able to talk with him for about a minute and had my picture taken with him. What I remember most about the short visit with him was that he was a regular guy. We talked about being White Sox fans from Chicago and living on the southside of Chicago. Another thing I remember from chatting with him briefly was that he looked tired. What a tough job. I wished I had gotten that job, but my time was long past. I wished him well.



I met President Barack Obama at the Master Lock Company in Milwaukee on February 15, 2012.

Here is an email I sent to my family and friends that evening.

Hi Everyone,

I met the President of the United States today.

The Prez spoke in Milwaukee today about creating manufacturing jobs. I was invited to attend through one of my friends in DC with whom I worked on the Platform for the Common Good four years ago. She now works in the White House. She called me last week that I might be invited to attend. She had me send some info on myself to the Executive Office of the President (EOP as we say in Washington speak) so they could check me out and make sure I wasn't some kind of nut case. Well, I passed that test. Apparently, I am clean as far as the FBI and National Security are concerned and was cleared to meet POTUS (security speak for President of the United States). I then got a call from my friend this morning saying today was the day and could I make it? I said I think I could but I had several meetings scheduled. I called the folks I was supposed to meet with and they all agreed to reschedule. So then I got an email inviting me to the event. And I headed up to Milwaukee, went through all of the security, and then stood for about 2 hours till the President showed up and addressed us.

After his speech, I was ushered into a room with about 20 other people (they call it a clutch) including the Mayor of Milwaukee and we had the chance to shake hands with the President and have a brief word with him. I was the third one to meet with him individually. As each person came up to meet him, he shook our hands and asked us our names. I told him my name and that I was a transplanted Chicagoan from the 35th Ward who is a Bears and White Sox fan. He laughed and said so is he. I also told him my wife used to live in Hyde Park while we were dating and I probably parked in front of what is currently his home in Hyde Park. He said that he does not get back there enough these days. I told him he has a tough job and just keep doing the best he can for all of us. I then was ushered out and the next person came in. There was a White House photographer taking pictures of each of us as we shook hands with the President. They told me I will get a picture in about a month.

What an experience and honor. And what a positive event in many ways.

First, just to have a Black man as our President speaking in Wisconsin made me remember when we were kids in the late 1940's and 1950's and we would all pile in the car on a Sunday and drive up to Wisconsin to swim in one of the lakes. I still remember seeing signs at the entry of some of the lakes saying that Negroes and Jews were not welcome. I told some people that today and they were shocked. But it is true. To even think that a Black man would be the President of the US 60 years later was a fantasy. But it happened. Progress takes a longer time than most of us wish, but as Martin Luther King said, "The arc of justice is upward, but it is exceedingly long." I am pleased to have played a small part in bringing about all of the changes in race relations in this country. Things are still not where they should be, but progress has been made.

Second, the President gave his speech at Master Lock Company in Milwaukee. It is a unionized company and both the CEO and union reps spoke glowingly of each other and how they have worked together to actually start bringing manufacturing jobs back to their plant in Milwaukee. It was such a good and positive example of what people who are supposed to dislike and distrust each other can do if they decide to work together to solve a problem instead of fighting each

other because that is what unions and management are expected to do. Having been on both sides of the bargaining table myself over the years, I think both sides have legitimate issues and concerns. But I always found things work out better if everyone talks and works with each other.

Third, as a former City Manager who had some events in my cities, but not of this scale, I was very impressed with the logistics and security of the whole event. Everything was done professionally and courteously.

Fourth, I was very impressed with Obama himself. Whether you agree with him or not, he speaks intelligently about what he thinks should be done to create more jobs which was the purpose of his trip today. He is a good speaker. I would give him a 9 on a scale of 10, which is pretty high as far as I am concerned. One thing he does not do which would put him at a 10 in my book is that he is a bit cerebral and does not exhibit as much passion as a great speaker does. And when I met him personally, and I know it was very briefly, he talks with you like a normal guy. He is interested in what you have to say, even if it is very brief. He makes good eye contact. And he is looking older and more tired. He has a tough job.

So, if you ever get a chance to meet this President or a future President, take advantage of the opportunity. You will find it to be quite an experience.

Thanks for indulging me, but it was quite an experience and I wanted to share it with you.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

Pain and Disillusionment

On the morning of March 26, 2014, we received an email from Maureen stating that she never wanted to have any contact with us in the future.

She said that we had made her life miserable growing up and continued to currently do so.

And she said that she did not want to talk to us about it because she said she was never able to discuss anything with us.

According to Maureen, we had failed horribly as parents in the cases of both her and her sister Alice. She never wanted to see us or talk with us. And she did not want us contacting Ted, her ex-husband, and our grandchildren, Andrew Robert and Katherine Anne.

Since the email was just signed by Maureen, we called Alice to see what was happening. Alice was very brief with us. She said Maureen spelled out very clearly in the email why she was rejecting us

Gaye and I were stunned after reading the email and talking with Alice. We thought that over the 44 plus years since Maureen was born, we had had a very positive, loving relationship with her and her sister. Both Gaye and I had always put a very high priority on being good parents who loved their children and did what was possible to help them become good and happy human beings. I am sure we were not perfect parents. Who is? But we loved both of them dearly.

The pain of our children's total rejection of us was one of the most painful experiences of our lives. In some ways, it has been more painful than if we had lost both of our daughters in a car accident. Every parent always dreads the midnight call that one of your children died in a car accident. In this case, no one died. As difficult as that would be, I think we could cope with the death of one of our children. But to be told that we had been terrible parents and had caused both of them never-ending pain for years and years just did not fit with our experiences with them for 40 plus years. We had given our daughters over 40 years of love and support. That is what parents are supposed to do. Gaye and I certainly did that to the best of our abilities. To see that love, time, and attention was of no value to them, shook us to the core of who and what we are as human beings. We had built our lives around the idea that love can and will overcome all of the difficulties we all encounter during our lives. In this case, that was not the end result of our efforts.

We have tried reaching out to Maureen and Alice on a regular basis since March 26, 2014. But we never hear back from either of them.

We will continue to reach out to them in the future.

In the meantime, Gaye and I have restructured our lives to fill the void of no longer having children and grandchildren. In some ways, we are even closer to each other since our rejection by our children. We have not blamed each other for what happened. And we continue to help each other understand how such a core, human value of love and support for each other could turn into not only indifference, but active hostility.

Chapter Thirty

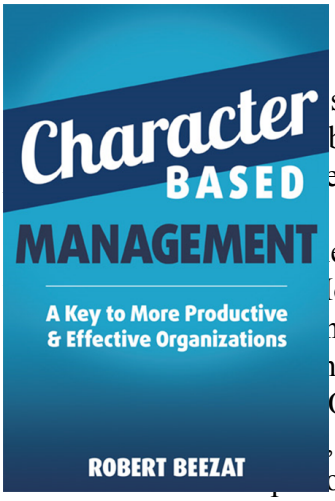
Writing a Second Book

In 2015, with close to 50 years of management experience in business, government, and the not-for-profit world, as well as teaching Principles of Management, Human Resource Management,
and Supervisory Management courses and training programs at colleges and universities and for different organizations, I started thinking about writing a book about management.

There are tons of management books in the marketplace, but one topic I never saw directly addressed in a management book was the idea of the role character plays in being a successful manager and helping to drive the success of an organization.

I thought a book on the connection between character and success of an organization could fill that gap and provide a framework for thinking about and doing things which improve the moral character of managers, and in turn, helps organizations become more effective and successful by unleashing the talents and energy of every organization's greatest assets: the people who work there.

So, the idea of writing such a book started taking shape. The title of the book was going to be Character Based Management: A Key to More Productive & Effective Organizations.



seen innumerable management theories and systems which were
blems and overcome the obstacles organizations face in being
efficient.

earned about was PPBS (Program Planning Budgeting System) which
lotor Company in the late 1950's by then CEO Robert McNamara.
ny alphabet soup acronyms which were supposed to transform an
nagement By Objectives) came along in the late 1960's. That was
Quality Management), Six Sigma, The Four E's of Leadership, SWOT,
, Re-Engineering, Right-Sizing, and many, many more systems which
organizations to some degree. Most of the theories were purported to be relatively quick fixes to the many complex challenges facing organizations. They usually proposed three or four simple things you needed to do to turn around your organization.

Almost all of the theories had some good points which had positive impacts on organizational effectiveness and success. But these various theories usually did not deliver on their grandiose promises regarding how this or that theory would make the organization more effective and successful. Often, they only addressed one portion of the total organizational culture, processes, and/or operations. As systems, they were frequently dumped after several years because they did

not solve as many of the organizational management challenges as they were purported to solve. That is why a new alphabet soup theory came along a few years later to replace the previous one.

Another reason that many of these systems failed is they only recommended changes in the surface behaviors of managers. They did not look into the intellectual and inter-personal sources of such behaviors. This approach is typified by the "One Minute Manager" books. These books generally recommended good practices for supervisors to use in managing people, but they did not require the manager to embody those behaviors in her or his character.

Most people can spot a phony, particularly when they see a person say one thing and then do another thing over a period of time. The problem with the "One Minute Manager" books was that managers were told to adopt certain behaviors as quick-fix practices. But those one-minute behaviors did nothing to change the basic character of the manager. For example, I had a boss who was always talking about looking at situations from a "win-win" approach. That sounded good. And when he first started using that terminology, we thought it was a positive concept and had the potential to make us a more cohesive and productive team. But after a few weeks of "win-win" comments, we realized that it was just more "BS." Winning meant that he won. He did not care if the rest of us ever won. Surface changes which do not reflect the real character of the manager as exhibited in their many other negative behaviors are recognized by employees. They just add to the lack of credibility and effectiveness of the manager.

What led me to thinking about the link between the character of a manager and the effectiveness of an organization was a quote I came across in a Principles of Management textbook which was used in a course I was teaching. The quote was:

> "In making decisions…the moral character (of the decision-maker) …
> determines the quality of the decisions."

Wow! That is something I never heard before when reading, talking, and thinking about management theories and practices.

I wondered: "Who is Henri Fayol, and what does he mean by that statement?"

After a little research, I learned that Henri Fayol was a French mining engineer and director of mines who developed a general theory of business administration that is often called Fayolism. He and his colleagues developed this theory in Europe in the late 1800's and early 1900's. That was about the same time as Frederick Taylor developed his similar but more well-known theory of scientific management in America. Taylor's work is widely acknowledged as the foundation of modern management methods. But as I looked into it a little more, I saw that Fayol's work was just as important as the work of Taylor.

Fayol's work was one of the first comprehensive statements of a general theory of management which he published in 1916. He wrote that there were six primary functions of management and fourteen principles of management as follows:

6 Functions of management

Plan	Organize	Staff
Command or Direct	Coordinate	Control

14 Principles of management

Division of labor	Authority	Discipline
Unity of command	Unity of direction	Subordination
Remuneration	Centralization	Chain of command
Order	Equity	Initiative
Stability of tenure of personnel	Esprit de corps	

Many of these terms and ideas are still part of the common language used today when thinking about how to manage an organization. But neither the list of functions nor principles of management said anything directly about moral character and the quality of decisions. So, I looked more deeply into his quote.

As I read Fayol's book, I found that though he never directly defined moral character, he had comments sprinkled throughout his text which he thought were the characteristics and behaviors which illustrate good moral character as a key factor in the success of an organization. Here is a sampling of those characteristics and behaviors which he mentions:

Equity	Kindliness	Justice
Firmness	Flexibility	Willingness to Accept Responsibility
Initiative	Loyalty	Tact
Dignity	Impartiality	Energy & Good Health
Moral Courage	Care for Common Good	Persistent, Thoughtful Determination
Foresight	Drive	Always Learning

And among all of those characteristics of a good manager, Fayol is particularly concerned with Equity which he says "results from the combination of kindliness and justice. Equity excludes neither forcefulness nor sternness and application of it requires much good sense, experience, and good nature…Desire for equity and equality of treatment are aspirations to be taken into account in dealing with employees…the head of the business must frequently summon up his highest faculties…to instill a sense of equity throughout all levels of the scalar chain (i.e., the chain of command)."

According to Fayol, being a manager of good moral character does not mean being a pushover and acquiescing to the needs of the employees no matter what those needs are. The manager sometimes must be forceful or stern as the situations may call for.

To be a good manager, "the head of the business must frequently summon up her or his highest faculties." Those words reminded me of a quote I read many years ago which President John F.

Kennedy adapted from the Greek philosophers: "The ancient Greek definition of Happiness is the full use of all of your powers along the lines of Excellence."

In my experience, a good manager of an organization and its people can experience great job satisfaction and happiness if they use the full range of their powers at a very high level/excellence. I think that is the particular joy of being a good manager. We use everything we have…our mind, our skills, our body, our experience, our learning and everything else about ourselves to make an organization successful. If we experience that joy and satisfaction as a manager, our employees will find that it works for them as well. But it is up to us as managers to model that behavior and encourage it in our employees.

Fayol asks managers to constantly develop all of these qualities by observing these qualities in more experienced managers and consciously practicing them as different workplace situations and challenges confront them.

These are not characteristics and behaviors that just automatically appear because we want them to do so. We need to find ways to understand what these characteristics are and grow these elements of character throughout our careers.

So, just as I did with my first book, I started writing essays on different elements and aspects of character and management. However, since I was not traveling as much as I used to, I did not write most of the essays in airports. I wrote almost all of the book on my home computer.

When I got the chapters organized into a book format, I wanted to provide a way so that managers could evaluate themselves on a regular basis, see where they needed to improve, and then determine one or two things they could try in the next week or two to get better at something and thereby improve their character. I suggested 10 areas in which people could evaluate themselves and then start making improvements. The ten areas are:

1. Listening.
2. Involving our employees in defining and solving a problem.
3. Not being afraid to be challenged by the people we manage.
4. Helping our people grow.
5. Helping our people solve their work-related problems.
6. Being friendly and genuinely respecting and caring for our employees.
7. Treating everyone equitably and fairly.
8. Always learning as broadly as possible.
9. Being a person of our word.
10. Being healthy.

This list of characteristics and behaviors closely mirrors the list that the thousands of modern-day employees who I have had in management training courses consider when describing their best/ideal boss.

Over the years, one tool I frequently used to help myself improve on anything was to have a yellow Post-it note stuck on some surface to remind me to get better at some aspect of how I manage. One of my more frequent Post-it notes to myself was to remind myself to "Shut up and Listen." But by 2015, people were using Apps which they could download on their smartphones to remind them of all kinds of things such as turning on heating and air-conditioning in their homes; measuring the number of steps they took each day; creating a shopping list; etc., etc. I thought it would be helpful to readers of my book to be able to use an App to evaluate themselves and remind them to do what they said they would do to improve their character.

One of my nephews, a computer engineer, designed an App to accompany my book. He worked with my website guru to get it on the website. And we were off and running. For a guy who was born in 1942 when the most advanced communication tool was a rotary dial telephone, having an App working for me was kind of mind-blowing. When I was born in 1942, I was closer to the 19th century than the 21st century. Having an App to accompany and work in tandem with a book I have written was something I was proud of and just enjoyed doing. I was keeping up with the times. I never wanted to be someone who thought "the good old days" were the best ways to live. The good old days had some pluses to them, and the good ways of living in all aspects of our lives should be retained. But to be relevant to the world which has changed a lot means we have to change with it. I thought the App which accompanied my book would help 21st century managers be better managers.

Chapter Thirty-One

Recycled, Not Retired

Around 2016, my management consulting work was drawing to a close. I could still do it if I had too. But Gaye was a great money manager. So, there was not a necessity to keep working. Also, my health was very good for a 74-year-old but traveling became a more difficult thing to do. Flying in planes and driving rental cars was not a problem. But I had never been a good sleeper. As I got older, getting a half-decent night's sleep was not something I was able to count on very often. Sleeping in strange beds with pillows and blankets which my body was not accustomed to as well as the difficulty in getting the temperature in the room where I was neither too hot or too cold made getting even half-decent sleep a big problem.

At the same time that my desire to travel to clients where overnight stays were required was a problem for me, GovHR USA was hiring more full-time staff rather than relying as much on independent contractors which I was currently and had been most of my management consulting career. That was fine with Heidi and Joellen who owned the company. But I did stay on their roster of consultants. In fact, with the publication of my book Character Based Management, they featured me prominently on their website, offering me to do book presentations and possible management training programs. I did that for a number of municipal professional associations in the Chicago-Milwaukee metro area.

And with the publication of my second book, I started to make presentations on that book as well as my first book. Many of the groups to whom I had made presentations on my first book invited me back to make a presentation on my second book. Plus, I was still making presentations on my first book.

At the same time, I was cutting back on paid consulting work, I started to participate in some grassroots organizations which were starting up in order to improve the Greater Racine area. One group is called Visioning a Greater Racine (VGR). The other group is Greening Greater Racine (GGR). It was at that time that a fellow retiree or semi-retiree or whatever we are should not say that we are retired. Rather, she said we should say we are being "Recycled." I thought it was funny. And, I thought it was a clever way to describe many of us who have been involved with our communities while we were working full-time. And now that we were not working full-time, we were able to devote more time to working for the common good.

Both groups were started because the City of Racine was struggling with some serious economic, health, social, environmental, and racial issues. I helped a little with getting VGR started. And through that process, I met a fellow named David Rhoads. He was a semi-retired professor of theology who taught at Carthage College in Kenosha as well as the Lutheran School of Theology at the University of Chicago. David was very interested in addressing environmental issues as both practical matters but also from a theological perspective. Thus, Greening Greater Racine was born, and I became one of the leaders of the all-volunteer organization.

Though environmental issues, particularly the question of global warming and climate change, had been growing in importance to many people since the 1980's, it was not my highest priority regarding where I put my main time and efforts. But through my work as the Interim CEO of the Racine/Kenosha Community Action Agency as described earlier, one of the programs I helped start was SEED (Sustainable Edible Economic Development, Inc.). The focus of the program was threefold: create jobs related to producing local food; give people the opportunity to grow healthy, fresh food in their neighborhoods; and connect local farmers with broader food markets, i.e., the Milwaukee and Chicago metro areas. One of the reasons for the success of the SEED program was because it engaged local people who could do something about an issue that they thought was important and that they could decide what they would do to get the job done. As 2015 came to an end, we decided to terminate the SEED program. Almost all of the reasons which spurred the start of SEED had been accomplished and were in good hands being run by other organizations which SEED helped develop.

The only goal SEED did not achieve was creating a local, healthy food hub. A food hub is a centralized place of collection and distribution of local, healthy food. All of the local farmers could bring the local food they produced to the food hub. Once the food was accumulated at the hub, it would be picked up by food distributors who would deliver it to stores and restaurants in a broader marketplace. We thought this idea would work because there were 13.5 million people within 100 miles of Racine and Kenosha. These markets were very interested in getting as much local, healthy food as they could.

Our first effort to develop a food hub was done in concert with a large food distribution company in Chicago, Midwest Foods, Inc. Among their many clients were high-end restaurants (the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Chicago, for example) as well as newer type food stores which catered to a more affluent clientele interested in local, healthy food. We worked with the distributor and local farmers to set up a food hub. A number of farmers joined the effort. But after a couple of years, the distributor in Chicago ended the relationship with our local farmers. Basically, there was not enough local healthy food to make it economically feasible for the food distributor to come up to the Racine/Kenosha area, pick up the food, and take it back to the Chicago area. About a year later, we worked with another food distributor out of Chicago. However, after another year of trying, there simply was not enough local, healthy food being grown in our area to make it worthwhile for a food distributor from Chicago to make regular trips up to our area. We tried to work with a smaller food distributor serving the Milwaukee metro area, but they had enough product from local farmers north of us to meet their needs and did not want to expand into our area. So, we terminated the SEED organization. However, there were still many people and groups interested in issues related to local, healthy food. And during my 6 years of helping start and then keep SEED going, I had developed a very good network with these people and groups.

When we closed down SEED, I thought I could move on to other activities and challenges. I really enjoyed making presentations to groups. I liked live interaction with audiences. It kept me sharp. And it was fun. I also enjoyed writing. I had had a great deal of practice writing over the years in my work, and I was good at it. I also liked doing research on economic disparities in

our country which had grown tremendously in the last 35 years. I figured I would spend the next several years working for a more equitable sharing of the wealth of our country. I would do that by doing research, writing about it, and making presentations to groups interested in the topic.

But as I thought about what new directions I might move in, the Greening Greater Racine movement was gathering steam. And Dave Rhoads, who had become a friend, was pushing hard to make progress on the environment in our area. Because of all of my connections with food related groups as well as my experience organizing and leading groups, he asked me to help him get GGR moving forward. And since he is a friend, I agreed to play a larger role in GGR. I figured I would help him out for awhile and then get back to what was more in line with what my interests and talents were.

Generally, environmental issues had been dealt with from a national and international perspective. In my experience and from my perspective, some significant progress had been made over the last 30 to 40 years to address these issues. The Clean Water Act of the 1970's was one example of a positive piece of national legislation. That piece of legislation was passed for many reasons, but what really spurred it on was when the Cuyahoga River caught on fire several times in 1969. The river, which flowed through Cleveland, OH and emptied into Lake Erie, started on fire one day because the river was so full of pollution. That fire was on the news every evening. Federal legislation passed shortly thereafter. But more still needed to be done, not only at the national and state level, but in local communities as well. GGR's approach was to address environmental issues from a local standpoint.

The first thing GGR did was identify and invite any and all public, private, and not-for-profit groups in the Greater Racine Area to come to a program to learn about the Natural Step. The Natural Step is a non-profit organization founded by scientist Karl-Henrik Robert in Sweden in 1989 to provide a way for communities to address issues of ecological, economic, and social sustainability. It is a science-based process which has been tested and proven for nearly two decades in many governments, businesses, and organizations around the globe.

The four guiding principles of the Natural Step approach are:

1. Provide conditions that enable all people to meet their basic needs: *A society that undermines the ability of people to meet their basic needs will not be sustainable.*

- Nine basic human needs: subsistence, protection/security, affection, understanding, participation, idleness, creation, identity, all finite, few and classifiable. Know the needs, and then be creative in all of our actions to find ways to satisfy more than one need at once.
- Adopt practices: Provide safe and healthy working conditions, improve health care by emphasizing prevention, increase opportunities for public involvement in government decision-making; and increase transportation choices.

2. Reduce dependence on Fossil fuels and heavy metals: *A society that mines and disperses materials at a rate faster than they are re-deposited back into the Earth's crust will not be sustainable*.

- Oil, coal, various metals and minerals cause unhealthy air, global warming, and contamination of soils as well as surface and ground water.
- Adopt practices: reduce energy use, renewable energy, energy efficient transportation systems, recycling, agricultural practices that minimize the use of petrochemical fertilizers and herbicides.

3. Reduce use of synthetic chemicals that persist in nature: *A society that produces artificial substances at a rate faster than they can be broken down by natural processes will not be sustainable.*

- Most petroleum-based plastics, dioxins, DDT, PCBs, CFCs from refrigerants.
- Adopt practices: eliminate toxic building, use alternatives to chemical pesticides and herbicides, healthy cleaning products, and eliminate hazardous materials in industrial processes.

4. Reduce our destruction of Earth: *A society that physically degrades natural resources at a rate faster than they are replenished, or completely destroys those resources, will not be sustainable.*

- Over-harvesting of trees, fish and game, overgrazing, depleting underground aquifers and building sprawl development**.**
- Adopt practices: conserve land and water resources, use renewable building materials and other products made using sustainable practices, and protect animal habitats.

The City of Madison, WI has been using the Natural Step approach and processes to foster a sustainable environment for several years, so we invited two people from the City of Madison to speak to our fledgling group. We had over 50 public, private, and not for profit organizations come to hear about this program. After hearing from the speakers, we invited participants to gather at tables which focused on several aspects of the environment: water, energy, food, invasive species, transportation, business, and health.

In each of the groups, people shared what they were already doing in these areas and what they hoped to accomplish in the future. This sharing was educational as well as inspiring to the participants because they saw that they did not stand alone in their desire to improve the physical, social, health, and environment in which we all lived. Groups started to identify ways they could work together to avoid duplicating efforts as well as maximize their positive impact on all the aspects of having a sustainable environment for our communities and people.

After that initial meeting in the Spring of 2015, we asked all of the groups to provide some written information about their mission, goals, programs, accomplishments, and future plans. We shared all of this information electronically with all of the participants. They in turn shared the information with their networks of volunteers and organizations. We then brought these organizations and people together in the Fall of 2015 to see what we might accomplish as a group. Many ideas were discussed. The one that generated the most enthusiasm was to do some type of community-wide event around Earth Day in 2016. And thus, was born EcoFest.

EcoFest was planned and organized around the idea of inviting the entire community to come and see the many positive environmental things happening in the greater Racine area. As a result

of the first two meetings described above, we were all truly impressed by how many groups and people were doing things to improve the local environment. We wanted to share that information with the broader community and inspire them to get involved with improving the environment in their homes, organizations, schools, and businesses.

Someone suggested we contact Gateway Technical College which we did. Gateway generally tries to have some type of Earth Day celebrations in the Spring. Gateway operates in 3 counties: Kenosha, Racine, and Walworth. Gateway had a very popular and successful program in Kenosha. They had tried a few things in Racine, but they were not particularly successful. When we talked with some of the Staff at Gateway about having an EcoFest on their Racine campus, they thought it would be a great idea. So, we partnered with them and planned the event for March 19.

The event featured over 50 organizations having tables at which people could learn about what the various groups were doing related to a sustainable environment. People could sign up to volunteer for a project. And very importantly, many of the environmental groups had activities which children could interact with and learn about the environment. The event ran from 9 AM to 1 PM. We were very pleased with the turnout. Approximately 700 people came through the exhibition space. About one half were children any where between 3 years old and 18 years old.



One of the exhibits at EcoFest which demonstrated the creation of electricity by pedaling a bike.

We repeated EcoFest in the Spring of 2017 and 2018. Over 1,000 people attended the event in 2017 and over 1,100 in 2018. We are so pleased to see such a wide diversity of people interested in environmental and sustainable issues and challenges.



Some of the teaching and learning displays and visitors to EcoFest.

Greening Greater Racine continues to grow. The new Racine City Administrator who started in mid-2017, considers improving the environment a high priority for the City. And a new Mayor who was elected in late 2017 is also very committed to providing a sustainable environmental future for the City. We incorporated Greening Greater Racine, Inc. in 2016. At the beginning, we operated under the fiscal sponsorship of the Racine County United Way. As GGR continued to grow in terms of our events and coordinating activities, we decided we needed to become a 501c3 tax exempt as approved by the Federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS). In 2016, in addition to being on the Board of Directors of GGR, I also became its Treasurer. Again, it was not a job I was looking for. But it was a job that needed to be done.

I worked with some of the GGR Board members and a very knowledgeable volunteer to put together our IRS request. We submitted that in December of 2016. We got a letter back from the IRS in May of 2017 that we needed to submit more information. We did so. And, finally, we did get IRS approval as a 501c3 not for profit corporation in September of 2017. I then filed more forms with the State of Wisconsin to become designated a Charitable Organization in the State which was approved in early 2018. I also then filed papers with the State to get a sales tax exemption certificate, so that when GGR purchased things, we did not have to pay sales taxes. We got that approval in April of 2018.

Another community effort I participated in starting in 2017 and continuing to the current time is a group working to address racial justice in the Greater Racine area. Racine has some success

stories of inter-racial cooperation over the years. But it continues to have serious problems with racial justice issues and disparities in income, wealth, employment, health care, and education compared to the overall population in the State. In the Spring of 2018, a national study ranked Racine as one of the worst 4 cities in the U.S. regarding racial disparities. And the State of Wisconsin as a whole ranks at the bottom of the 50 states for such issues. I am working with a number of people to try and address this problem. We are just starting. I hope we can make some significant progress in the months and years ahead.

Another activity I have been involved with for the past several years is a book club. We meet every four or five weeks depending on everyone's schedules and the major holidays. The group consists of about fifteen people and usually a dozen show up at each meeting. The group has about a 50-50 split between women and men. Most, if not all of us, are no longer working full-time. But we are all still involved as volunteers with a wide range of service organizations. We select and read books related to spiritual, religious, philosophical, and social justice issues. Like with the Commonweal groups I helped start and discussed earlier, this book club is an opportunity to again discuss ideas about what the reality of the world around us is, and so we can act in accordance with that broad understanding to make the world a better place for more people.

Also, during the past four years and moving into the coming years, I work with Sr. Miriam Brown, a Dominican nun at the Siena Retreat Center in Racine to facilitate a "Morning of Refreshment" for those who serve others either through their jobs, their volunteer involvement, or family responsibilities. It is a half day program which gives people who serve others to think about what and why the do what they do. It is also an opportunity to share their successes and struggles serving others. And finally, it is an opportunity to celebrate the good things they do as individuals and/or as part of an organization. Serving others, like many things in life, can wear out people. They can get discouraged because they are not accomplishing all the good things that they are aiming for. These mornings of refreshment are an opportunity for a community of people to support each other in the important work that they each do.

On a personal note, Gaye and I celebrated our 50th Wedding Anniversary on October 8, 2016. We are still best friends. We still love each other and support each other. Being married to Gaye has without a doubt been the best thing that has ever happened to me.

And since Gaye is an accountant and worked in probate, estates, and wills, she likes to look at actuarial tables. She did this recently when I turned 77 and she turned 76. According to the actuarial tables, the odds are we will both live until we are 87. One of us should live to the age of 92. Gaye asked me how I felt about turning 75 in 2017. My answer was that I was surprised. Most people did not live to be 75 when I was a kid growing up. And those people who made it to 75 seemed to be pretty worn out physically. Though both Gaye and I have had some serious health issues to deal with over the years, I think the regular exercise we have practiced over the years and the healthy diet we follow has kept us relatively strong and active physically and mentally.

Chapter Thirty-Two

2019 And Beyond

Learning, loving, and serving.

That is very much what my life has been about. It will continue to be how I will live my life in the future.

If I have learned one thing in the past 77 years it is that so many things change all the time.

That will continue into the future.

Some things will be changes for the better. Some will be changes for the worse.

My efforts have always been to bring about changes for the better and will continue to be so in the future.

Personally, I know my health is gradually changing. And, overall, it is not changing for the better. I have always exercised to contribute to my health. When I was younger, I exercised to get stronger, and/or faster, or more adept at whatever sport I was engaged in. Now, I exercise to slow down the physical decline. I can still run, and walk, and swim, and bicycle which I enjoy. And I am pleased that I can continue to do so. I know many people my age and younger who cannot do those things. But the speed and skill with which I do those things steadily diminishes.

Mentally, I think I am still able to learn. I always try to learn something new every day. And I try to learn not only with my mind, but when possible, to learn with my body as well (building things, doing work in the garden for Gaye, learning to paint pictures, etc.). I also learn by writing and sharing my ideas with others. Writing helps me clarify my thoughts and understanding of whatever I am thinking about. Making presentations to a variety of audiences on a broad range of topics keeps my mind working and exposes my ideas to feedback from my audiences which help me continue to learn. It also forces me to think and rethink my ideas so that my presentations meet the goals and expectations of the groups to whom I am speaking.

I am so fortunate that I am still in love with my best friend, my wife, Gaye. We have both helped each other grow and when necessary, confront, survive, and/or overcome the hard times which come to everyone. What a blessing it has been to be able to face the hard times together. It has also been a blessing to enjoy the good times together. Unlike exercise which slows down the physical decline, love continues to grow deeper and is more joyful and satisfying as we both move into old age.

As I have all of my life, I will continue to try to make the world a better place for as many people as I can. As I discussed previously, I thought I could do that best by being elected to political

office. But I never got elected. Instead, I have tried to make a positive difference through my jobs, my community work, my Church, my family, and my friends.

I will try to give people hope. There are so many people who cannot find hope in their lives. Life without hope can be pretty grim.

And finally, even though I have helped bring about positive changes in many people's lives as individuals and groups, I have never accomplished as much as I had hoped. There are a lot of barriers to making positive changes and there will continue to be barriers.

However, no matter what barriers I confront and try to overcome, I can always do some thing every day to love whomever I come into contact with on that day. In the long run, I think showing and sharing love is the most important thing each of us can do to bring about positive change in individuals and groups of people.

I am still inspired by a quote from Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), a French scientist and priest, who said:

"Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity,
we shall harness for God the energies of love,
and then,
for a second time in the history of the world,
we will have discovered fire."

I hope I have contributed something to that second great discovery.