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April 17, 1936 - April 11, 2026

Memoirs

First USSR Trip

In September 1990, Joyce and I found ourselves a tad anxious, facing a journey that began with a Delta flight to Berlin, Germany, and then an Aeroflot flight to Moscow. This trip was part of a cooperation agreement with the Soviets, so you can imagine the mix of curiosity and concern.

The plane was an adventure in itself. Joyce discovered her seatbelt was inoperable—a glaring reminder that safety standards were, let's say, a bit flexible. When snacks were served, I attempted to lower my tray table, only to find one hinge broken. Improvisation kicked in, and my lap became my dining table. An ominous start, indeed!

Upon arriving in Moscow, we were corralled onto a Soviet bus with our luggage, headed for the Moscow Hotel, our home for the week. Here, we met a young man, whom I'll call “Vladimir” for anonymity's sake. He was sharp, witty, and full of information, answering all our questions with ease. When asked about the job situation in Moscow, Vladimir quipped, “Here in Moscow, we pretend to work, and the government pretends to pay us!” That comment had everyone laughing. In that moment, I knew I had to get to know Vladimir better.

And indeed, I did get to know Vladimir better! I made a concerted effort to secure a spot near him during the bus rides to the Kremlin, the venue for our conference meetings, and in the back of the cafeteria at our host hotel. On a couple of occasions, he was accompanied by two other young and beautiful Russian ladies who served as interpreter/guides for other U.S. lawyers.

One day, as we conversed, I expressed to Vladimir my eagerness to give a talk to students at Moscow State University due to the plethora of questions he had. Impressed by Vladimir's excellent command of English, I suggested he could serve as my interpreter. Vladimir, in turn, promised to do his best but mentioned that for important interpreting matters, he would consult the father of the girl he was dating—a man who had spent a considerable amount of time in New York on behalf of the Soviet Union.

This conversation transpired on a Tuesday during our week in Moscow, and to my surprise, the very next day, Vladimir informed me that he had arranged a lecture hall at his university for 3:30 p.m. on Thursday. Additionally, Vladimir shared that his girlfriend's father, whom I'll refer to as "Andre" for convenience, would handle the interpreting duties. The plot thickened when, around 2 p.m. on the following day, I met Andre and Vladimir in our hotel room. As Andre delved into a barrage of questions about my presentation, I couldn't shake the feeling that he might be connected to the KGB.

As our conversation unfolded, covering topics such as the rule of law, constitutional rights, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and search and seizure rights, I suddenly hit upon a subject that seemed to strike a chord with Andre.

He emphatically declared, "Emphasize that, and emphasize that! These people you will be talking to have no idea you have the right to do that in the United States!" In that moment, my suspicions about Andre's affiliation with the KGB began to wane, and I concluded that perhaps he wasn't part of the notorious organization after all. The intrigue of Moscow continued to unfold, revealing unexpected twists in the narrative.

So, accompanied by Joyce, Andre, and Vladimir, we made our way to the university. The meeting room unfolded as a charming little amphitheater, each row rising just a foot higher than the seats in the row before. The room boasted about a hundred and fifty seats, and the majority were occupied. I was introduced to the audience as a "millionaire businessman" from the United States, a title that sparked a subsequent conversation with Andre. He assured me that the characterization was acceptable, explaining that the general perception in Russia was that all Americans were considered millionaires!

Taking the stage, I spoke for a spirited 15 to 20 minutes before opening the floor to questions. Drawing from my experiences in Beijing and Tokyo, I realized the importance of addressing questions based on the audience's interests rather than simply offering what I thought they wanted to hear. The room buzzed with curiosity, and one particular question stood out: "Do you run into many negative people in the United States? And if you do, how do you handle them?" It was the first time I had encountered such a query.

In response, I shared my evolution in dealing with negativity. I recounted how I used to invest considerable time with negative individuals, believing I could persuade them toward more positive resolutions. However, over the years, I came to the realization that such efforts were often futile, as negative people rarely changed their minds. Hence, my current approach involves simply walking away from negativity. The revelation prompted laughter from both me and the crowd.

A middle-aged gentleman situated in the top left side row conveyed, through my interpreter, his sentiment: "Mr. Norman, you are very fortunate you can walk away from negative people in the United States!" The remark elicited further amusement from the audience, creating a light-hearted moment amid the engaging exchange of ideas. The dynamics of the discussion added a colorful layer to our Moscow adventure, leaving an indelible mark on the unfolding narrative.

As the clock struck 6:30 p.m., I had an unexpected revelation - I was three hours deep into what was initially intended to be a concise one-hour program. Far from feeling dismayed, I found myself in a state of euphoria; the audience seemed captivated, genuinely intrigued by what I had to share. Meanwhile, Joyce, perched on the edge of her seat, was wrestling with anticipation. Our conference group had coveted seats for a performance of the Moscow Circus

scheduled just an hour later. Joyce, brimming with anxiety, was convinced that tardiness loomed. I, on the other hand, couldn't be bothered!

Nevertheless, acknowledging the need to bring things to a close, I signaled to Andre. Suddenly, a group of Russians from the audience approached me, each bearing a unique proposition. One handed me a brochure from a chemical company near Moscow, posing the question, "I'm with this Chemical Company; can you help us sell these chemicals in the United States?" Another presented a cellophane package brimming with dried mushrooms, uttering, "I'm with this company; can you help me sell mushrooms in the United States?" Yet another declared, "I'm with a group that films documentaries of various events in Siberia; can you help us market this in the United States?" In that moment, it dawned on me - Moscow was teeming with aspiring entrepreneurs.

In the end, our journey didn't just conclude with the unexpected entrepreneurial encounters but seamlessly transitioned to the Moscow Circus. To everyone's delight, we were not only present but also right on time! Joyce beamed with happiness, and the serendipitous twists of our Moscow adventure unfolded in ways I couldn't have predicted. The vibrancy of the city and the spontaneity of its people had added an exhilarating chapter to our unforgettable experience.

In September 1990, our conference meetings unfolded within the hallowed buildings of the Kremlin. The historical heart of Moscow became our backdrop as we, a group of U.S. lawyers, embarked on a captivating tour of the Kremlin's churches. From the Cathedral of the Assumption to the Cathedral of the Annunciation, to the Cathedral of the Archangel on to the Bell Tower and the Church of The Twelve Apostles – each structure held a piece of history, some dating back to the 1400s. The Kremlin, with its ancient walls and fortifications, perched proudly overlooking the Moscow River, offered a glimpse into Russia's rich past. For Joyce and me, devout Catholics throughout our lives, the experience was not only interesting but downright fascinating. Immersed in the heritage of the Russian Orthodox Church, we delved into its history, finding resonance with our own spiritual journey.

Amidst the formalities of the Moscow conference, I engaged in conversations with U.S. attorneys, much like I had in Beijing and Tokyo. However, my primary interest lay in connecting with Soviet lawyers who were proficient in English. The conference meetings seamlessly blended languages, with presentations delivered in both Russian and English. Attendees equipped with translation earphones could effortlessly switch between languages based on the

speaker. The cultural and linguistic tapestry woven into the fabric of the Moscow conference added a unique layer to our interactions, creating a bridge between legal discussions and shared international understanding.

In the midst of this particular meeting, my attention was drawn to a young man sporting a Soviet badge. Curiously, he was listening to an English speaker without the aid of headphones, indicating a proficiency in the language. Seizing the opportunity, I promptly took a seat beside him, introducing myself and handing him one of my business cards. In a matter of five minutes, I had him out in the hallway, eager to unravel the story behind the Soviet badge.

To my pleasant surprise, this individual turned out to be Kasim Surbyvich Maulonov, heading the Legal and Treaty Department of Kazakhstan and Central Asia. Little did I know, in that moment, that my now 27-year adventure with the Kazakh people had just taken its initial steps. The chance encounter marked the beginning of a journey filled with discoveries, connections, and a profound engagement with the vibrant tapestry of Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

Approximately 25 legal participants from Kazakhstan graced the conference, and it was Kasim who graciously introduced Joyce and me to each one of them. We had the honor of joining the Kazakh delegation at the final banquet, where the mayor of Almaty, the then capital of Kazakhstan, added to the distinguished gathering. Kasim, embodying the spirit of hospitality, extended an invitation to a party he hosted for the delegation.

The event was a culinary delight, with delicacies from Kazakhstan taking center stage. To complement the feast, the vodka flowed generously—truly, an abundance of spirits set the tone for a lively celebration. Amidst the revelry, we had the pleasure of meeting notable figures such as Tulegen A. Marenov, the economic chairman for Kazakhstan, and the honorable Tarnas Ajtmukhambato, Chairman of the Kazakhstan Supreme Court. The conference, enriched by the presence of these high-ranking legal minds from Kazakhstan, served as a platform for cultural exchange, fostering connections that would endure beyond the confines of formal proceedings.

At the grand finale, the Final Conference Banquet held in a spacious room within the Kremlin, a notable figure made his presence known - Mikhail Gorbachev, the Supreme Leader of the Communist Party. Kasim, having previously met Gorbachev, graciously ushered us to the head table where Gorbachev and James Baker, the U.S. Secretary of State, were seated. It was

there that Kasim introduced me and Joyce to Gorbachev, and we had the honor of shaking hands with him—a moment etched in our memories.

In the year following September 1990, Kasim and I maintained communication through a couple of faxes. As history unfolded, with the collapse of the Soviet Union on December 8th, 1991, and Kazakhstan declaring its independence, Kasim extended an invitation via fax for me to come to Kazakhstan and conduct a seminar on how to do business between the United States and Kazakhstan. With passports in hand, we secured passage to Almaty, Kazakhstan, through Moscow. In late January 1992, I, along with my two petroleum engineer sons, Stephen Beauchamp and Thomas Beauchamp, and two business friends, Roger Preede and Jim Repp, arrived in Almaty.

The ensuing three-day business seminar, hosted at Almaty State University, proved to be a captivating experience. Almost everywhere we went, we were greeted as the first Americans many had ever seen. More tales from these remarkable adventures will be shared as I delve deeper into those extraordinary times.

Kazakhstan Adventures

In January 1992, Roger Preede, James Repp, Stephen Beauchamp, Thomas Beauchamp, and I, (Norman Beauchamp) embarked on a journey to Almaty, Kazakhstan. Our adventure began with the first leg of the trip, flying into Moscow and landing at Sheremetyevo International Airport to the north of the city. From there, we transferred by car to Domodedovo Airport, situated approximately 50 km south of Moscow, where we caught our flight to Almaty, Kazakhstan.

The flight to Almaty was aboard the Ilyushin 86, the largest passenger jet operated by the Russians at the time, accommodating over 400 passengers. True to its popularity, the flight was consistently packed with travelers, setting the stage for the next chapter of our captivating journey in Kazakhstan.

The cabin had an ambiance reminiscent of a smoking parlor, where the air was thick with the scent of cigarette smoke. Nearly all the Russians and Kazakhs on board were smokers, and it seemed like a significant number were chain-smokers. Adding to the eclectic mix were nomadic types, often flying to destinations in Siberia. On occasion, some of these individuals

would set up a Bunsen burner in the aisles and cook meat, creating a unique and unconventional scene mid-flight.

Our sustenance on the plane was derived from a substantial (and I mean BIG) pot of chicken. The stewardess would extract portions from this colossal pot and serve steaming chicken and potatoes on our plates. However, this seemingly hearty meal took a toll on Jim Repp, who experienced an upset stomach the next day.

When he shared his discomfort with me, my response was, "My God, you didn't eat that stuff, did you?" Unfortunately, my failure to forewarn him about the culinary choices has, I believe, left a lasting impression on Jim. In hindsight, it was a matter of what I deemed common sense, but Jim's upset stomach highlighted the diverse culinary adventures one might encounter during unconventional flights.

We successfully organized a three-day conference on business relations with the United States in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Kasim, with his efficient planning, had secured a conference room at Almaty State University, where we gathered with approximately 100 to 200 contacts at 10:30 in the morning. It became evident that, in our interactions, we were consistently the first Americans many of the locals had ever encountered.

Around this time, I came to realize that Kazakhstan had been somewhat secluded within the old Soviet Union for the past 45 years. The presence of the Baikonur Cosmodrome in the West/Central area of Kazakhstan, serving as the launch site for all Soviet space missions, and the Semipalatinsk Oblast in Northeast Kazakhstan, where the Soviets conducted their nuclear testing, contributed to this seclusion. These significant sites were off-limits to foreigners, reflecting a historical perspective that shaped Kazakhstan's relative isolation from external influences.

In late January 1992, during my stay in Almaty, Kazakhstan, I had the privilege of meeting the president or lead officer of the Republican Arts College, thanks to the introduction by Kasim S. Maulenov. The Republican Arts College stood as a remarkable institution, comprising approximately 400 students from across Kazakhstan who excelled in various artistic disciplines—dancers, singers, painters, sculptors, composers, artists, and musicians, aged roughly between 10 and 15 years old. Subsequently, on multiple trips to Kazakhstan, I had the opportunity to attend captivating programs featuring their dance, singing, and playing talents.

As our connections deepened, I extended an invitation to one young lady from the Republican Arts College, bringing her to St. Clair County Community College in Port Huron, Michigan for two years of education. This cultural exchange marked a significant chapter in fostering connections between Kazakhstan and the United States.

Kasim Maulenov also introduced us to his father and mother. Maulenov Senior emerged as a distinguished figure—a World War II hero for the Soviet Union, particularly recognized for his valor in the Battle of Leningrad (now St. Petersburg). Beyond his military achievements, Maulenov Senior held the esteemed position of the poet laureate of Kazakhstan. He served as the former president of the Writers and Poets Society of the Soviet Union and boasted an impressive body of work, with over 25 volumes of poetry published. The Maulenov family embodied a rich tapestry of history, art, and patriotism that left a lasting impression on our encounters in Kazakhstan.

Having forged connections with a multitude of high-profile Kazakh professionals, including lawyers, jurors, legislators, executive branch members, and businessmen, I felt compelled to expedite my return to Kazakhstan. My objective was clear: to organize a delegation comprising a diverse cross-section of business and government representatives from Kazakhstan. The aim was to bring them to Port Huron, Michigan, and orchestrate a conference dedicated to fostering trade partnerships and joint ventures between Kazakhstan and the United States. This initiative represented a pivotal step towards strengthening bilateral ties and promoting collaborative endeavors between the two nations.

In late February and into March 1993, accompanied by my wife Joyce and our daughter Jeanne Beauchamp, a recent business major graduate from Kalamazoo College, we returned to Kazakhstan. The journey required us to navigate through Moscow, departing from the Domodedovo Airport, approximately 50 km south of the city, for the internal flight to Almaty.

For Joyce and Jeanne, this trip served as a firsthand introduction to Kazakhstan and a novel experience with "outdoor privies" at about half the places where we would be staying. Our itinerary included crucial meetings with key figures in the Kazakh government and business sector. Sovietkhan Nurpeisov, Vice President of Kazakhstan Energy Company and the immediate past chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Kazakhstan, was among those we met. Additionally, discussions were held with Tulegan A. Marenov, the First Deputy Chairman of the State Committee for Economics for Kazakhstan, equivalent to the role of our Secretary of Commerce. Another significant meeting was with the Honorable Zinayida L. Fedotova, Deputy

Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Kazakhstan, who displayed a family picture of Joyce, me, and our ten children under the glass plate on her desk—a personal touch from my previous trip.

Further engagements included discussions with the Honorable Tamas K. Ajtmukhambatov, Kazakhstan Supreme Court Chairman; Yerjan K. Sagyndykuv, First Deputy Chairman of the State Committee for State Property; Aigoul T. Kenjebayeva, Head Arbitrator of the Commodity Exchange "Kazakhstan" and Rector (President) of Kazakhstan Medical Institute, among others. The primary agenda was to invite them to Michigan in early June 1992 to participate in a Kazakhstan/United States/Canada Trade and Joint Venture Conference. Their unanimous agreement marked a significant milestone in fostering international collaboration.

Arranged by Kasim Maulenov, our journey extended to Chimkent, Kazakhstan, situated on the south/central border with Uzbekistan, where we had a meeting with Anwar K. Mamascharipov of the "Maksat" Foreign Economic Joint Stock Company. Anwar, a prominent figure in the business, industrial, and commodities brokerage sectors in Kazakhstan, proved to be a key player in our discussions.

The train trip from Almaty to Chimkent spanned over 12 hours, commencing in the early evening and concluding the next morning. Joyce and Jeanne had a two-bunk sleeping compartment, while Kasim and I shared a similar space. Our company expanded with the addition of another young man, referred to as Tomas. The night was marked by the appearance of a fifth of vodka, several bottles of wine, and beer, fostering lively conversations throughout the night.

To our surprise, Tomas disclosed that he was a mathematician in the Soviet Nuclear Program. What added intrigue to his story was the revelation that he was under constant surveillance by at least two KGB agents wherever he traveled within the Soviet Union, and he was prohibited from leaving the country. The ensuing day brought fatigue, sleep deprivation, and the remnants of a hangover from the eventful night.

Upon our arrival in Chimkent, Anwar Mamascharypov and his family warmly welcomed us and led a tour showcasing the historical highlights of Chimkent—an ancient capital situated on one of the branches of the Silk Road connecting Europe and China. As evening approached, we were chauffeured to Anwar's residence, an expansive 20,000-square-foot dwelling, where we were greeted by a welcoming party attended by approximately 30 people, including Anwar's

family and business associates. The gathering featured an array of meats, fruits, vegetables, and, of course, copious amounts of vodka.

Considering that this occurred just three months after the collapse of the Soviet Union, we were the first Americans that most of the attendees had ever seen or with whom they conversed. Amidst the revelry, Joyce and Jeanne were accompanied by female escorts to an outhouse—a singular pit toilet—to attend to their needs. Notably, there were cows in the vicinity, adding a touch of rustic charm to the experience!

Good Deeds

Throughout the years, people have often posed the question: "What do you believe in? What is your philosophy of life? Do you have a mission?" Or some variation of these inquiries. For a considerable period, my go-to response has been, "Good Works!" I used to assert, "I don't spend much time praying; I'd rather dedicate that time to doing Good Works." However, as time has unfolded, it turns out that was a bit of an exaggeration. In these later years, there is ample time for both prayer and Good Works.

Contemplating this "philosophy" has occupied my thoughts. How did it originate? Was it a conscious development? Is it inherent, intuitive, or simply a natural aspect of me? Do I genuinely embody it, or is it just an ego-driven pursuit? Could it be connected to Confucius' admonition: "Do not do to others that which you do not want done to you"?

Looking back, I realize that my perspective on this matter was shaped, at least in part, by recalling the kindness of others and the good deeds that benefited me. One such moment etched in my memory is my brother Roger pulling me out of the swimming hole in the Days River when I was around seven years old. That single act altered the course of my existence. Why does that good deed surface in my thoughts, particularly when dipping my toe in the water? Another impactful deed was when Nancy Holmburg rescued me from Little Bay De Noc, a bay in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, at a similar age.

Even amidst the sterile walls of the University Hospital, I somehow retained my knack for making people smile. This was especially true during my five-month stay on the 16-bed ward, from January to May, when I was just 16 years old. As I was mobile, I'd roam from bed to bed,

chatting with patients and offering a much-needed dose of humor. Often, my infectious laughter would spread like wildfire, brightening even the most somber faces. My cheerleading act didn't stop there. I even wielded a microphone, interviewing patients across both the men's and women's wards (the latter a 16-bed domain across the hall). These lighthearted interviews, broadcasted over the hospital's loudspeaker system, became a regular source of amusement, filling the air with bursts of laughter and reminding everyone, even briefly, that life could be joyful even within the confines of a hospital.

The year was 1953, and I, a seventeen-year-old brimming with youthful optimism, found myself standing tall as a counselor at Bay Cliff Health Camp. Nestled amidst the majesty of Lake Superior, roughly 30 miles north of Marquette, this unique haven welcomed children with speech, hearing, and other physical challenges. My cabin, buzzing with ten inquisitive faces, each around eleven years old, became my summer kingdom. Though faced with their individual needs, I embarked on a journey to guide them through a summer rich with laughter and discovery.

In part, I attribute this success to the fact that they witnessed a young man with a non-functioning left arm who could still play ball, throw a football, and sprint with enthusiasm. Seeing someone overcoming their own limitations likely helped them put their challenges into perspective.

Sometimes, the impact of Good Deeds comes in small, gradual gestures. One such instance was my attendance at numerous clinics at the University Hospital whenever summoned by Dr. Bob Bailey or Tony Filippis of Wright & Filippis. My role was to demonstrate the functionality of an artificial arm. I remain hopeful that these appearances, coupled with participation in television programs, helped fellow amputees in making informed decisions.

During the two winters Joyce and I spent at Herman Gardens in Detroit while I was in law school, our activities intrigued our neighbor kids. When snow blanketed the weekends, I would venture out to the commons area with our son Mark and, in the second year, with our son Steve. Together, we crafted slides, small forts, and snowmen. Often, we were joined by about 20 other kids, and I would be the lone adult. At the very least, these kids discovered the joy in playing with snow! An additional lesson I gleaned from these experiences, given that almost all the other kids were African American, was that prejudices between blacks and whites are not inherent. If prejudices surfaced later on, they had to be learned or taught. Among my most cherished

memories are weekends during the winter at Herman Gardens, when groups of young black boys would knock on our door. Their question was always the same: "Can Mark's dad come out and play?" And play we did!

Serving on the board of directors of a nonprofit public service organization is, in itself, a form of undertaking Good Deeds. In the 1980s, I found myself on no fewer than nine such boards, each contributing to the betterment of society. Among them was the St. Clair County Community College Board of Trustees, a publicly elected board with six-year terms. Remarkably, my tenure on this board spanned almost 42 years, beginning with my first election in 1967, when SC4 was first established.

Being a part of the Michigan Community College Association (“MCAA”) was another facet of my commitment to community service. Established in 1969 by merging the Michigan Community College Presidents Association and the Michigan Community College Trustees Association into a unified entity, I served as a Director of MCCA for over 30 years, starting in 1969.

Additionally, my involvement extended to the Port Huron Hospital Board of Trustees, where I served for about 18 years, including a term as Chairman of the Board from 1983 to 1988. Another notable commitment was on the Marwood Manor Nursing Home Board of Directors. Marwood Manor, a non-profit nursing home with around 250 beds, benefited from my service on the board for approximately ten years, beginning in 1983.

The Holy Cross High School Board of Directors in Marine City, Michigan, also drew my attention. Our daughter Anne attended Holy Cross High School in 1980, followed by our sons Thomas in 1981 and James in 1983. Economic considerations led the Port Huron Area School District to terminate sports in 1980. As both Anne and Tom were skilled athletes who found an outlet for their sports interests at Holy Cross, Joyce and I were asked to serve on the Holy Cross High School Board of Directors for several years. Given the significant number of students from the Port Huron area attending Holy Cross, it seemed the board valued input from parents who transported, or arranged transportation, for their students over 30 to 40 miles each day.

Moreover, our connection with community and service extended to St. Mary's Catholic Church Parish Council during the 1970s and 1980s. As most of our ten children attended St.

Mary’s Grade School during those years, either Joyce or I found ourselves on the parish council or the Parent-Teachers Association for the school.

My involvement also extended to the Marydale Center, an assisted living facility situated on 10th Street near Brandywine and St. Mary's Parish. Featuring communal dining and social spaces, residents needed to be mobile to reach the dining room for each meal. The Board of Directors focused on objectives such as cost control, maximizing volunteer assistance, securing external contributions and support, and recruiting and retaining competent, cost-effective staff.

However, the challenge with non-profit Boards of Directors is their time-consuming nature, particularly when approached with conscientious dedication. I've always held the belief that a board member carries a fiduciary obligation to the beneficiaries of the nonprofit institution. This involves performing duties conscientiously, objectively, and in a timely manner. Balancing the best interests of the nonprofit's mission and the public can be challenging, particularly in the case of a public institution like SC4.

When dealing with SC4, one must navigate the interests of students, taxpayers, and various unions representing faculty, clerical workers, maintenance staff, and administrative personnel. Achieving a harmonious balance among these stakeholders requires careful consideration and decision-making. One of my self-imposed guidelines for serving on boards was never to spring surprises on a president or top administrator during a board meeting, especially if it was a public one. As confirmed by our last two SC4 Presidents during my ten-year tenure on the board, I consistently adhered to this practice. Prior to each public board meeting, I would fax questions and issues to them.

Given that we received the Board Agenda and all background materials by noon on Tuesday for our Thursday 4:30 p.m. meeting, I took the opportunity to review and annotate the agenda. I would pose questions like, "Have you considered this alternative?" or "Isn't spending $_____ on _____ a priority over $_____ on _____?" On any given agenda, I might have ten to twenty comments, issues, or questions. However, this proactive approach ensured that the president was aware of my thoughts in advance, preventing any embarrassment due to unpreparedness during the meeting.

The initial months posed a challenge with only 60 to 80 attendees. To boost participation, Joyce and I decided to donate $500 to the first overall Bingo game of the night. However, we

added a twist by announcing that the $500 prize had to be won within the first set of numbers called. If no one claimed the prize in that timeframe, the $500 would roll over to the coverall game and be awarded in the first set of numbers called for that game.

This strategic move paid off. It took 12 weeks for the first $500 prize to be won, but by then, we had around 350 people attending our Bingo Games every Friday night. The popularity soared to the extent that tables had to be set up in the corridor between the school lunchroom and the church. Tables were spread along the corridor between the classrooms at St. Mary's School, even extending to the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades for Bingo players. The Bingo Games became such a hit that we were able to offer a final coverall Bingo every Friday night.

During the mid-to-late 1970s, Bingo was generating $50,000 to $60,000 for Saint Mary's School every year. In current funding terms, that equates to about $225,000 in today’s dollars.

With 300 to 400 people attending each of our Bingo games, the need for a St. Mary’s School Gymnasium became apparent. However, before broaching the subject with our Parish Pastor, Father William Welch, and the Parish Council, I believed it was crucial to have detailed drawings of the new gymnasium, storage room, and an extra classroom, accompanied by a comprehensive estimate of probable costs.

Knowing Roy French, the owner of Roy French and Associates Architects, I approached him to create the necessary drawings and cost estimates. French designed a small gym, a storage room, and an additional classroom to be situated at the front of the new addition. The estimated cost for the entire project was $140,000. Armed with these drawings and cost estimates, I presented the proposal to Father William Welch and the Parish Council at St. Mary's.

While the Parish Council approved the building project, they decided to omit the extra classroom. I distinctly recall the Chairman of the Parish Council, Vince Kellerman, who owned Star Oil company with around 50 Shell Oil gasoline stations and combined convenience stores in St. Clair County and the thumb area of Michigan. Kellerman concluded the meeting with a straightforward statement, "Norm, you got the gymnasium, now you have to raise the funds!"

Fundraising wasn't originally my forte, but I fully embraced the challenge. Joyce and I personally contributed $10,000, with the next highest donation standing at $5,000, followed by

several $1,000 donations. In a span of two months, we managed to collect approximately $98,000. With Pastor Welsh's approval, we proceeded to bid out the construction. To cover the remaining costs, about $37,000, a very low-interest loan was secured from the Archdiocese of Detroit.

As a result, the gym and storage room were promptly constructed. The combined gym and old lunchroom became the vibrant hub where we could see all our Bingo patrons. Bingo continued to flourish. I personally worked Bingo every Friday night, unless there was a scheduling conflict, throughout 1969. However, despite having smoke eaters, the cumulative impact of the smoke eventually took its toll, and I made the decision to step back from working the games in the early 1970s.

To foster the "esprit de corps" among Bingo workers in the 1970s, Joyce and I took the initiative to host several winter worker Bingo parties at our home. We had a tennis court on the lot next to our home, which we transformed into a hockey and figure skating haven with a ten-foot-high wire fence during the winter. For these parties, we invited all Bingo workers to bring their skates.

Alcohol was always part of the festivities. One year, we made a particularly potent punch using five 1.75-liter bottles of bourbon and a case of sparkling Captiva non-alcoholic grape juice, mixed half and half. The sisters who taught and the principal at St. Mary's also attended these gatherings. On one memorable occasion, they had to drive four couples home early due to the potency of the punch. It tasted so good, but it packed a punch akin to "Manhattans," causing some revelers to bow out early.

Amid my Bingo exploits at St. Mary’s, I also became an author, writing The Bingo Book. But that's a story for another time!

While Good Works often bring positive outcomes, there can be downsides, as experienced in my involvement with Bingo at St. Mary’s. When Father Francis Weingartz became Pastor, he insisted that the Bingo License, originally in the name of the school, be transferred to the Parish. This change meant that the proceeds from the games would technically flow to the school through the Parish and contribute to the Parish's subsidy. Despite being on the Parish Council at the time, I strongly objected to this shift, as Bingo was primarily run by school parents, not the Parish.

Father Weingartz claimed that this handling was an Archdiocesan requirement and dismissed dissenting views, stating, "Anyone who doesn't agree with it DOESN'T HAVE THEIR HEAD SCREWED ON STRAIGHT!" Our views clashed, and my relationship with Father Weingartz deteriorated from that point onward.

On a separate occasion, I had a significant disagreement with Father Weingartz when he announced, just before the 8th-grade trip to Toronto, that there would be no trip because no teacher could accompany the students. This news devastated parents who had worked hard to raise funds for the trip. Quick on my feet, I stood up and offered to be an employee of the school for that weekend, accepting $1 as compensation (which I promptly forgave), and assuming full responsibility for the students on the trip. Father Weingartz, taken aback, agreed to let the trip proceed. The trip turned out to be outstanding, and I suspect the requirement for a paid employee was perhaps a concoction in the first place. Joyce and I chaperoned the trip, ensuring its success.

Toronto indeed makes for an ideal destination for an 8th-grade trip, and it was wonderful to chaperone at least five of them. Taking off from Sarnia, Ontario, on a Canadian national train and staying at the Royal George Hotel, the trips typically included visits to notable attractions such as the Ontario Science Centre, Casa Loma, CN Tower, Ontario Place, Eaton Centre, the Planetarium, and the Royal Ontario Museum. A lunch break at The Distillery District was often a welcome respite for the thirsty chaperones. It was a fantastic way to cap off the 8th-grade experience.

My son Mark, along with his wife Kathy, have continued the tradition by chaperoning more than a dozen 8th-grade trips to Washington, D.C. Undoubtedly, those trips must be filled with memorable experiences for the students. Mark recalls the unforgettable trips to Washington, D.C., with his siblings Stephen and Anne, where they visited the White House, the Smithsonians, the Mint, the FBI building, and many other iconic landmarks. Such experiences undoubtedly leave a lasting impact on 14-year-olds, creating cherished memories.

Good Deeds as Part of Business

Business endeavors can indeed create opportunities to engage in Good Works and provide valuable opportunities for others. An illustrative example is my August 1987 trip to

Beijing, China. The connections made during this trip, particularly through my friend Professor "Jane," who had visited my home earlier that year, led to a meeting with the Second Highest Minister of Education.

As a result, three professors from China were invited to Orlando, Florida, to attend the U.S. Community College Trustees' annual meeting in November 1987. This meeting laid the foundation for establishing over 20 Protocols of Intent, aiming to create Sister College relations between U.S. Community Colleges and colleges in China.

This initial engagement paved the way for my return to China in May 1988 and a significant meeting with Dr. Zhou BiQuang, a leading microsurgeon in the country. Subsequently, I facilitated Dr. Zhou BiQuang's visits to institutions like SC4 and Port Huron Hospital, Lambton College, and St. Joseph Hospital in Sarnia, Ontario, as well as Alpena Community College and Alpena Hospital in Michigan.

Dr. Zhou BiQuang's remarkable abilities, particularly in successfully reattaching over 200 severed arms and legs under challenging circumstances, left a profound impression on attendees at these institutions. The exchange of expertise and collaborative efforts in the medical field exemplifies how business engagements can create avenues for impactful Good Works and international collaboration.

The trip Joyce and I made to the Kremlin in Moscow in September 1990 not only provided a unique experience but also opened doors to business opportunities with the potential for doing Good Works. This venture led to my involvement in providing at least ten years of community college education for Kazakh students.

My commitment to a cardinal rule, wherein I refrained from bringing over any child of a Kazakh executive or government employee, reflects a principled approach to creating opportunities for those who might not have had access otherwise. The first four students I brought over in 1993 were two young men from the Semipalatinsk Oblast in northeastern Kazakhstan, where the Soviets conducted their nuclear testing. This initiative aimed to provide opportunities for young individuals from a region with a challenging history.

Among them was a young lady with a remarkable linguistic ability: fluent in Russian, Kazakh, Japanese, and English. As she interpreted law lectures at Almaty State University for a week, I recognized her potential and decided to offer her a year of education at SC4. Given her Jewish heritage in a predominantly Muslim-controlled country, I saw this as an opportunity to provide support. She was able to enroll at the University of Michigan for her second year, although I eventually lost track of her. This endeavor demonstrates how business initiatives can be harnessed to create educational opportunities and promote positive outcomes, particularly for individuals from diverse backgrounds and regions. Another young lady I encountered at the Republican Arts College in Almaty in 1993, who later stayed for a second year at SC4 and continued her education at the University of Arizona, exemplifies the success stories that can emerge from these programs. Being recognized as an "honorary board member" at the Republican Arts College underscored my meaningful connection with the institution and its students.

One particularly fascinating student from Kzyl Orda Oblast, Yerden Menglibay, who had an impressive talent for limericks, stands out in the narrative. Bringing him and a fellow student to Michigan in 1998 showcased the depth of talent in Kazakhstan. Yerden's remarkable academic performance at Kirkland Community College in Roscommon, Michigan, where he earned a full scholarship for a second year, further attests to the positive impact of my efforts. The recognition and support Yerden received from the faculty and administration at Kirkland Community College reflect the lasting impact these exchange programs can have on individuals and communities.

My experience with Yerden is a testament to the enduring impact of wise business decisions that lead to meaningful Good Works. Yerden's success as a logistics expert with Hurricane Kumkol Munai, managing the dispersal of a substantial volume of oil, reflects not only his individual achievements but also the positive influence of the opportunities that can be provided. His expression of gratitude in his last communication, acknowledging that he wouldn't be where he is without my help, is a powerful affirmation of the lasting impact that mentorship and support can have on individuals. The alignment of business decisions with the goal of fostering personal and professional growth showcases the potential for positive change that exists within the business realm.

These stories highlight the ripple effect of goodwill and mentorship, demonstrating that business decisions, when grounded in a commitment to doing good, can lead to lasting and meaningful outcomes.

St. Mary's Church and School

In 2006, Father Simeon Iber, a charismatic priest from Makurdi, Nigeria, took on the role of pastor at St. Mary's Church in Port Huron. One of the initial challenges bestowed upon Father Simeon by the Archdiocese of Detroit was the task of constructing new classrooms for Saint Mary's school. These classrooms were intended to welcome back the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades from Stevens, where they were previously known as the McCormick School. At that time, I had the privilege of serving as the chairman of the financial committee for St. Mary's, thus I was entrusted with spearheading the fundraising efforts. After meticulously planning and with architectural drawings in hand, we estimated the cost to be $565,000. Astonishingly, our community rallied together and managed to raise the necessary funds in under a year. Noteworthy contributions came from families like the Beauchamps, who generously donated over $25,000 towards our endeavor.

In 2009, during my tenure as Chairman of the St. Mary's Church Finance Committee, we were tasked with approving the budget for St. Mary's McCormick school. It became evident to me that there was a pressing need for additional funding to acquire computers, Wi-Fi infrastructure, whiteboards, and other cutting-edge equipment. Recognizing this need, my wife Joyce and I decided to make a significant contribution of $40,000 to St. Mary's School. Our agreement stipulated that these funds were to be dedicated solely to the purchase of high-tech equipment not included in their pre-approved operating budget.

Over the course of approximately a year and a half, this donation was utilized for the procurement of the specified equipment. Throughout this period, Sue McDonald, the Church Business Manager, diligently kept me informed about the expenditures. It was truly gratifying to witness how our contribution directly enhanced the learning environment for the students at St. Mary's.

Back in the early 1980s, my wife Joyce and I were actively involved on the School Board at Holy Cross High School in Marine City. It was during this time that I stumbled upon an intriguing discovery: a non-profit, 501-C3 qualified entity known as the Holy Cross School Foundation. This foundation, managed by a group of dedicated Holy Cross alumni, boasted an impressive sum of over $700,000 in its coffers during that era.

Upon learning about this foundation, I was inspired to obtain a copy of its bylaws. My intention was clear: I wanted to propose the formation of a similar foundation for St. Mary's School in Port Huron. However, despite my initial enthusiasm, I regrettably did not follow through with this idea. Looking back, I ponder what might have hindered my actions. Perhaps it was the demanding workload at the law firm, where I logged well over 3,000 chargeable hours in the 80s. It could also have been the responsibilities that came with serving on the Port Huron Hospital Board, a role I held as chairman from 1984 to 1989. Additionally, my commitments to both the board of directors of St. Clair County Community College and as a director of the Michigan

Community College Association throughout the 1980s may have played a part in my decision making.

Regardless of the reasons, I must admit I did not act upon the idea of establishing a similar foundation for St. Mary's School. It remains a thought provoking reflection on the opportunities that sometimes slip by amidst life's various responsibilities and commitments.

In a remarkable turn of events in 2011, I again stumbled upon the copy of the Holy Cross School Foundation and was inspired to take action. Without hesitation, I set out to draft the bylaws for what would become the St. Mary's McCormick School Foundation. With determination and a clear vision in mind, I also meticulously crafted the Articles of Incorporation for this new endeavor.

Armed with these foundational documents, I embarked on a mission to rally support. I presented copies of the bylaws and Articles of Incorporation to over 30 St. Mary's Parishioners and parents of St. Mary's Academy. The response was heartening - over 30 individuals eagerly agreed to serve on the First Board of Directors for the Foundation. Without delay, I filed the Articles of Incorporation with the State of Michigan and set to work on preparing and submitting the application for the Foundation to be granted 501(c)-3 status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's perseverance paid off when we received the coveted 501(c)-3 approval.

The success of the Foundation quickly became evident. In both 2011 and 2012, it financed over $20,000 worth of projects for the academy, enriching the educational experience for its students. The momentum continued into 2013 when the generosity of two families, along with a substantial contribution from my wife Joyce and myself, amounting to $16,000 each, enabled the Foundation to acquire a significant asset - over 30 iPads valued at $50,000 for the Academy. This achievement would not have been possible without the invaluable assistance of Brian Kelly, one of our dedicated directors. Brian not only facilitated the purchase of all the iPads but also took the initiative to program them for school use before the students received them.

However, as life often unfolds, unexpected challenges arose. In the summer of 2025, I underwent a quadruple bypass, prompting me to tender my resignation to the other officers and directors of the Foundation. Regrettably, it seems that the Foundation may now face dissolution without my continued involvement.

Nonetheless, the legacy of the St. Mary's McCormick School Foundation stands as a testament to what can be achieved through community collaboration and unwavering dedication to educational excellence. Though my role may have ended, I am proud of the impact we were able to make during my tenure, and I am confident that the Foundation's spirit will live on in the hearts of those who continue its mission.

One of the most fulfilling endeavors I've been involved in is the collaborative work with Father Simeon Iber. My acquaintance with Father Simeon began when he joined Father Rene Demaries at the Newman Center in downtown Port Huron. It wasn't until he assumed the role of pastor at St. Mary's Church in Port Huron around early 2006 that our friendship deepened. As

mentioned previously, I had the privilege of spearheading the campaign alongside Father Simeon in 2007 to secure funding for the $565,000 addition to St. Mary's McCormack Academy.

In the realm of philanthropy, another remarkable initiative has been the Reverend Simeon Community Development FUND, established by Bob Nickerson, a local attorney and former St. Clair County prosecutor, as a non-profit Michigan corporation with 501(c)3 IRS approval (the “FUND”). Bob Nickerson, his wife Karen, along with Margie Hale and Dorothy Bergquist, have been the driving forces behind the FUND for over a decade. Each year, they organize annual fundraisers to support its mission.

The FUND plays a pivotal role in financing the Center for Development and Social Justice, a Nigerian non-profit under Father Simeon's guidance (the “CENTER”). With more than 30 dedicated volunteers, the CENTER works tirelessly to advance various projects. A standout example of their impactful work was the construction of four classrooms in Nigeria, accompanied by 40 desks for each room (totaling 160 desks) along with essential school supplies. Remarkably, the total cost for this project was a mere $10,556.

These classrooms, equipped with metal roofs and sturdy cement block walls, were constructed entirely by the dedicated volunteers of the CENTER. Their commitment and labor not only kept the costs incredibly low but also amplified the impact of U.S. donations. It's a testament to their dedication that U.S. contributions are leveraged two to three times over by the invaluable volunteer support.

This model stands in stark contrast to some U.S. foundations where a significant portion, often 70% to 80%, is consumed by overhead costs, leaving only a fraction of the donations to reach the intended objectives. The efficiency and direct impact of the CENTER's work highlight the profound difference that can be made when resources are utilized with integrity and a focus on the core mission.

The volunteers at the CENTER are not only dedicated to physical infrastructure but also to empowering local communities through education. They undergo training in healthcare, vaccinations, and malaria prevention, equipping them to teach and train villagers in improved healthcare practices. This holistic approach to community development has yielded significant results.

Currently, the CENTER has adopted six distinct villages in the greater Makurdi area of Nigeria. These villages are not just names on a map; they represent communities in which the CENTER is deeply invested. One of the vital contributions to these villages has been the drilling of at least one water well for each of them. Access to clean and reliable water is fundamental to the health and well-being of these communities, and the impact of these wells cannot be overstated.

Beyond the physical wells, the volunteers continue to work closely with villagers, sharing knowledge and expertise to improve overall health outcomes. By empowering locals with the skills and knowledge needed to sustainably manage their health, the CENTER is fostering

long-term positive change in these communities. This comprehensive approach, encompassing both infrastructure and education, underscores the commitment of the CENTER and its volunteers to make a lasting difference in the lives of those they serve.

In March of 2010, my wife Joyce and I had the incredible opportunity to visit Father Simeon in Makurdi. This trip was a profound experience that allowed us to witness firsthand the impactful work being done by Father Simeon and his dedicated volunteers. During our visit, we observed the volunteers conducting healthcare seminars and distributing mosquito netting to mothers of newborns, essential steps in improving community health.

One particularly memorable experience was when about twenty of Father Simeon's volunteers accompanied us to the village of _____, located about an hour and fifteen minutes away from Makurdi. Here, we had the privilege of witnessing Father Simeon addressing the elders and approximately 1,000 villagers. Despite speaking in the local TIV tribe language, Father Simeon's volunteers, all fluent in English, graciously interpreted for me and Joyce.

Father Simeon's instructions to the villagers were clear and impactful. He outlined the necessary steps for the community before the CENTER would proceed with the well project. Each family hut was instructed to construct a feces pit, with specific guidance on location and size. The village elders were tasked with forming a Water Community to govern the control and allocation of the water. Additionally, a crucial aspect was the requirement for the community to raise 5% of the well cost for maintenance and repair. Timely reports on the well's operation were also emphasized.

The level of organization and community involvement was truly impressive, and Joyce and I were deeply moved by what we witnessed. Upon our return to the U.S., we were inspired to take action. We wrote a check for $6,000 to the FUND to cover the costs of the first well. The process of drilling wells in these areas required depths of 190 to 225 feet to reach potable water, and the equipment had to be transported over great distances, contributing to the high costs.

Despite the initial challenges, the efforts bore fruit. The cost of subsequent wells has been reduced to $4,000 each, thanks to the collective efforts and efficiencies achieved. To date, Joyce and I have had the privilege of financing seven wells, and we are committed to supporting many more in the future. The impact of these wells extends far beyond providing clean water; they represent hope, health, and a brighter future for the communities they serve.

The distance to the nearest potable water source for several villages adopted by the CENTER in Nigeria is often a challenging 5-7 miles away. Witnessing the sight of women and children carrying heavy water containers on their heads or balancing two buckets on a pole over their shoulders is a stark reminder of the urgent need for accessible clean water. It's moments like these that compel one to reach deep into their pockets for solutions.

Father Simeon has a vision for the villages adopted by the CENTER, a vision that extends far beyond just water wells. There are numerous projects he envisions to enhance the quality of life for these communities. Among these aspirations are the establishment of a healthcare center

in Kuhov, the drilling of 11 more water wells, the construction of schools, and providing playground equipment for the children. These projects represent not just basic necessities but opportunities for growth, development, and a better future.

Looking ahead, Joyce and I hope that our health remains stable in the coming years so we can continue to play a role in making these projects a reality. Being able to contribute to the CENTER's mission of improving the lives of those in need is a privilege we hold dear. We are committed to supporting Father Simeon and his team as they work tirelessly to bring these vital projects to fruition. Each well, each school, and each healthcare center is not just a building; it's a beacon of hope and progress for the communities they serve. Together, we can make a meaningful difference, one project at a time.

A One-Armed Life

The fall of 1952, during the Gladstone/Marquette High School football game, marked a significant turning point in my life – at just 16.5 years old, I lost the use of my left arm. Over the years, I've found that when people discover I have an artificial arm, they often express curiosity. It's not uncommon for someone to approach me, sometimes even five or ten years after we've met, and ask, "What happened?" Occasionally, this question is followed by inquiries about how I've managed or similar reflections on my journey. It's understandable that people wonder and perhaps even speculate about the circumstances. So, here are my thoughts on the matter.

The loss of my left arm was indeed a life-altering event. At the time, it felt like the ground had been pulled from beneath me. It was a challenge that I had never anticipated, and initially, it was incredibly difficult to navigate emotionally and physically. The adjustment to life with an artificial arm was a steep learning curve, filled with moments of frustration, adaptation, and resilience. However, adversity has a way of revealing one's true strength. Over time, I learned to adapt. I found new ways to perform everyday tasks, and I discovered a resilience within myself that I never knew existed. With the unwavering support of my family and friends, I gradually embraced my new reality and focused on what I could do, rather than dwelling on what I had lost. Throughout this journey, I've learned valuable lessons about perseverance, gratitude, and the power of the human spirit. I've faced challenges head-on, whether it's learning to tie my shoes with one hand or pursuing my passions and dreams despite the obstacles. Life with an artificial arm is not without its challenges, but it has also brought unexpected growth and resilience.

So, when someone asks me "What happened?" or "How have you managed?" I often respond with a smile. I've learned that life's challenges can be opportunities for growth and self-discovery. I've managed by embracing the journey, finding humor in the everyday struggles, and remaining grateful for the strength and support that surrounds me. It's not just about managing; it's about thriving despite the odds, and that's a lesson I continue to carry with me every day.

Life with one arm certainly has its moments of humor and lightheartedness, and I've had my fair share of those experiences. Here are a few that stand out, moments that were

lighthearted at the time or in hindsight: One particular memory that always brings a smile to my face is when Tony Filippis, the owner of Wright & Filippis, the company responsible for crafting my first artificial arm, picked me up at University Hospital in Ann Arbor. He graciously invited me to stay at his home in Detroit while my arm was being crafted. It was during this weekend stay that Tony introduced me to a whole new world.

On a Friday night, Tony took me to an "Amputee Dance" organized by a group with which he was involved. Initially, the idea of an amputee dance seemed foreign and intriguing. However, once I arrived and saw amputees dancing and having an absolute blast, it was a revelation. In that moment, I realized that life with one arm was far from over; in fact, it could be just as fun and vibrant as ever.

The sight of amputees twirling on the dance floor, laughing, and enjoying themselves without hesitation was incredibly uplifting. It was a reminder that life's challenges doesn’t have to define us; we can still find joy and laughter in the most unexpected places. That dance night was a turning point for me, a moment of realization that there was still so much joy and fun to be had, even with the challenges I faced. So, whenever I look back on that amputee dance, I can't help but chuckle and feel a sense of gratitude. It was a moment of lightness and freedom, a reminder that life is what we make of it. And from that point on, I embraced the idea that fun and laughter are always within reach, regardless of the circumstances.

In the mid-to-late 1960s, my wife Joyce and I were active members of the Black River Golf Club. One evening, we found ourselves at a lively banquet at the club, surrounded by friends and acquaintances. On this particular occasion, we were seated next to Bev Valentine and her husband Tom Valentine. Tom, an architect engineer and a familiar face on the golf course, and I had shared many rounds together.

However, the events of that evening took an unexpected turn when Bev, who was seated next to me on my left side, accidentally sat on my artificial hand. There was a moment of shock as Bev quickly realized what had happened and jumped up, profusely apologizing to me. Without missing a beat, I decided to lighten the mood and replied, "No, Bev, I want to thank you!"

Perplexed, Bev asked, "Why are you thanking me?" With a deadpan expression, I responded, "Bev, the good doctor transplanted all my sexual sensors to my new hand! You just gave me a very exciting experience!"

The room erupted in laughter, including Bev, who chuckled at the unexpected twist. It was a lighthearted moment that broke the tension, and Bev, though slightly embarrassed, took it in good humor. However, I couldn't help but notice that Bev seemed to avoid sitting next to me at future gatherings!

Looking back, it's one of those amusing anecdotes that still brings a smile to my face. It's moments like these that remind us to find humor in life's unexpected mishaps and to not take ourselves too seriously. And as for Bev, well, I like to think that she'll always remember that banquet as one of the more entertaining evenings at the Black River Golf Club!

In the late 1970s, I had the unique opportunity of vacationing in Jamaica thanks to a generous client of mine, Peter Gout, the owner of Lakeville Gas Associates. Peter graciously invited my wife Joyce and me, along with two other couples, for a week's vacation in this beautiful island paradise. Little did I know that this trip would lead to one of the most memorable and amusing experiences of my life.

One Sunday morning, all eight of us decided to attend mass at a Catholic Church in Montego Bay. As we settled into our pew, I noticed there were about six young local boys sitting in front of us. One of the boys, around 6 or 7 years old, couldn't seem to take his eyes off my left hand. In a bold move, he reached out and started stroking my artificial hand with curiosity. It was a gesture that caught me completely off guard, something that had never happened to me before or since.

Feeling a bit mischievous, I decided to have some fun. I grabbed a mass booklet with my left hand, and when the boy tried to take it from me, he couldn't. With a sly grin, I whispered to him, "It's bionic!" The boy's eyes widened in amazement, and he immediately turned to inform the other boys in a hushed excitement, "The bionic man is sitting right behind us."

Word seemed to spread like wildfire through the church. By the time communion came around, it seemed that the entire congregation, especially the local children, knew about the "bionic man" in their midst. As we went up for communion, the boys must have informed the girls on the other side of the church, because when they returned, there was quite a commotion.

The boys excitedly shared their discovery with the girls, and soon enough, the priest had to send the Altar Boys to remove the enthusiastic youngsters from our area. However, the excitement didn't end there. As we exited the church and made our way to our van, we were greeted by a crowd of around 40 curious Jamaican children who had gathered to catch a glimpse of "The Bionic Man."

It was a moment of pure hilarity and unexpected fame, all thanks to a mischievous whisper and a curious young boy. Needless to say, we made a hasty exit from the church grounds, leaving behind a crowd of eager onlookers and the echoes of laughter. It was a memory that we would fondly recount for years to come, a testament to the unexpected adventures that life has in store.

Ah, the adventures of living with an artificial hand in the 1970s! There was a particular incident during a trip to Lansing for a meeting of the Michigan Community College Association Board of Directors that stands out in my memory:

As Joyce and I were preparing to leave the hotel and head back to Port Huron, I found myself with a small suitcase in my left hand and another suitcase in my right hand. It was a typical situation, or so I thought. However, when I reached the car, I encountered a problem - I couldn't open my left hand! In those days, the artificial hand I had was designed to snap shut when you grabbed something, and then you had to apply a bit more pressure to get it to open

again. Realizing the predicament, I had to think quickly. I couldn't just leave my hand attached to the suitcase in the trunk! So, I made the decision to remove my hand from my artificial arm. I unsnapped the cable from my shoulder harness and placed the suitcase with the hand on it in the trunk of my car. Thankfully, I had a spare hand at home that I could use until I resolved the situation.

The following week, I took the suitcase with my hand still attached to it to the Wright & Filippis main office on Woodward Avenue near Six Mile Road in Detroit. There, I met with the limb maker, Dominic Lemma, and explained my rather unusual predicament. Without missing a beat, Dominic readily removed my hand from the suitcase. Feeling a bit embarrassed, I apologized to Dominic for the trouble. However, his response left me both amused and relieved.

He casually remarked, "This is nothing. You should have been here last week when a guy came in with his hand attached to a refrigerator!" I couldn't help but burst into laughter at the absurdity of the situation. To this day, I still wonder if Dominic was telling the truth or simply having a bit of fun with me. Either way, it was a memorable moment that added a touch of humor to the unexpected challenges of living with an artificial hand.

In the 1980s, I found myself up in Oscoda with my friends Bob Corbin and Tom Kroll. Bob was the proud owner of a boat he named the Goodwood, likely a nod to his ownership of the Corbin Lumber Company - a business dealing in a lot of wood! It was during one of our trips on the Goodwood that we landed a whopping 27 lb Chinook Salmon. This prized catch now proudly adorns the lower-level fireplace, a testament to our fishing adventures in the waters where the Au Sable River meets Lake Huron near Oscoda, Michigan.

One Sunday morning, the three of us decided to attend mass at a Catholic Church in Harrisville, a few miles north of Oscoda. Little did we know, this particular mass would turn into a memorable, albeit amusing, incident. The priest presiding over the mass was clearly of foreign extraction, and I would hazard a guess that he hailed from Italy, Poland, or perhaps even Lower Slabodia!

As we approached the communion line, I found myself ahead of Tom and Bob. When it was my turn to receive the host, I naturally extended my right hand, as was customary for me. However, to my surprise and shock, the priest SHOUTED at me, "No, you take it in your left hand, then you put it in your right hand, then you put it in your mouth!" The entire church seemed to freeze, and I could feel the eyes of every parishioner on me.

Well, I was immediately taken aback and, to put it mildly, quite pissed off. In a moment of quick thinking (or perhaps impulsiveness), I reacted by slamming my artificial hand with my good right hand. The priest let out a surprised "oh!" and promptly placed the host in my right hand. Tom and Bob, who were behind me, couldn't contain their laughter, and by the time we made it back to our seats, all three of us were in absolute stitches. The situation was so comical and unexpected that we couldn't help but burst into uncontrollable laughter. It was one of those moments where the more you try to stifle the laughter, the harder it becomes. Needless to say, we had to excuse ourselves from the church to regain our composure.

As we left the church, still chuckling, I couldn't help but hope that perhaps the priest had learned a valuable lesson about assumptions and not shouting at parishioners! It was certainly a memorable and hilarious experience that we would recount with laughter for years to come.

Athletics

Athletics played a significant role in my life, despite the fact that I was unable to continue playing football after my injury in 1952. I made a conscious decision not to discourage or encourage my seven boys from playing high school football. Instead, I left the decision up to them, respecting their individual interests and passions.

As it turned out, several of my sons did choose to play high school football. Steve and Tom both took to the field, lacing up their cleats and donning the pads. Seeing them pursue the sport brought a mix of emotions for me. On one hand, I understood the thrill and camaraderie that comes with playing football. On the other hand, I couldn't help but remember my own injury and the impact it had on my life.

Despite my reservations, I wholeheartedly supported my sons in their athletic endeavors. I attended their games, cheering from the sidelines and offering words of encouragement. Watching them play, I couldn't help but feel a sense of pride in their dedication and determination. While my own football days were cut short, I found joy in witnessing my sons embrace the sport. Each game they played was a reminder of the resilience of the human spirit and the bonds forged on the field. Whether they won or lost, I was always there to support them, just as they supported each other.

Athletics, particularly football, may have been a bittersweet topic for me, but seeing my sons find their own passion and drive in the sport was a rewarding experience. It taught me the importance of letting each individual chart their own path, even if it meant navigating the same fields that once held both triumph and tragedy for me.

Hockey has always held a special place in our family, even though we didn't have a high school team back when I was growing up. As a kid, I spent many hours skating on Little Bay De Noc, honing my skills on the ice. In the 1970s, we decided to build a tennis court on the lot next to our house, but during the winter months, it transformed into our very own hockey rink.

All seven of our boys took to the ice, lacing up their skates and grabbing their sticks. They embraced the sport with enthusiasm, and I couldn't help but join in the fun. I remember buying a pair of used skates and some goalie pads, eager to play a little hockey with the younger kids. It was a joyous sight to see our makeshift tennis court rink come alive with the sounds of sticks clacking against the puck and the laughter of children. I have fond memories of those days, of skating alongside my kids, teaching them the ins and outs of the game, and sharing in their excitement. I'll never forget the moments when I played goalie against the six, seven, and eight-year-olds. Despite my age, I managed to score some goals against the youngsters, much

to their delight and my own amusement. Those games were filled with friendly competition, endless energy, and the sheer joy of being on the ice together as a family.

While I may not have pursued hockey at a competitive level, those backyard games with my children are some of the most cherished memories I have. It was a time of bonding, laughter, and shared experiences that brought us closer together as a family. Hockey wasn't just a sport for us; it was a way of connecting, creating lasting memories, and enjoying the simple pleasures of life.

Golf was a sport I never considered until one summer when I found myself with plenty of time on my hands. Working as a lifeguard for the Gladstone City Recreation Department, I decided to pick up a set of old golf clubs and give it a try. The Gladstone Golf Course, located just a mile and a half from our home outside Kipling, became my new playground.

At first, I experimented with using my hook to steady the club, but I soon realized it was hindering my swing. So, I decided to try something different - I started golfing with just one hand. It was a bit unconventional, but surprisingly effective. I found my rhythm and my scores started improving. I spent many days out on the course, often playing solo and getting in as many as 54 holes on some occasions. As I became more comfortable with my one-handed swing, my scores began to reflect the improvement. I managed to get my score for 9 holes down to the high 40s, a significant achievement for me.

One particular day stands out in my memory - I shot a remarkable 39, the best I ever did. It was a round filled with precision shots and good fortune, and I was thrilled with the result. With my trusty 3-wood, I could sometimes unleash a 200-yard drive, which always gave me a sense of satisfaction. Over the years, I had the pleasure of scoring several birdies, moments of triumph that added to my love for the game. However, despite my best efforts, a hole in one remained elusive. Nonetheless, each time I stepped onto the course, I found joy in the challenge, the camaraderie, and the sheer pleasure of playing golf.

Golf became more than just a pastime for me; it was a way to relax, unwind, and enjoy the beauty of the outdoors. It was a sport that taught me patience, perseverance, and the joy of a well-struck shot. And even though I never achieved that elusive hole in one, the memories and experiences I gained on the golf course will always hold a special place in my heart.

Basketball

Basketball was another sport that I enjoyed, especially when it came to shooting. My brother Roger and I, with some assistance from Exior, took on the project of building a backboard for the field next to our garage outside Kipling. Roger was quite skilled on the court and played high school basketball, which inspired me to get more involved in the sport.

During my time on the junior varsity team, I had a standout game where I scored 17 points against Norway, showcasing my knack for shooting. It was a memorable performance that highlighted my skills on the court. Additionally, I had the opportunity to coach the Gladstone

8th-grade team during my senior year, guiding them to an undefeated season. It was a rewarding experience to share my knowledge and passion for the game with the younger players.

Back at our home at 1810 South Woodland Drive, we constructed a basketball backboard positioned four feet out from the fence at the south end of the tennis court-turned-hockey rink. This setup allowed for plenty of practice and friendly games with friends and family. Even as I entered my 40's and 50's, I found that I could still outshoot most of our kids in the classic game of horse.

Basketball remained a sport that brought me joy and satisfaction throughout the years. Whether it was playing competitive games, coaching young players, or simply shooting hoops on our homemade court, basketball was a constant presence in my life. It wasn't just about the game itself; it was about the camaraderie, the challenge, and the sheer fun of putting the ball through the hoop.

Bowling

Bowling was a sport that I first got a taste of when I was 14 and 15 years old, setting pins at a Gladstone bowling alley to earn a few dollars. This was in the days before the automated pin-setting machines, so it was a manual and physically demanding job. However, it wasn't until I was in college that I truly took up bowling as a hobby.

In college, I found myself drawn to the lanes and picked up the sport quite well. My average was good enough to earn a spot on the Phi Kappa Tau Fraternity four-member bowling team for inter-fraternity play. It was a competitive environment, and I enjoyed the camaraderie and challenge of competing against other fraternity teams.

One particular game stands out in my memory: I bowled my highest game ever with an impressive score of 267. It was a moment of personal achievement and a testament to the hours of practice and dedication I put into the sport. However, even with my strong performance, our team had a standout player named Bob James. Bob was incredibly skilled, averaging over 230 when he bowled for money at the Michigan Union. His talent was unmatched, and he was a force to be reckoned with on the lanes.

In the 1970's, Joyce and I joined the St. Mary's couples league, adding a social aspect to our love for bowling. It was a fun and friendly league where we could enjoy the sport together. One year, I even managed to achieve the high game in the league, a moment of pride for me.

As for the lowest score in the league? Well, I'll admit that honor went to me on occasion. Bowling, like any sport, has its ups and downs, and I certainly had my fair share of challenging games. But regardless of the score, I always found joy in the sport, whether it was the thrill of a high score or the laughter shared with friends on the lanes. Bowling became more than just a hobby; it was a way to unwind, socialize, and enjoy the simple pleasures of life.

Baseball

Baseball was a sport that I dabbled in during my time in Gladstone before my injury. We were fortunate to live just one block away from the lighted ballpark, making it easy to spend evenings watching or playing the game. Personally, I batted left-handed, but I never considered baseball to be my strongest sport. However, I always had a deep appreciation for the game and admired those who excelled at it. Our son Tom, in particular, was a standout player. He possessed remarkable eye-hand coordination and a keen understanding of the game.

I remember one year in Little League Baseball when Tom's batting average was simply astonishing - over .700. His ability to place hits precisely where the infielders weren't was truly remarkable. He had a knack for punching singles out to any area of the diamond, consistently finding gaps and frustrating the opposing team's defense. Watching Tom play was a joy for me as a father. His natural talent and passion for the game were evident in every swing of the bat and every play on the field. He had a special connection with baseball, and it was a pleasure to witness his success on the diamond.

While baseball may not have been my forte, seeing Tom excel at the sport brought me immense pride and admiration. His achievements in Little League were a testament to his hard work, skill, and love for the game. It was moments like these that made me appreciate the beauty and magic of baseball, a sport that has a way of bringing families together and creating lifelong memories.

Billiards

Playing pool at Yenty Wheaton's Pool Hall on Main Street in Gladstone was a regular pastime for me during my freshman and sophomore years. After wrapping bread at Norm Knudson's Sunrise Bakery, I would often find myself at the pool hall, honing my skills on the green felt.

I got fairly good at the game, partly because we often played for a dime or more a game. Money was tight for me back then, so I had to be strategic about whom I challenged to a match. It was all part of the excitement and strategy of the game.

Yenty Wheaton, the owner of the pool hall, was a legendary billiards player himself. He was always seen with a chew of tobacco in his mouth, adding to his colorful character. I remember he would sit next to a coal wood-burning stove near the center of the pool hall, the room filled with the sounds of clacking balls and occasional laughter. To the right of Yenty, about three or four feet away, was a HUMONGOUS SPITTOON. This was no ordinary spittoon; it was a sight to behold. Yenty had an impressive aim, and whenever he needed to spit, he would expertly launch his wad of tobacco juice those few feet into the giant receptacle. It was a skill to behold, and I can't recall ever seeing him miss.

I must admit, I was always grateful that I never had to empty that SPITTOON! The thought alone was enough to make me shudder. But despite the unusual sights and sounds of Yenty Wheaton's Pool Hall, it was a place of camaraderie, competition, and good-natured fun. Playing pool there was not just about the game; it was about the unique characters, the stories shared, and the memories made in that lively and vibrant space.

I used to play pool occasionally after my amputation. I would use my artificial arm, adjusting at the wrist. We got a used pool table for the basement of our home at 1810 South Woodland Drive, and I also bought a snooker table to put there. I would play with our kids and sometimes friends who came over.

When we built our new home at 2975 Sandy Oaks Lane in 1996, I bought a new 7-foot pool table and had it installed in the lower level just after we poured the concrete floor. About 8 to 10 years ago, our neighbor Bob Bales finished his man cave basement and put a 9-foot pool table in it. This started a boys' night out where we would eat, play cards and play pool every first Wednesday of the month. We also enjoy a few drinks; I typically have a couple of Southern Comforts, scotches, or bourbons before the first pool game!

Our boys' night out has expanded to 8-10 attendees. Seven of us—Bob Bales, Bill Burrows, Lou Darcey, Tim Linehan, Jim Acheson, Rob Finos, and I—have pool tables, so we alternate hosting. We used to play a lot of 8-Ball and 9-Ball. I love 9-Ball and would often win my fair share of games. On every shot after the break, I would aim to sink the 9-ball in a selected pocket, after hitting the ball that was up.

For the last three to four years, we have almost always played 3-Ball. In this game, the one, two, and three balls are set up, and each player tries to sink all three with the least number of shots. Our best pool players are Bob Bales and Bill Burrows, who often sink one of the three balls on their break! They frequently get a three-count for sinking all three balls when they sink one on the break. I am not great at 3-Ball. I believe I had only won one game over the last three years, until our most recent game!

Let me tell you what happened on the first Wednesday of this month as I am writing this epistle! The game was at Jim Atchison's beautiful home. Jim was the majority shareholder of Acheson Colloids, Incorporated when they sold out for about 750 million dollars in the 1990s! Jim has two 9-foot tables, one on the first level and one in the lower level.

In the first game of the evening, I shot third after Jim and Bob Bales. After I broke, I managed to sink two balls with my second shot and got in a good position to sink the third ball on my third shot! I did and I won! It was the first time I had sunk all three balls in three shots since I started playing 3-Ball! I also won another game with a total of four shots.

At the end of the evening, Bob Bales announced a playoff for the Championship of the Universe between Jim Atchison and me, Norman Beauchamp! Jim had also managed to sink all three balls in three shots in an earlier game. In the final game of the evening, I again made all three

balls in four shots. Jim was unable to match my performance. So, as of this writing, I am the pool champion of the universe!

Jogging

I used to jog fairly often in my forties and fifties when we lived at 1810 South Woodland Drive. I would get up at 5 a.m., run over to Lakeside Park, and then through Port Huron Cemetery. This route was about 3-4 miles, which I would complete by 6 a.m. Now, with St. Clair County's Fort Gratiot Park just north of our condominium development, I walk around the park instead. I cover three to four miles, which takes me about an hour to an hour and a half.

Joyce and I were members of Planet Fitness at the mall for about two years. However, as of January of this year, our new health insurance arrangements provide us with free admission to the Silver Sneakers programs at The Cutting Edge gymnasium, located about two miles from our home. We both thoroughly enjoy these workouts.

Joyce and I have developed a fondness for our instructors, Daddy and Kimm. They are both enthusiastic and supportive, making each session enjoyable. Plus, they are both affectionate individuals, and the warmth of their hugs adds an extra layer of positivity to our workouts. For both Joyce and me, the touchy-feely aspect of hugs is far more meaningful than high fives!

Other Aspects of Life

Life is a rich tapestry woven with various aspects, and for me, one significant aspect has been navigating life with an artificial arm. I've always harbored a desire not to be defined solely as "that one-armed guy." It brings me immense satisfaction when people don't immediately recognize that I have a prosthetic limb. I've found solace in the fact that the prosthetic arms and hands I've received from Wright and Phillips have been meticulously crafted. They come complete with rubber gloves and can feature fingernails and coloring closely resembling those of my natural right hand.

I recall a poignant moment during my time at the University of Michigan's business school. On the final day of class, a fraternity brother barged into the room and playfully lifted my left arm, slamming it onto my desk. The gentleman seated next to me was taken aback. Despite being seated together for the entire semester, he had never realized that I had an artificial arm! It's moments like these that remind me of the subtle victories in navigating life with grace and dignity.

Making eye contact with everyone I meet has become a habit of mine. Not only does it foster connection and communication, but it also serves another purpose – if someone is looking at my eyes, they're not focusing on my hands. This subtle strategy helps me navigate social interactions with ease.

One aspect, however, that highlights the innocence and curiosity of children, particularly those aged 3 to 4, is their candid reactions in various settings like grocery stores. At their eye level, my artificial hand often catches their attention. I've lost count of the times I've noticed them noticing my left hand, which appears different to them. Their natural curiosity prompts them to tug at their mothers, urging them to take notice of my hand. It's a gentle reminder of the simplicity and honesty of childhood curiosity, and it often leads to unexpected but heartwarming interactions.

For quite a few years now, I've predominantly used my left hand for cosmetic purposes. Essentially, it serves more of an aesthetic role rather than being heavily relied upon for tasks like carrying my briefcase or assisting with tying my tie. However, I still wear my wedding ring on my artificial hand, maintaining a symbolic connection to my marriage. Surprisingly, I can still perform certain tasks with it, like holding a fork to steady my steak as I cut it with my right hand.

Exior and Zola

Exior Elmondore Beauchamp was born on May 1st, 1893, as the fourth of ten children to Arsene Beauchamp, born on January 1st, 1858, in Montreal, Canada, and Amanda Slicer, born on March 3rd, 1864, also in Montreal, Canada. Arsene and Amanda's first two children were born in Montreal, Canada.

Around 1888, Arsene and Amanda decided to move to Escanaba, Michigan, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (the U.P.). They then relocated to a log cabin in Perkins, Michigan, where Exior was born. Approximately in 1894, they made further advancements by building a farmhouse and dairy farm buildings near Brampton, Michigan, establishing the Fairfield Dairy. This marked the beginning of a new chapter for the Beauchamp family as they ventured into farming in the Michigan countryside.

Contrary to the academic path, the reality of Exior's early years was marked by laborious work. According to accounts primarily relayed by my mother, Exior found himself toiling away building railroads for 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, starting at the tender age of 14. This arduous undertaking likely began around 1907 in Delta County of the U.P., situated approximately 20 miles from Escanaba, the largest nearby town. It paints a stark picture of the challenges and responsibilities faced by young individuals in that era, shaping Exior's life in profound ways. Child labor laws were probably non-existent in the U.P. around the 19 hundred times!

At some point between the 1910s and 1920s, Exior ventured to Chicago, where he secured employment as a welder for a company. This position lasted for several years until a harrowing incident altered the course of his life. Exior fell victim to a robbery at knifepoint, an experience that left him deeply traumatized. In the aftermath, he made the difficult decision to

resign from his job and retreated to the familiarity of the dairy farm near Brampton, Michigan. The shock of the event was so profound that Exior was rendered speechless for a couple of years, grappling with the emotional aftermath.

My memories of Exior are mainly rooted in the early 1940s when I was just seven years old in 1943, and they extend through the 1950s. By then, Exior had emerged as a multifaceted individual capable of almost anything. He embodied versatility, excelling as a carpenter, electrician, welder, lathe operator, farmer, and hunter. Beyond his practical skills, he assumed roles as a disciplinarian, provider, and sage advisor, offering wisdom gleaned from a lifetime of experiences. Exior's resilience and breadth of abilities left a lasting impression on those around him, shaping the fabric of our family's history for generations to come.

When my parents were married on June 7th, 1933, they embarked on a new chapter together, marked by the purchase of seven acres of property along the combined US 2 and US 41, about 5 miles north of Gladstone and halfway to Rapid River Bay, extending north from Escanaba off of Lake Michigan.

This property came complete with a modest three-room house. The kitchen boasted a wood-burning stove, providing warmth and sustenance to our family meals. Adjacent to it, the living room featured a pot-bellied coal and hardwood burning stove, radiating cozy comfort throughout the space. Meanwhile, a snug bedroom to the south of the kitchen accommodated three beds with little room to spare.

In addition to the house, the Seven Acres property boasted a stand-alone garage, providing shelter for one car alongside my father's workshop and storage space for barrels and bins filled with chicken feed and other essentials. This setup facilitated our venture into poultry farming each spring, as we raised chickens and roosters for their eggs, which were either sold directly by my father or distributed through the Fairfield Dairy, then under the management of my uncle Alphonse. It was a bustling homestead, brimming with life and activity, nurturing both our family and our livelihood.

I vividly recall the autumnal ritual from my days at the age of 10, 11, and 12 when the time came to cull our flock of chickens and preserve their meat for the coming months. At some point, I assumed the role of the chicken killer, a responsibility that acquainted me with the grim reality of the phrase "he looked like a chicken with its head cut off". Armed with an axe and wielding a 10-12-inch diameter maple log, roughly 2 feet in length, I carried out the task at hand.

Yet, despite the somber nature of the chore, we adhered to a principle of thrift and resourcefulness. My mother, in her culinary prowess, would cook up the chicken meat in a large pressure cooker, transforming it into a bounty of delicious meals. During weekends, our home buzzed with activity as we canned numerous quarts of meat in Mason jars, ensuring nothing went to waste. These jars found a resting place in our root cellar, accessed through a trap door nestled between our kitchen and bedroom. Throughout the late fall, winter, and spring, we would venture into this cool, dimly lit sanctuary to retrieve jars of preserved meat, vegetables, and fruit, each one a testament to our hard work and self-sufficiency. It was a labor-intensive process, but

one that instilled in me a deep appreciation for the fruits of our labor and the importance of making the most of what we had. The realization dawned on me at some point in my life that our survival during the winter months hinged on the abundance of our garden, the presence of our chickens, and the efforts we put into canning. Without these elements, our plates would have been empty when snow blanketed the ground.

Exior, true to his role as a provider, supplemented our diet through hunting. He proudly wielded his 30-06 rifle, affectionately referring to it as "my 30-06." Exior held firm to the belief that hunting season limitations were not applicable to locals like us; venison was our sustenance, not just a recreational pursuit. Whenever the need arose, Exior would venture out and bring home deer to feed our family. I recall one particularly fruitful fall when he bagged five deer and even a bear. Yet, not a scrap went to waste. The meat was either worked into our meals or shared with relatives, of whom there were many.

There was one tense evening during my childhood when my father went out hunting and didn't return home. Zola, my mother, was understandably worried. However, Exior returned the next morning, assuaging our fears with a tale of evasion. He had encountered a roadblock manned by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on his way home, prompting him to take evasive action. Seeking refuge in a stranger's driveway, he explained his predicament to the homeowners, who graciously understood. With the roadblock cleared the next morning, Exior returned home, deer in tow, ensuring our pantry remained stocked for the winter ahead. It was a testament to Exior’s resourcefulness and commitment to providing for his family, even in the face of unexpected challenges.

Exior's marksmanship with his 30-06 rifle was truly remarkable! I have vivid memories of him winning shooting contests held at the old Fairfield dairy farm, affectionately known as "the FARM", situated between Brampton and Perkins, roughly a half-mile east of the M-35 State Road between Gladstone and Chaison. This farm served as the gathering place for the Beauchamp family during the mid-to-late 1940s, a period I fondly recall from my youth. With 10 siblings and an expansive extended family, our gatherings were lively affairs, brimming with laughter and camaraderie. The Beauchamp clan was deeply rooted in the communities of Perkins, Brampton, Rapid River, Gladstone, and Escanaba during the 1940s, contributing to the fabric of these towns in myriad ways.

One of the most enduring images from those gatherings is of Grandma Amanda Slicer Beauchamp seated in her rocking chair next to the pot-bellied wood-burning stove. With a blanket draped over her shoulders to ward off the winter chill, she exuded warmth and comfort. Grandma Amanda, born in Montreal, Canada, on March 3rd, 1864, and passing away in Perkins on February 14th, 1942, left an indelible mark on our family. Although I was just a young child of less than 6 years old when she passed, my memories of her, from the ages of 4 and 5, are treasured snapshots of a beloved matriarch who shaped our family's legacy with her presence and love.

Playing cards has been a lifelong passion of mine. I was introduced to the game of Smear when I was about 7 or 8 years old, likely by my Grandpa Middleton Daniel Wolf. He also taught

me Cribbage when I was around aged 9 or 10. Later on, during my time at the Southfield Dormitory in Ann Arbor back in 1954, I learned to play Bridge. Each game holds its own cherished memories and has added its unique flavor to my life's experiences.

The farmhouse was spacious by Upper Peninsula standards. During our Sunday gatherings, it was not uncommon to have as many as 10 card tables set up for the game of smear. Each table would seat 4 or 6 players, with partners at a 4-person table or two partners at a 6-person table.

Smear is a relatively simple game compared to Bridge, which I have been playing for over 60 years. Each deal in Smear has four points:

1. **High**: The Ace or highest card in the bid suit.
2. **Low**: The seven in the four-handed game and the five in the six-handed game, or the lowest card in the bid suit.
3. **Jack**: The Jack of the bid suit, but only if it is dealt, as some cards remain in the deck after each hand is dealt.
4. **Game**: The most points taken by the partners after all six cards are played, with each 10 valued at 10 points; Aces at 4 points; Kings at 3 points; Queens at 2 points; and Jacks at 1 point. Thus, there are up to 80 points to be won in each deal.

The dealer shuffles and deals six cards to each player, then bids first, with the deal passing after each round. Let's say the dealer gets the Ace, King, and six of hearts in the six cards dealt. The dealer would likely bid three, reasoning that the Ace of Hearts as high and the King of Hearts would secure at least two tricks and probably three. The dealer might also get the Jack of Hearts if it is with one of his partners or an opponent without three or more hearts. Additionally, there is a fair chance the hearts would be low, either held by the dealer's partners or in the remaining deck. Furthermore, the dealer's three-heart bid would probably secure the game point, as they would likely take three tricks and rely on their partners for at least one more trick.

This detailed explanation of Smear may seem lengthy, but it highlights the significance of the game in our family. Smear was the primary game played by the Beauchamps during the first 17 years of my life and was almost exclusively played by others in our area during the 1940s and 1950s. It brought us together and created cherished memories that have lasted a lifetime.

I learned to play Smear when I was about eight years old, and along with my brother Roger, we became regulars at the Smear tables at the farm starting around 1944. It was at these tables that I first encountered the reality that some people cheated. These Sunday gatherings also involved the consumption of beer, wine, and liquor, which likely contributed to the occasional knavery!

My Uncle Paul, who was 14 years younger than the next oldest sibling, was often my partner for Smear. He ran a grocery store with his wife, and they would parcel out winnings to the victors after each hand. If we won a hand, three or four chips would sometimes mysteriously appear in our stack, a trick that often went unnoticed by our opponents. If confronted, Paul would

argue vehemently that the score was correct, and often, he would prevail. On the rare occasion he had to give up the chips, it was always attributed to an innocent mistake.

These Sunday get-togethers at the farm were a major highlight of the 1940s. For many of the Beauchamp children and their families, including ours, it was the primary social activity. My oldest brother Joe was retired and lived in Perkins. Romeo owned a grocery store in Gladstone before moving to Escanaba, where he built two more stores. Victoria lived in the Perkins area, while Uncle Albert owned a small grocery store, gas station, and rentable cabins in Perkins. Aunt Lila was married to Napoleon Sharkey and ran a farm just outside of Perkins. Emma married John Reumme, who operated a gasoline distributorship business in a town about six miles south of Escanaba. Uncle Alphonse took over the farm and ran the Fairfield Dairy. Uncle Paul, as I mentioned, ran a small grocery store in Brampton, and Aunt Victoria (Hakes) lived in the Rapid River area.

Most of the Beauchamp family and their extended families were within a 10-15-mile radius of the farm, making these gatherings convenient and frequent. These Sunday afternoons were more than just a time for cards; they were a cherished family tradition that provided a sense of community and connection.

I would estimate that at least half of my Sundays during the 1940s were spent at the farm. These gatherings were a feast and a festivity all rolled into one. Everyone brought something to share: meat, salads, fruit, and desserts. We made ice cream using the dry ice method with cream from the Fairfield Dairy. Games of horseshoes and croquet filled the yard, laughter echoed all around, and of course, Smear was played.

In my younger years, after dinner, I would be put to bed upstairs at the farm, only to be awakened by Zola or Exior later at night to go home—usually after the last game of Smear ended.

Exior was a "hickory stick disciplinarian". By that, I mean if Roger or I did something seriously wrong, there were no lectures or second chances. Out came the hickory stick. I remember once, at about seven years old, I was caught playing with matches. That was a major no-no because it could have burned our house down or ruined our crops. The hickory branch came out, my britches came down, and my rear-end got blistered. I never played with matches again!

When Adrian Peterson, the running back for the Minnesota Vikings, was indicted for child abuse for spanking his son with a tree branch, I couldn't help but think of Exior. If Exior had been on that jury, he would have voted not guilty. In his eyes, spanking with a tree limb was the ideal way to discipline a child for serious misbehavior.

There are some things I should mention about Exior. Exior's life took a different trajectory than what was commonly assumed in our family. For years, I had believed that schooling only went up to the 4th grade. It wasn't until a couple of years ago when my brother, Roger, shared a

surprising revelation: our father had actually attended school through the 6th grade! Roger recalled an incident from when we lived outside Kipling on the old US 2/41. He had made a critical comment about Exior's lack of education and competence.

Our mother immediately reprimanded Roger, saying, "Don't you ever say anything critical about your father's lack of education. He's so much smarter than I am or you are! When he grocery shops, he knows to the penny the total cost of all the items in his cart and knows he has enough money in his wallet to buy them! He's self-taught in electrical work, plumbing, and everything else! There isn't anything he can't do!" After that, Roger never again mentioned anything about Exior's abilities.

This conversation really opened my eyes to the depth of Exior's skills and intelligence. Despite his limited formal education, he had a remarkable ability to learn and master a wide range of practical skills, from grocery shopping with precision to teaching himself complex trades. It was a testament to his resourcefulness and determination, qualities that deeply influenced our family.

In hindsight, I was the beneficiary of many valuable lessons from Exior, taught to me through his examples. One memorable instance occurred when I was about 11 or 12 years old. My dad had me dig a deep hole in our side yard with a post hole digger, going down about six feet. The purpose was to sink a point at the end of a hand pump, so we could get well water for drinking, cooking, and other needs. As Exior explained, I can still recall his words vividly.

He pointed out that the bluff, about a mile and a half to the west of our home, was formed eons ago, standing 150-200 feet high and running at least 25 miles from the Escanaba area northwest to Rapid River, at the top of Little Bay de Noc. Exior said that under a foot or so of topsoil, it was all sand. The water flowing eastward off the bluff traveled through this sand under our seven acres, moving directly eastward to Little Bay de Noc. Exior emphasized that the point for our hand pump must not be located between our outhouse and Little Bay de Noc, to prevent sewage contamination of our drinking water. This was a pollution avoidance strategy in the U.P. 70 years ago!

These lessons resonate with me today, especially since Joyce and I have sponsored six water wells for our Nigerian Catholic priest friend, Father Simeon Diwe, in the Mkurdi area of Nigeria. Fortunately, we don't have to worry about subsurface water flow there because the wells must be drilled about 225 feet deep to reach potable water. The major concern is establishing local committees to control the distribution of water, as there is not enough for all needs.

Our outhouse at home on US 2/41 was built by Exior. It was a two-holer! At one point, I thought we must be rich, or at least prosperous, because most other outhouses in our area were one-holers. My cousin Byron Wolf, who lived about a quarter-mile south of us, and two of my classmates at Kipling School, Nancy Holmberg and Margaret Johnson, also had one-holers. Eventually, I began to think it was dumb to have a two-holer because no one ever sat with me when I used it! It wasn't until our two-holer filled up and Exior ordered me to dig a new pit a little way away that it dawned on me why he made a two-holer outhouse. A two-holer would only fill

up every two years, while a one-holer would fill up every year. From a practical standpoint, Exior was a genius!

When I was 4, 5, and 6 years old, I observed Exior taking his handmade scoop shovel out to bank up snow four to five feet high against the sides of our house during the winter. By the time I was 9, 10, and 11, when it was my turn to shovel snow against our house, I realized that the snow acted as insulation because the walls of our house were not insulated.

I've often joked with all 10 of our kids, somewhat facetiously, that having an outhouse in the U.P. in the winter as a kid made me decisive. I've told them that when you're 9 or 10 years old and it's 20 degrees below zero, and your outhouse is 120 feet in the back of your house, you have to know what you're doing and do it quickly, or you could freeze to death! Especially when you had to use the sharp, cutting pages from a Sears Roebuck or Montgomery Ward catalog to clean yourself. I'm glad I don't have to make those decisions so quickly and decisively anymore!

We lived on US 2/41 until we moved to Gladstone sometime in 1949 when I was 13 years old. At our home on US 2/41, we didn't have a refrigerator, we had an icebox. When Exior built his free-standing garage workshop, he added another backroom about 15 feet by 25 feet in the back of the garage with a concrete floor. Exior also kept a lot of sawdust in there. Every winter, when the surface of Little Bay de Noc would freeze over, often from 18 inches to 2 feet thick, our neighbor on the east side of US 2/41 would let us access the bay on a dirt road. Exior, and later Roger and I, would cut out big blocks of ice and take them on a sled to the ice room at the back of our garage, covering the ice chunks with sawdust. Every day during the spring, summer, and fall until the bay froze again the following winter, we would break off a chunk of ice and put it in our icebox to keep our milk and the few fruits and vegetables we had cool. It was a hell of a lot of labor to produce a cooling effect! Whoever invented the refrigerator should be given a big reward!

In the 1940s, Uncle Alphonse, born on May 22nd, 1905, the eighth child of our parents Arsene and Amanda Beauchamp, had taken over the dairy farm and was running the Fairfield Dairy. Every day or two, we would have several quarts of milk delivered to our home by Uncle Alphonse. He was a most congenial person, but he and his wife Cecilia never had any children. Every quart of milk received had at least 3 inches of cream at the top. Zola would always make special use of this cream in all the great dishes she would make. Unfortunately or fortunately, depending on how you looked at it, in about 1947, the state of Michigan required all commercial sellers of milk to have it pasteurized before sale. This was either too expensive for Uncle Alphonse to buy the equipment and pasteurize the milk, or it was too much idiotic bureaucratic nonsense for Uncle Alphonse to take, so he sold the Fairfield Dairy and moved to the Phoenix, Arizona area. I remember visiting him just after I first graduated from college. He had taken up real estate and already had about 40 realtors working for him. Alphonse was definitely an entrepreneur!

Exior was also a conservative person. In about 1949, he and Zola had saved up about $10,000, so they bought a vacant lot on 10th Street in Gladstone, right across from the Jones Elementary School, where Zola was a first-grade teacher, and built a two-bedroom house. In the

house was an inside toilet! Also, there was a kitchen, dining room, family room, utility room, a fireplace, one-car garage, and a full basement. The living room had a fireplace, and above the mantle were two mounted deer heads with large racks of horns—Exior's trophies!

At 13 years of age, I remember helping to build the house, along with my brother Roger. I remember pounding in the hardwood floors in the dining room, family room, and bedrooms. We had to help as much as possible. The house had to be free and clear, so no bank could ever foreclose on it!

Our basement had a concrete floor. However, Exior drilled a big hole in it and sunk a water well point down into the sand beneath the floor, connecting it to a water pump so we could use it to water our front, side, and back yards. This was free water, the same way we got it at our country home out on US 2/41! Somehow, the city of Gladstone got wind of this and forced Exior to seal off the water well point and use metered city water to water our lawn. Using free water was against regulations! To say Exior was mad about this stupid regulation was putting it mildly. However, there was no rule or regulation stating that the grass, which normally took on a brownish color, normally had to be satisfied with rainwater. Plus, Gladstone could not bill its residents for rain.

I would characterize Exior as frugal and proud. I remember when I was about 11 or 12 and living in our one-bedroom house, Exior got laid off as a lathe operator at the Atlas Veneer Plywood Company in Gladstone. Overall, I believe Exior worked at Atlas for about 18 years in the thirties and forties. After being laid off, my brother Romeo Beauchamp and his wife Pauline stopped at our US 2/41 home on a Sunday. Romeo owned two side-by-side grocery stores in Escanaba and had previously owned a grocery store in Gladstone. Romeo, obviously trying to be helpful, suggested that Exior should go to the welfare department in Gladstone and get some free bread! Exior erupted! He threw Romeo out of our house!

He told Romeo, "Don't you ever come into my home and tell me to go get some handouts! I knew at age 11 or 12 that Exior, my father, would have starved before we could ever accept anything like welfare! I'll never forget Romeo and Pauline's visit that day! I believe it was also the birth of my conservative values!

Right after we moved to Gladstone in 1949, Exior, who had been doing carpentry work, fell and broke his leg. About a day after he got home with his leg in a cast, Exior called my brother Roger and me into our living room. He was sitting in his rocking chair with his leg up on a cushion. Exior didn't say anything about his leg. He simply said in a loud and forceful voice, "I want you boys to go out and get a job! Right now!"

There was nothing vague or unclear about his demand. Immediately, there was no question in my mind that we had to get a job or we were mincemeat! I think it was my mother who had heard that Norman Knudsen, our neighbor two doors away and the owner of the Sunrise Bakery on Gladstone's Main Street, Delta Avenue, needed some help. Roger and I met with Mr. Knudsen and he took us on. His bread and rolls wrapper had quit and he needed replacements. Norman Knudsen showed us an archaic machine that brought freshly baked, but cooled bread, onto a conveyor belt that went through cutting blades. Two sheets of wax paper

would flow over the loaf, be cut off, and clamps would come down on the sides, sealing the wax paper under the loaf. The metal panels on the ends and the bottom of the loaf were heated, letting the wax paper melt and seal each loaf as it was pushed off the platform onto another conveyor belt to be put on racks to be sold in the bakery upfront or to be placed in boxes and delivered to stores throughout the county.

Operating the bread wrapping machine was a challenge, to say the least. It seemed to have a mind of its own, making it quite ornery. Adjustments were necessary every time we switched from wrapping footlong loaves to 18-inch ones, or when we changed bread types like potato or brown bread. The dimensions and settings of the wrapper had to be meticulously altered, especially when we used see-through cellophane for different-sized rolls destined for boxes. And let's not forget about the cutting blade, which dulled quickly and required frequent sharpening. Armed with screwdrivers and wrenches, we tinkered with various machine parts to keep it running smoothly.

Sunrise Bakery churned out an impressive amount of bread and rolls, keeping us busy after school from around 3:30 until late into the evening. Fridays were particularly demanding as the bakery prepared for the weekend rush, often keeping us there until the early hours of Saturday morning.

Roger was 15 when he started the job, earning $10 per week, while I, at 13, earned $8. With an average of 35 hours per week, my wage came out to about $0.22 per hour. It was humble pay by any standard, but necessities dictated our choices. Despite my uncle Wallace's concerns about child labor laws, which seemed somewhat ironic given his own early work experiences, we pressed on. After all, we had bills to pay and responsibilities to meet.

Meanwhile, Exior toiled away at the Atlas Veneer and Plywood Company in Gladstone. The plant, nestled by the banks of Little Bay De Noc, received massive maple trees that were then sliced into manageable sections. These chunks were later lathed down to a diameter of 8 to 12 inches, leaving behind hefty logs. Exior, resourceful as ever, purchased these logs at a bargain, often for just $8 a load. Two or three of these loads could sustain us through the bitter winters, fueling the pot-bellied stove that kept our living room warm and cozy.

Exior didn't often discuss his work in detail, but one name that frequently surfaced in his stories was Bull LaRue, one of his bosses. Whenever the lathe Exior operated was out of commission, Bull seemed to have a knack for assigning him the dirtiest, filthiest cleanup tasks to keep him occupied. Despite the challenging conditions, Exior eventually decided to join the union. After a successful vote, the union was established, bringing a newfound sense of dignity to the working men, including Exior.

However, tensions eventually rose, leading to a strike. In response, Atlas Veneer and Plywood Company shut its doors, leaving 500 workers, Exior among them, without jobs. Despite the uncertainty and hardship caused by the strike, the union had given them a voice and a sense of pride that they hadn't experienced before.

Zola Wolf Beauchamp

Zola May Wolf Beauchamp, or simply Zola, was born on May 3rd, 1911, in Foosland, Illinois, the fifth child of Middleton Daniel Wolfe and Myrtle Luella Womeldorph Wolfe. Zola's family history held a fascinating connection—her great-grandfather, Middleton Daniel Selby, was purportedly a fur trading partner with none other than John D. Rockefeller in the mid-1800s.

Zola's early life saw significant moves and losses. In March 1913, her family relocated to a farm near Hamden, North Dakota, where they settled. However, tragedy struck when her mother, Myrtle Wolfe, passed away in March 1917. To navigate the challenges of life, Zola's father took her to Webster City, Iowa, to live with her aunt Edna Sheffer in October 1918. Sadly, Aunt Edna passed away in September 1932, prompting Zola's move to Brampton, Michigan.

In Brampton, Zola embarked on a remarkable journey in education. Despite having only one year of normal school in Webster City, which she equated to a year of college, Zola was determined to pursue learning. She began teaching all children in a one-room school in Brampton, immersing herself in the academic world. Zola's thirst for knowledge led her to Northern Michigan University, where she attended summer sessions and took extension courses, ultimately earning her bachelor's and master's degrees. Remarkably, she continued her educational pursuits, accumulating 60 credit hours beyond her master's—a testament to her dedication and intellect.

Zola's commitment to education was exemplary, and her extensive academic journey could arguably have earned her the title of Doctor of Education from any university. Her legacy as a lifelong learner and educator continues to inspire those who follow in her footsteps.

In the autumn of 1932, fate brought Zola and Exior Beauchamp together in the tranquil forest near her one-room school. As they crossed paths year after year, their bond grew stronger, culminating in their marriage on June 7th, 1933—a union marked not by gunfire but by love and commitment. With a few dollars to their name, they wasted no time in purchasing a picturesque seven-acre parcel on US 2/41, nestled between Kipling and the Day's River Road, with the Soo Line Railroad forming a boundary to the west.

Their family soon expanded to include three sons: Roger Beauchamp, Norman Dwayne Beauchamp, born on April 17th, 1936, followed by Wendell Lee Beauchamp on November 30th, 1941—just days before the events of Pearl Harbor unfolded. The vast expanse of their property became a playground for the boys, a canvas for their imagination and exploration.

Zola, a talented seamstress, adorned her family with garments of her own creation. She meticulously crafted clothes not only for her sons but also for Exior and herself. Their shirts, fashioned from large cotton sacks adorned with colorful floral prints, bore the mark of her skillful

hands. Zola's ingenuity knew no bounds; she once tasked her young son, aged nine, with transforming a flower sack into a shirt. Guided by her patient instruction, he learned to piece together the fabric, initially puzzled by the seemingly inside-out construction, only to witness the magical transformation as the shirt took form.

Beyond clothing her family, Zola's sewing prowess extended to her own wardrobe—suits, dresses, blouses, and coats—all bearing the hallmark of her originality with hand-stitched labels proudly declaring "Original by Zola." Her talents did not go unnoticed; each year, she entered her creations into the Escanaba Upper Peninsula State Fair, consistently earning top honors and accolades. Through her craft, Zola not only clothed her family but also wove a tapestry of love, creativity, and tradition that endured for generations to come.

Zola, a dedicated first-grade teacher in the Gladstone schools, was always on the lookout for innovative teaching methods to benefit her students. When she learned about phonics reading and its potential to enhance literacy skills, she was determined to incorporate it into her curriculum. With unwavering resolve, she approached Superintendent Wallace "Wally" Cameron to seek permission, willing to undergo additional training and secure the necessary materials.

Despite initial approval, Zola faced resistance from other first-grade teachers who were reluctant to embrace phonics reading. Undeterred by this setback, she took her case directly to the school board, advocating passionately for the educational benefits of phonics instruction. Persuaded by her determination and evidence of success, the board granted her permission to implement phonics reading in her classroom.

Zola's commitment extended beyond the classroom; she offered free tutoring to struggling readers, determined to see every student succeed. Her efforts yielded remarkable results, with her first-grade students consistently achieving reading levels well beyond their grade. Many surpassed even eighth-grade proficiency, a testament to Zola's effective teaching methods and dedication to her students' success.

Upon Zola's passing, her legacy as an exceptional educator was evident as former students, now adults, flocked to the funeral home to pay their respects. Countless individuals expressed gratitude for her impact on their lives, with many citing her as the greatest teacher they ever had. Her influence on their reading skills left an indelible mark, reaffirming Zola's status as a revered educator, bar none.

Zola was a force of nature, embodying the spirit of involvement and activism in every aspect of her life. Whether as a devoted wife, nurturing mother, dedicated teacher, or passionate advocate, she left an unforgettable mark on those around her. Zola's enthusiasm knew no bounds; she initiated and participated in a myriad of community activities, from sewing and knitting clubs to girls' organizations.

Despite facing challenges, such as unfulfilled promises of raises from Superintendent Wally Cameron, Zola remained undeterred in her pursuit of justice. When Michigan amended its Constitution in 1963 to allow teachers to unionize, Zola wasted no time in assuming leadership

as the president of the inaugural public school teachers' union. Throughout her tenure, she steadfastly upheld her principles, refusing to authorize a teacher strike even when tensions ran high.

Zola's talents extended beyond the classroom and the realm of activism; she was also a skilled painter. In the 1930s and 1940s, she lent her artistic abilities to enhance black and white wedding photographs at a studio in Escanaba, using flash coloring techniques to infuse them with vibrant realism. This venture provided additional income for her family, demonstrating Zola's resourcefulness and entrepreneurial spirit.

In her retirement years in Sun Valley, Arizona, Zola continued to pursue her passion for painting, creating exquisite portraits of young Indian girls reminiscent of the renowned Arizona painter DeGrazia. These masterpieces, treasured by her family, serve as enduring reminders of Zola's creativity, talent, and the beauty she brought into the world.

Zola's artistic talents extended beyond painting to the realm of crocheting, where she crafted lifelike pictures that captured cherished moments in her family's life. One remarkable creation depicts our daughters figure skating, with three rows of spectators showcasing 24 individual girls, each adorned in unique handmade attire and hairstyles. Another masterpiece portrays our son in his hockey uniform, set against a backdrop of four-tiered bleachers filled with 24 diverse spectators, boys and girls alike, distinguished by their varied hairstyles, shirts, and jackets. These intricate works of art were truly labors of love, reflecting Zola's dedication and attention to detail.

In addition to her artistic pursuits, Zola also contributed to the community as a newspaper reporter for the Delta Reporter, a weekly publication serving Delta County in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Her weekly submissions captured the pulse of local life, documenting weddings, birthdays, meetings, and other noteworthy events. A typical entry might read as follows:

"On Sunday, May 17th, Exior and Zola Beauchamp, accompanied by their sons Roger, Norman, and Wendell, journeyed to the historic family farm near Brampton. They were joined by Alphonse and Cecilia Beauchamp, Paul and Myrtle Beauchamp, along with their son Napoleon, and Deliah Sharky with her son Nappy. The day was filled with a rifle shooting contest, spirited games of croquet, and intense rounds of Smear, with Nappy Sharky and Romeo Beauchamp emerging as the victorious partners. Amidst the festivities, homemade ice cream was savored, and Cecilia Beauchamp's chicken pot pie earned well-deserved praise. Laughter and camaraderie abounded, ensuring a memorable day for all who gathered."

Kipling Grade School

During my early school years at Kipling Grade School, there were three distinct classrooms, each hosting a combination of grade levels. The arrangement was quite clear-cut: one room for the little ones encompassing Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades, another for the middle grades of 3rd, 4th, and 5th, and a third for the upper echelons of 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.

In the realm of the lower grades, I encountered the enchanting Fern Nasberg, our teacher for Kindergarten through 2nd grade. Oh, how I admired her! With her captivating beauty and impeccable teaching skills, she was the object of my childhood crush. I often daydreamed of growing older so I could marry her. Thanks to Zola's early guidance, I arrived at Kindergarten already equipped with reading and writing skills, eager to impress my beloved teacher. In Mrs. Nasberg's class, I found myself frequently completing assignments ahead of schedule, affording me the opportunity to absorb the lessons intended for older grades. By the time I reached 2nd grade, I had essentially covered the material twice over, thanks to my curiosity and Mrs. Nasberg's inclusive teaching style.

Transitioning to the middle grades, Mrs. Greene assumed the role of our teacher for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades. While memories of Mrs. Greene are somewhat scant, one thing stood out distinctly: her reputation as a strict disciplinarian. However, it was an incident in the 5th grade that left a lasting impression on me:

One day, accusations of desk vandalism circulated, and Mrs. Greene, determined to identify the culprit, focused her attention on four boys from our class, myself included. Without any substantiated evidence, she singled me out first, coercing me to confess to the damage. Despite my protestations of innocence, Mrs. Greene resorted to using a wooden ruler to chastise me, demanding that I confess. Refusing to yield to false accusations, I endured the unjust punishment. One by one, each of the other boys faced the same ordeal, yet none confessed. To this day, the true perpetrator remains unknown. Looking back, I regret not speaking up about Mrs. Greene's unjust treatment, but perhaps my silent defiance was its own form of resistance against tyranny.

When I moved to Gladstone at the end of my 2nd grade, I found myself in the capable hands of Mrs. Wixom for both 6th and 7th grades at Kipling Grade School. Mrs. Wixom was a remarkable teacher, known for her engaging and effective teaching methods. Her husband, Dallas Wixom, was the Commander of the Michigan State Police in Gladstone. I vividly recall the day he spoke to our class. His talk had a profound impact on me, instilling a strong resolve to always stay on the right side of the law.

One of the highlights of Mrs. Wixom’s class was the “spelldowns.” She would line us up against the wall and give us words to spell, each one more challenging than the last. If you misspelled a word, you had to sit down. The last student standing won the spelldown. I hated the embarrassment of sitting down, so I studied hard and became an excellent speller. I took great pride in often being “The Last One Standing”.

Recess at Kipling Grade School was another fond memory. In the fall, the 6th, 7th, and 8th graders would play tackle football on the field behind the school. Come spring, the same field would transform into a baseball diamond. There was also a basketball backboard near the Brampton Township Hall, just about 200 feet north of the school, where we played pick-up games.

During my 6th and 7th grades, we had a strong football team. We often played against a team from Gladstone organized by Norman Stocks, who was about five years older than us. Though he didn't play, he managed his team diligently. Our team had no official manager, but we had Ed Bunno, an 8th grader who weighed about 175 pounds and was extremely physical. Joe Corbid, a classmate of mine, was an athletic marvel who would go on to play fullback for the Gladstone High School team for three years. Guy Gereau, another classmate, was about 5'10" and very physical as well. Frank Barak and Jack Tackerman, also good football players, rounded out our team. I prided myself on being fast and elusive, considering myself a good football player. We played Normie Stock's team four to six times during those two years, and we always "cleaned their clocks"!

In December 1948, while I was in the 7th grade at Kipling School, we decided to put on "The Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens. I was selected to play the part of Scrooge! The practices were hectic and nerve-wracking as this was my first attempt at acting. I feared I would forget all my lines. The entire school and all the parents, grandparents, and folks coming from Timbuktu were going to be there. In truth, I have no recollection of how the play actually went or how I performed. Regardless, I remember receiving several kudos and "good job" comments. However, that marked the end of my acting career.

One of my classmates and friends at Kipling School was Jack Tackman. Jack was very smart and went on to start his own accounting firm, eventually owning one of the largest and most successful CPA firms in the Upper Peninsula. While I believed I had the edge over Jack in football, basketball, and baseball, that was merely my own assessment—likely not his. In the 6th or 7th grade, Jack brought two pairs of boxing gloves to school and challenged me to a boxing match, with no referee. My immediate instinct was to swing wildly at Jack's head, but he kept ducking and sneaking uppercuts into my face and chin. I soon found myself outmatched and had to quit. From that experience, I learned one of life's great lessons: before you get into a fight, know your opponent's strengths and weaknesses, know your own strengths and weaknesses, and have a foolproof plan to win. Although I never articulated this lesson to myself, my future actions and reactions seemed to reflect it.

Kipling Grade School was definitely a "country grade school" during my years there, from Kindergarten through 7th grade. Reflecting on it now, I realize the teaching and learning were quite effective. When the class of 1954 graduated from Gladstone High School, at least five of the over 100 seniors were from my old Kipling class of just 15 kids. That's a testament to the solid foundation we received at Kipling.

Growing up on US 2/41, about seven miles north of Gladstone, was a unique and adventurous experience. When I was about 6 or 7 years old, my mother either made or bought cowboy suits for Roger and me, complete with hats, play guns, and holsters. Since the Soo Line Railroad track was about 500-600 feet behind our house, we used to lie in wait for trains to pass by, then jump up and pretend to shoot at the engineers and firemen. They would always play along, pretending to get hit and dramatically falling out of the engine window. It was so much fun! I can't imagine that happening today; we'd probably be arrested for terrorism.

Our seven-acre property on US 2/41 included garden areas and a lot of woods filled with pine trees, hardwoods like oaks and maples, and many softwood poplar trees. The poplar trees were the most fun. When I was 8, 9, or 10 years old, Roger and I would run through the woods, climb near the top of some of these poplars—about 4-5 inches in diameter and 30 feet high—and begin swaying back and forth. Often, the trees would sway so much that we could get within 8 to 10 feet of the ground and then let go, falling to the ground. Sometimes the trees would break, and we'd fall to the ground. Miraculously, we never got hurt. I never told my own kids to play that way; by the time I was 30 or 40, I realized how dangerous it was.

The Gladstone Golf Course was about 2 miles from our home, off Days River Road, which started about a quarter-mile north of our home and meandered west about six miles to M-35 and the little village of Brampton. The golf course had the Days River running through it and was part of the 100 to 200-foot-high sand bluff system that ran 20-30 miles from the Escanaba area northwest to Perkins, at the north tip of Little Bay De Noc. In my youth, the Gladstone Golf Course was a nine-hole course that doubled as the Gladstone Ski Course in the winter, with about six rope tows on various slopes along the sand bluffs.

Zola told me I started skiing at the Gladstone Ski Course when I was just 3 years old, using tiny skis with a heavy felt loop over the center. I remember using those, and later, better skis when I was 8, 10, and 12 years old. Roger and I would grab onto car bumpers on the snowy and icy Days River Road to get rides all the way up to the ski course. Zola and Exior would buy me a ski pin for 50 cents, which allowed me to use any of the rope tows all winter. Our son Tom now owns a home in Breckenridge, Colorado, a fitting legacy for a family with such deep ties to skiing.

My brother Roger possessed a natural talent for basketball that was evident from an early age. I can vividly recall a moment from my childhood when Roger, then around 12 years old, teamed up with Exior to craft a makeshift basketball hoop. Together, they assembled a backboard complete with a sturdy rim and netting, which they affixed to a sizable wooden post firmly planted in the earth beside our garage. Roger was adamant that the rim be set precisely 10 feet above the ground, just like the regulation height.

With our impromptu court ready for action, Roger and I engaged in countless one-on-one matchups and spent endless hours honing our shooting skills. Roger's dedication and hard work paid off handsomely, earning him a coveted spot on the Gladstone High Varsity team for two consecutive years. Meanwhile, I found my niche as a sharpshooter, boasting an impressive feat of sinking 77 free throws in a row during practice sessions.

Fast forward to 1969, when Joyce and I decided to settle at 1810 S. Woodland. Eager to continue our love affair with sports, we seized the opportunity to purchase the adjacent lot, envisioning the perfect setting for our athletic pursuits. In no time, we transformed the barren land into a sprawling concrete base, measuring 50 feet by 120 feet, destined to become our very own tennis court. Encircling this sporting haven was a formidable 10-foot-high wire fence, ensuring privacy and focus during intense matches.

True to form, we couldn't resist adding a touch of basketball flair to our new court. Positioned strategically at the western end, a basketball backboard and net protruded four feet from the fence, beckoning players to test their shooting prowess against the backdrop of friendly competition. Even as the years passed and I entered my 50s, I remained confident in my ability to outshoot our children on the court. After all, the love for the game and the thrill of sinking that perfect shot never truly fade away.

At the tender age of 12, my brother Roger landed a paper route gig with the Escanaba Daily Press, setting the stage for our family's entanglement with the world of news delivery. With around 100 loyal customers relying on him for their daily dose of headlines, Roger took to the streets dutifully, rain or shine. I occasionally pitched in, familiarizing myself with the ins and outs of his route. However, come August 1948, Roger embarked on his high school journey, leaving me with the honorable task of taking over the reins of the paper route. It was a responsibility thrust upon me, an assignment I couldn't evade nor escape. The routine was set: each day, bundles of newspapers would be deposited at Kipling School, awaiting my arrival. Mounting my trusty bicycle, equipped with a substantial basket to accommodate the hefty load of papers, I pedaled my way to school, ready to embark on my appointed rounds.

Oh, the tales I've shared with our ten children over the years, each recounting peppered with jest and exaggeration. They've come to know our paper route saga as a legendary odyssey, immortalized in family lore. "Dad, tell us about your epic route, spanning over 20 miles, uphill both ways!" they'd tease, knowing well that truth often intertwines with humor. And truth be told, traversing that route was no small feat. From the school grounds, I navigated through neighborhoods stretching a mile to the south, weaving through the maze of the Old Flooring Mill subdivision. Many a home lay tucked away, hidden behind foliage and winding paths, adding extra miles to my journey. The papers had to be delivered come rain or shine, even if it meant braving the aftermath of a vicious storm, working tirelessly until the late hours of the evening.

The Escanaba Daily Press demanded 25 cents per week from each subscriber, and it fell upon me to collect each hard-earned penny. As an independent contractor, I was entitled to a modest cut of 5 cents per subscriber, a token gesture for my tireless efforts. However, the reality of bad debts soon dawned upon me, prompting a strategic shift in my approach. Henceforth, I resolved that the Daily Press ought to shoulder the burden of unpaid dues, ensuring that I received my due compensation first before remitting the balance to them. Remarkably, they never batted an eye at my unconventional arrangement.

Upon our relocation to Gladstone, the Daily Press opted to split the route into two manageable parts. It was a decision welcomed with open arms, providing a glimpse of relief for future generations tasked with the mantle of newspaper delivery. As our children grew, so did their understanding of the infamous phrase "uphill both ways", a testament to the enduring legacy of our family's humble beginnings in the world of paper routes.

Another point about my Kipling area days: when I was about 8-13 years old out there, I began riding my bicycle often with my brother Roger. We would ride about four to five miles into Gladstone and go to the Rialto Theater and watch a double-feature: a cartoon, the news reel,

and a serial (which was about a five to eight minute feature that never ended). It was always a cowboy and Indian feature that ended with the wagon on which the hero was riding, going over a cliff, or meeting some other life threatening situation! The objective was to get you to come back the next week to see if the hero jumped off the wagon before it crashed, or if he avoided some other tragedy! I remember a number of news reels about the War in the Pacific against the Japanese and the War in Europe against the Germans. When I was 12 and 13 years old, I began hitchhiking into Gladstone to see the movies on Saturdays. One day, I was picked up by a man who was the co-owner of a grocery store and one-pump gasoline station on US 2/41 that was located about two blocks south of our Kipling School, towards Gladstone. He was a popular store owner because he always gave us huge double dipped ice cream cones for five cents! He was alone in the car, and I sat in the right front seat. After he started the car back up, the first thing he did was grab and squeeze my left thigh! I was shocked, to put it mildly. This was the first time anything like that had ever happened to me. Regardless, I had the presence of mind to remove his hand, tell him to stop the car, which he did, and I got out. I never went to the movies that day. I never told my parents about this incident. When I got to high school, I found out from other boys that this grocery store owner was a well known creep. There are a lot of things and situations in life about which I should have told or warned our ten children. This was one of those times that I should have talked about with them.

High School Years

The high school years were a time of academic triumphs, athletic feats, and enduring friendships. For me, those formative years stretched from the fall of 1950 to the spring of 1954, were a time of discovery and growth that laid the foundation for the journey ahead. My academic journey began with a flourish as I navigated the halls of Gladstone High School, earning accolades with a string of straight A's. The revelation of my IQ score, a respectable 140, placed me in esteemed company alongside luminaries like Abraham Lincoln and Bill Clinton—an unexpected but welcome recognition of my potential.

Athletics provided another avenue for self-expression and camaraderie. As a freshman, I cut my teeth on the gridiron and hardwood, honing my skills in Junior Varsity football and basketball. By my sophomore year, I had earned a coveted spot on the varsity football team as a fleet-footed half-back, showcasing my speed in electrifying dashes down the field. Fate intervened when an injury sidelined our starting right halfback, thrusting me into the spotlight as his substitute. In those fleeting moments, I seized the opportunity, scoring touchdowns and igniting dreams of future triumphs.

Off the field, the City of Gladstone Tennis Courts beckoned, offering a sanctuary for spirited matches and friendly competition. My prowess on the court yielded two consecutive victories, clinching the City of Gladstone trophy at the tender ages of 14 and 15—a testament to dedication and skill.

Yet, amidst the whirlwind of academics and athletics, it was the bonds of friendship that truly enriched my high school experience. Two steadfast companions, Duane "Pete" Peterson and James "Jim" Kliner, stood by my side through thick and thin. Duane, a towering figure of strength and intellect, commanded respect both on and off the football field. As co-captains of our formidable football team, we shared triumphs and setbacks, forging memories that would endure a lifetime. His academic prowess mirrored his athletic ability, earning him the title of Salutatorian—a testament to his unwavering dedication. Jim, with his boundless talent and tireless work ethic, captivated us with his Ham Radio Operator Shack—a sanctuary of exploration nestled within an old car garage. Together, we embarked on voyages of communication, reaching out to distant lands and cultures with the crackle of the radio waves. It was a glimpse into a world beyond our own, proof of the power of connection in an increasingly interconnected world.

As the years have passed and technology has evolved, I find myself reflecting on those simpler times with a sense of nostalgia. In an era of iPhones and the internet, the allure of Ham Radio has faded, yet the memories of those shared moments remain etched in my heart—a reminder of the enduring power of friendship and the timeless pursuit of exploration. The rebellious spirit of youth, leading us down the winding path of newfound freedoms and clandestine indulgences. In our junior and senior years, a camaraderie forged over shared adventures spilled over into the realm of libations. Beer became our elixir of choice, fueling evenings of merriment and friendly competition.

Our favorite pastime? A spirited game of Smear, a card game that seemed tailor-made for our mischievous gatherings. Often, we would coax a fellow classmate to join us in the confines of the Shack, our sanctuary of revelry nestled within Jim's garage. There, amidst the crackling of cards and raucous laughter, we would while away the hours, ensconced in the warmth of camaraderie and the heady haze of inebriation.

Jim's father, affectionately known as "Father Pissonya" Kleiner, would often grace us with his presence, adding a touch of parental wisdom to our youthful exploits. Together, we would gather around the kitchen table, the glow of the television casting shadows across our makeshift tavern. On Friday nights, as the fights blared from the screen, we would imbibe with gusto, our laughter mingling with the clinking of glass and the shuffle of cards. Yet, amidst the revelry, a cloud of tension hung in the air, a silent disapproval from Jim's mother, who watched from the sidelines, excluded from our bacchanalian revels.

Beneath the beds in the Shack, nestled amidst the detritus of adolescence, lay our secret stash—two or three cases of beer, a treasure trove of liquid courage that fueled our escapades. Father Pissonya, ever the jovial borrower, would occasionally liberate a six-pack or two, always quick to repay his debts with a hearty laugh and a promise of restitution.

Despite our forays into the realm of beer-fueled antics, sports remained a steadfast presence in our lives. In my early years of high school, tennis provided a welcome diversion, the city courts and baseball diamond beckoning just a block from our doorstep. Though I never

considered myself particularly skilled, I managed to clinch victory in my age class for two consecutive years, a testament to perseverance over perceived limitations.

Yet, amidst the highs of triumph and the camaraderie of friendship, my junior and senior years were overshadowed by a single, fateful moment—an injury that would reverberate through the corridors of time. As the starting right halfback in the fall of 1952, fate dealt me a cruel blow in the form of a bone-crushing tackle during a fateful encounter with Marquette High School. The sound of bones snapping echoed across the field, a stark reminder of the fragility of youth and the indomitable spirit that carries us through the darkest of days.

As the sun dipped low on that fateful Saturday afternoon in September, my life took an unexpected turn, plunging me into a realm of pain and uncertainty that would shape the years to come. In the aftermath of the bone-crushing tackle that fractured my arm, I found myself ensconced in a world of white hospital walls and sterile corridors, my days punctuated by the steady presence of doctors and the relentless throb of pain.

The following days blurred into a haze of agony and apprehension as I grappled with the consequences of my injury. Each morning brought a fresh wave of despair as I faced the reality of my swollen, unresponsive arm, the numbness creeping ever deeper into my fingers. Day after day, I sought solace in the familiar faces of the Gladstone doctors, their attempts to alleviate my suffering falling short against the relentless march of time. It wasn't until that fateful Friday, when the Gladstone doctors finally conceded defeat and arranged an appointment with Dr. Elzinga at Marquette Hospital, that a glimmer of hope pierced the darkness.

Stepping into Dr. Elzinga's office, I was met with a mixture of relief and apprehension as his expert gaze fell upon my ravaged arm. With a solemnity born of years of experience, he set to work, his hands moving with a precision born of practice as he addressed the damage that had already taken root. I still remember the urgency in his voice, the frustration palpable as he cursed the delay that had allowed gangrene to take hold. With a deftness born of necessity, he made an incision along the length of my arm, the pungent stench of decay mingling with the antiseptic tang of the operating room.

In the weeks that followed, I became intimately acquainted with the halls of Marquette General Hospital, my world reduced to the confines of a sterile room and the gentle ministrations of the nursing staff. Amidst the haze of pain and despair, one figure stood out—a beacon of warmth and compassion in a sea of clinical detachment. Marcia Bamford, with her gentle smile and soothing words, became a lifeline in those dark days, her presence a reminder that, despite the harsh realities of my condition, I was still a human being worthy of care and kindness.

The diagnosis, when it came, was a blow—a Volkmann's Contracture, they called it—a cruel twist of fate that robbed me of movement and sensation in my left forearm. The technicalities mattered little in the face of the stark reality—I was left with a useless limb, a constant reminder of the fragility of life and the capriciousness of fate.

In the aftermath of my ordeal, as the whispers of litigation danced on the periphery of my consciousness, I chose a different path—a path of acceptance and healing, guided by the wisdom of experience and the kindness of strangers. And though the road ahead would be fraught with challenges, I faced it with a newfound resolve, fortified by the knowledge that, even in the darkest of times, there is light to be found in the kindness of others.

In very early January 1953, Dr. Elzinga had me go to the University Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan. This ended up being a five month stay through May, 1953. I was the patient of Dr. Carl Badgley, who headed the Orthopedic Surgery Department, and Dr. Robert Bailey who was reputed to be the best orthopedic surgeon at the University Hospital at that time. I don't know what all they did to make my arm better, but I know that I had several operations. Tendon transplants was one of them. A few times, it was "touch and go"! I had to receive nine pints of blood after one operation. A Catholic priest was called (by whom I do not know) three different times to give me my "Last Rites". Somehow, I survived.

Nothing worked medically, but I had a lot of learning experiences. Some of the high and/or questionable points include:

1. Teachers would stop by most days and I took all my spring 1953 junior high school courses in my hospital bed. They gave me all A's.
2. UofM Hospital is a teaching hospital. Several times a week doctors would bring a group of medical students past my bed. The "top" doctor would have my chart and explain my situation. I did not understand much of what was said, but I always remember "Volkmann's Contracture" being emphasized.
3. A couple of my operations were in what seemed to be a little amphitheater. I remember being on an operating table and looking up at what appeared to be medical students looking down at me from around the ceiling. That was just before the sodium pentothal kicked in.
4. I was in a 16-bed men's wing at University Hospital. Just beyond the nursing station was a 16-bed women's wing. Since I was mobile, the Powers-that-Be would have me call Bingo for both wards to keep people occupied. Several times they would give a microphone and recording equipment and have me go around and interview people in both the men's and women's wards. I could bring out some humor from most folks, so it was somewhat entertaining. In hindsight, I don't think the activities that the Powers-that-Be assigned to me were just to keep me occupied, but also to keep others occupied. Many of my fellow patients were not only from all over the state of Michigan, but from the U.S. generally, and were there for very long stints, with very few visitors.
5. I got to know two lady occupational therapists who were at the University Hospital. They were great gals and had me do painting and other crafts. I had a suitcase under my bed, and several times they invited me to their apartment, which was only a few blocks from the hospital, for Sunday dinner. What a nice diversion they were!
6. In early May of 1953, the Kentucky Derby was run. Somehow I got the idea to run a pot so I got the names of all the horses that were running. There were 11 horses in the race.

Native Dancer, who was the winner in all 11 of his previous races was the odds on favorite to win. I collected 11 dollars from my fellow patients, including a back from myself. We drew names from a hat. I don't know who got Native Dancer. I drew Dark Star, the horse most likely to lose the Kentucky Derby at 25 to 1 odds. Guess who won the Kentucky Derby? You got it! Dark Star. My good luck was just beginning to blossom!

7. I believe it was Zola's family health insurance from the Gladstone School District that paid my hospital and medical bills. I asked what the University Hospital charged for one day in 1953, and I was told the cost was $14.00 per day. Since inflation is up about 900% since 1953, I suppose the University now charges about $126.00 for one day at the hospital, presently.
8. The Orthopedic Ward at University Hospital handled a lot of amputations. I distinctly remember one morning when two gentlemen in my 16-bed ward each had one of their legs amputated. There was a lot of screaming and hollering after they were brought back to our ward. One of these gentlemen had severe pain in the area WHERE HIS LEG HAD BEEN! This was explained to me as "Phantom Pains". Unknowingly, this was something I would personally experience in the future.
9. I was interested in my doctors. I would ask the nurses, nurse's aides, and therapists, about what they thought about orthopedic doctors. Dr. Robert Bailey came in with the highest marks, both as a surgeon and the one with the best people skills. Dr. Bailey took a personal interest in me. At some point before I left the hospital (near the end of May 1953), he had me attend an Amputee Clinic that he scheduled every month or two at the hospital. That was where I first met Tony Filippis. Tony was the owner of Wright and Filippis, the leading maker of custom arm and leg prosthetics in the Detroit area. At the time I believe I was naïve enough to believe there was still a possibility that some sort of operation could somehow restore the feeling and movement in my left hand and fingers. Dr. Bailey was practical and thought I should determine whether an artificial arm would be better than the useless non-feeling limb with which I had been left.

The summer after my junior year of high school marked a transformative chapter in my life—a season of growth and empathy that unfolded amidst the sprawling beauty of Bay Cliff Health Camp, nestled just outside of Big Bay, Michigan. As a camp counselor, I found myself thrust into a world teeming with possibility and purpose, tasked with the care of a cabin filled with spirited boys, each grappling with their own unique challenges and triumphs. With roughly 170 campers scattered across the grounds, each bearing the weight of their own conditions and ailments, our days were a whirlwind of activity and camaraderie. From dawn till dusk, we led our charges in sports and games, guided them on hikes through the lush wilderness, and accompanied them on daring descents to the shores of Big Bay—a shimmering jewel nestled along the southern edge of Lake Superior.

But our responsibilities extended far beyond mere recreation. As counselors, we were entrusted with the holistic well-being of our campers, ensuring they received the therapy and treatment necessary to address their individual needs. We became their confidants, their champions, their guardians in a world fraught with uncertainty and adversity. For many of the

campers, Bay Cliff was a sanctuary—a place where they could find solace and companionship amidst the trials of their conditions. And for me, having recently emerged from a harrowing journey of my own, the camp became a haven of healing and empathy. With the loss of use in my left arm still fresh in my mind, I found common ground with my young charges, offering them a listening ear and a comforting presence in their moments of doubt and despair.

Bay Cliff Health Camp was more than just a summer job—it was a crucible of compassion and understanding, a testament to the indomitable spirit of its founder, Elba Morse, whose vision had sparked a beacon of hope for countless children over the years. Under her watchful eye, we forged bonds that transcended age and background, united by a shared commitment to service and solidarity. The camp staff, a vibrant tapestry of youth and energy, embodied the spirit of dedication and determination that infused every aspect of Bay Cliff life. From the tireless nurses and therapists to the spirited counselors pursuing careers in medicine and psychology, each member of the team played a vital role in the tapestry of care and compassion that enveloped the camp. Yet amidst the rigors of our responsibilities, there were moments of respite and camaraderie. In the quiet hours of the evening, we would steal away to the Half-Way Tavern, a rustic haven nestled halfway between camp and civilization. There, amidst the laughter and camaraderie, we found solace in the simple joys of friendship and fellowship.

Looking back, the summer of 1953 stands as a testament to the power of empathy and compassion, a reminder that even in the darkest of times, there is light to be found in the bonds of human connection. Though the pay may have been meager and the days long, the lessons learned and the memories forged at Bay Cliff Health Camp were worth far more than gold.

Norman "Numbie" Bolden, a man of boundless energy and endless tales, left an indelible mark on the landscape of Bay Cliff Health Camp. As the tireless caretaker of the camp, he was a whirlwind of activity, always in motion, whether he was mowing the lawns or tinkering with this or that. But it was Numbie's penchant for storytelling that truly set him apart—a raconteur extraordinaire with a knack for spinning yarns that captivated all who crossed his path. Over lunch breaks by the beach, he regaled me with tales of his encounters at the infamous Lumberjack Tavern, where he found himself in the midst of a chilling drama that would later become the stuff of legend.

One summer evening, as the sun dipped low on the horizon, a fateful altercation unfolded within the dimly lit confines of the tavern. An Army lieutenant, Coleman Peterson, strode into the bar with a handgun in hand, his eyes ablaze with fury. In a heartbeat, the tranquil atmosphere was shattered as he unleashed a barrage of bullets, leaving death and devastation in his wake. Numbie, ever the witness to history, found himself at the epicenter of the chaos, his incredulous gaze locked with that of the enraged lieutenant. In the aftermath of the carnage, as the dust settled and the echoes of gunfire faded into the night, Numbie found himself entangled in a web of intrigue, his encounters with the lieutenant's wife Charlotte adding a surreal twist to the unfolding drama.

As the wheels of justice turned, the trial that followed gripped the community in a vice of suspense and speculation. Led by the legal prowess of John Voelker, the defense mounted a compelling case for temporary insanity, weaving a narrative of passion and tragedy that left the jury spellbound. And so, against all odds, Coleman Peterson emerged from the crucible of the courtroom, acquitted by reason of temporary insanity—a verdict that would inspire a work of fiction in the book “Anatomy of a Murder” that would captivate audiences for generations to come. In 1959, this book became a Hollywood movie with Jimmy Stewart playing the part of the defense attorney. Ben Gazzara played the part of the Army Lieutenant, Lee Remick was the officer’s wife, and George C. Scott was the part of the prosecuting attorney. I don’t know if Numbie ever saw the movie, but he would have probably agreed it was a work of fiction.

As my senior year unfolded, it seemed to lack the dramatic flair of previous chapters in my high school saga. While our football team, under the leadership of Captain Duane Peterson, soared to new heights of glory on the gridiron, I found myself relegated to the sidelines as an honorary co-captain, cheering on my teammates with unwavering pride.

In the quiet moments between games, I found solace in the familiar rhythms of everyday life, taking on odd jobs at the Sunrise Bakery to make ends meet. With Harold Goodyear as my guide, I learned the delicate art of bread wrapping, mastering the intricacies of the trade with a singular determination born of necessity.

But it was my unexpected foray into coaching that truly ignited a spark within me. Tasked with leading the 8th grade basketball team, I found myself stepping into uncharted territory, armed with little more than a passion for the game and a belief in the potential of my young charges. As we navigated our way through six to eight games, emerging victorious each time, I began to glimpse the transformative power of leadership—a realization that would shape my journey in the years to come.

Yet, amidst the triumphs on the court, there lingered a shadow of regret—a palpable reminder of the dances and social gatherings I had missed during my junior year, lost in the labyrinthine halls of University Hospital. As the Junior Prom and Senior Ball came and went, I found myself grappling with the harsh reality of my physical limitations, a solitary figure on the sidelines of teenage revelry.

It wasn't until the advent of individualistic dances like the _____ that I found a reprieve from the awkwardness of my condition, liberated from the constraints of traditional social norms. With each step, each movement, I discovered a newfound sense of freedom—a testament to the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

And yet, amidst the ebb and flow of daily life, a pivotal decision loomed on the horizon—a choice that would alter the course of my future in ways I could scarcely imagine. With a sense of quiet resolve, I embarked on the journey towards amputation, placing my trust in the skilled hands of Dr. Robert Bailey and the team at University Hospital. In the aftermath of the operation, as I grappled with the reality of my altered form, Dr. Bailey's words echoed in my mind, a beacon of hope amidst the uncertainty. With my forearm stump left intact, I found solace in the

knowledge that even in the midst of loss, there remained the promise of possibility—a glimmer of light in the darkness of the unknown.

The journey into the realm of artificial limbs began with Tony Filippis, a beacon of compassion and expertise in the field of prosthetics. As the proprietor of Wright and Filippis, the renowned makers of artificial limbs in Detroit, Tony extended a hand of friendship and support that would shape the course of my recovery. From the moment he picked me up at University Hospital, it was clear that Tony was more than just a skilled craftsman—he was a kindred spirit, a fellow traveler on the path of resilience and adaptation. Welcomed into his home with open arms, I found peace in the warmth of his family and the comfort of his presence.

Each day, we embarked on a journey to his Limb Shop on Woodward Avenue, a bustling hub of innovation and ingenuity. Surrounded by a team of craftsmen, many of them amputees themselves, Tony led the charge as we embarked on the arduous task of crafting my first artificial arm. The process was equal parts art and science, a delicate dance of form and function as Tony meticulously molded a socket to fit the contours of my stump. With precision and care, he fashioned an artificial hand that would become an extension of my own, a mechanical marvel capable of grasping, holding, and releasing with a simple gesture.

The mechanics of the artificial hand were a marvel to behold—a testimony to human ingenuity and determination. With a subtle movement of my elbow, I could command the hand to open and close, gripping objects with a strength and dexterity that belied its mechanical nature. In the days and weeks that followed, I marveled at the newfound capabilities afforded by my artificial limb. From simple tasks like holding a fork to more complex maneuvers like unbuttoning a shirt or tying a tie, the hand became an indispensable tool in my daily life, empowering me to navigate the world with newfound confidence and independence. And yet, amidst the triumph of technological achievement, it was Tony's unwavering support and guidance that proved to be the true catalyst for transformation. With his wisdom and encouragement, I embarked on a journey of self-discovery, embracing the challenges of my new reality with courage and resilience.

In Tony Filippis, I found not just a skilled craftsman, but a mentor and friend—a guiding light in the darkness, illuminating the path forward with hope and possibility. And as I embarked on the next chapter of my journey, I carried with me the lessons learned and the bonds forged in the crucible of adversity, knowing that with determination and perseverance, anything was possible.

Returning to Tony Filippis, the cornerstone of my journey in the realm of prosthetics, I recall a particular Friday night spent in his company that left an indelible mark on my memory. Tony, ever the visionary, had organized an Amputee Club, a beacon of camaraderie and support for those navigating the complexities of life with limb loss. That evening, he whisked me away to a dance—a gathering of kindred spirits where the flailing of artificial limbs dissolved barriers and ignited a spirit of unity and acceptance. In the midst of the swirling dance floor, surrounded by fellow amputees, I shed my inhibitions and embraced the joy of movement, liberated from the confines of self-consciousness. For in that moment, I realized that our shared experiences

transcended the boundaries of physicality, weaving a tapestry of resilience and perseverance that bound us together as one.

And so began a lifelong relationship with Wright and Filippis, the bastion of innovation and compassion in the world of prosthetics. Over the course of 63 years, they have been my steadfast companions on a journey marked by resilience and adaptation. From the humble beginnings of a Figure Eight harness to the cutting-edge technology of electronic mechanics, they have been at the forefront of my evolution, crafting arms that seamlessly integrate with the rhythm of my life.

But beyond the realm of prosthetics, Tony Filippis was a visionary—a pioneer whose impact extended far beyond the confines of his shop on Woodward Avenue. His tireless advocacy and philanthropy laid the foundation for a more inclusive world, where individuals with disabilities were celebrated for their abilities rather than defined by their limitations. From the inception of the Olympics for the Handicapped to his unwavering support for those in need of healthcare, Tony's legacy continues to inspire and uplift, a testament to the power of compassion and human connection.

As I reflect on the countless conversations shared with Tony over the years, I am reminded of the profound impact he has had on my life and the lives of countless others. And though he may no longer walk among us, his spirit lives on in the hearts of all who had the privilege of knowing him—a beacon of hope and possibility in a world often shrouded in darkness.

The revelation from Tony Sr. that my arm was his first creation was a moment of profound significance—an unexpected twist in the tapestry of our shared history. As I listened to his words, I couldn't help but feel a swell of emotion, realizing that the very limb that had become an integral part of my life held a special place in the annals of Wright and Filippis' legacy. It was evidence of the enduring bond forged between us—a bond that transcended mere craftsmanship and delved into the realm of shared experience and collective respect. Over the years, my relationship with Wright and Filippis evolved into a symbiotic partnership—a testimony to the power of collaboration and mutual support. As I embarked on my journey through the halls of academia at the University of Michigan, Tony and Dr. Robert Bailey continued to reach out, inviting me to participate in Amputee Clinics and share my experiences with potential prosthetic users.

I vividly recall the moments spent demonstrating the ease of donning and operating the artificial arm, offering a glimpse into the transformative power of prosthetics. And when the opportunity arose to star in a television documentary on the use of artificial arms, I embraced it wholeheartedly, knowing that my story had the potential to inspire and educate others. The ripple effect of that documentary reached far beyond the confines of the small screen, resonating with viewers in communities across the state. It was a humbling reminder of the impact that our shared experiences can have on the world around us—a testament to the power of storytelling and human connection.

As I reflect on the myriad ways in which Wright and Filippis have shaped my life, I am filled with gratitude for the unwavering support and guidance they have provided throughout the years. From the halls of University Hospital to the stages of television studios, they have been my steadfast companions on a journey marked by resilience, determination, and hope. And though Tony may no longer walk among us, his legacy lives on in the countless lives he touched—a beacon of inspiration for generations to come.

Graduation day had arrived, marking the culmination of my high school journey. As I stood before my peers in the familiar confines of our gymnasium, tasked with delivering the Valedictory speech, the weight of the moment washed over me. Yet, despite the honor bestowed upon me, the words I spoke that day have faded into the mists of memory, lost to the passage of time. With my diploma in hand and the promise of a new chapter beckoning, I embarked on a journey southward, hitchhiking my way to Ann Arbor. It was here, amidst the bustling streets and vibrant energy of the college town, that I would lay the foundation for my future endeavors.

Fortune smiled upon me as connections paved the way for employment opportunities. Thanks to the kindness of Coach Photenhauer's brother, Merrill, and the auspicious intervention of Al Wistert, a gateway opened to the realm of painting—a trade that would sustain me through the summer months. From the confines of commercial buildings to the hallowed halls of the University, I wielded my brush with diligence and determination. As a member of the summer paint crew, my task was clear: to coat closets in hues of white and color, transforming mundane spaces into showcases of cleanliness and order. Yet, my initial zeal was met with caution, as seasoned hands warned against hastening the pace. And so, with measured strokes and deliberate care, I learned the art of patience—a lesson that would serve me well in the years to come.

As a young Yooper, raised in the embrace of traditional values, I found myself taken aback by the bold expressions adorning the walls of the closets I was tasked with painting. Innocence clashed with curiosity as I beheld the vivid graffiti, each stroke a testament to the evolving attitudes of a new generation. In my upbringing, the sanctity of marriage was paramount, and the notion of sex before that sacred bond was a foreign concept. Yet, within these closets, a different narrative unfolded—a tapestry of desires, aspirations, and uninhibited expressions of youthful exuberance. Glimpses of a changing world met my gaze, challenging preconceived notions and sparking introspection. What I deemed taboo was embraced with openness and candor by others, revealing the diverse perspectives that colored the canvas of human experience. In those moments, amidst the swirl of paint and the echo of whispered confessions, I found myself confronting the complexities of adulthood, navigating the delicate balance between tradition and progress, innocence and experience.

Amidst the swirl of paint and the camaraderie of the summer crew, I found myself in the company of remarkable individuals, each with their own stories and talents. Jimmy Pace, with his lightning speed and football scholarship, embodied athleticism in its purest form. His exploits on the field were legendary, yet he remained down-to-earth, painting closets alongside the rest of us. Then there was Frank Howell, a former gridiron warrior turned dental student, whose affable nature and easygoing demeanor endeared him to all. Despite his past glories on the football

field, he approached each task with humility and grace, embodying the spirit of teamwork and dedication.

For a young Yooper like myself, earning $3.67 an hour felt like a fortune—a testament to the vast opportunities awaiting beyond the familiar confines of home. It was a stark contrast to the modest earnings of my family back in the Upper Peninsula, where every penny was hard-earned and carefully accounted for.

Reflecting on these experiences, I couldn't help but marvel at the twists and turns life had taken me on, from the rugged landscapes of Michigan's north to the bustling streets of Ann Arbor. Each encounter, each paycheck, was a reminder of the vast tapestry of human existence, woven with threads of resilience, ambition, and the enduring pursuit of a better tomorrow.

The halls of Trigon Fraternity were a melting pot of personalities and backgrounds, each adding a unique flavor to the vibrant tapestry of college life. Among the eclectic mix of residents, one figure stood out—an enigmatic young man hailing from the sands of Saudi Arabia. With his striking presence, adorned with a sleek sports car and the rumble of a Harley Davidson, he exuded an air of opulence and intrigue. It was whispered among the fraternity brethren that he was of royal lineage, a scion of Saudi nobility or perhaps an heir to an oil empire. In the midst of our shared abode, I had the privilege of crossing paths with this mysterious figure, though our encounters were fleeting and our conversations brief. In hindsight, I lamented my youthful naiveté, realizing the missed opportunity to forge a lasting connection with someone whose world held the promise of untold riches and possibilities. Had I possessed the wisdom of age that I now possess, I would have seized the chance to cultivate a friendship that transcended borders and boundaries. In the ever-evolving landscape of global commerce and diplomacy, such connections are the currency of success, opening doors to ventures and ventures that lie beyond the horizon.

Reflecting on those formative years at Trigon, I couldn't help but rue the opportunities left unexplored, the paths not taken. Yet, in that hindsight, there lies the wisdom to recognize the value of seizing the moment, of embracing the unknown, and of forging connections that transcend the boundaries of time and place.

The eclectic mix of characters at Trigon Fraternity provided a rich backdrop for my summer in Ann Arbor, each resident offering a glimpse into worlds far removed from my own. Among them, a young man from the Golden State stood out—a scholar pursuing his master's degree while also dabbling in the world of horse racing. With his roots in California and a keen interest in business, he navigated the complex world of thoroughbred racing with a seasoned eye, leveraging insider information to place strategic bets on the track. His approach, eschewing the allure of outright victory in favor of prudent wagers on placing and showing, spoke volumes about his calculated demeanor and astute judgment. In hindsight, I recognized the missed opportunity to forge a deeper connection with this enigmatic figure, whose knowledge of the racetrack could have provided not only financial gain but also invaluable insights into the world of high-stakes gambling and business acumen.

Yet, amidst the vibrant tapestry of college life, another discovery awaited me—the culinary delights of The Old German Restaurant. Nestled on Washington Street, this quaint establishment offered a respite from the mundane with its tantalizing fare of rare roast beef, German fried potatoes, and crisp salads. Savoring each bite of succulent beef and relishing the comfort of hearty German cuisine, I reveled in the simple pleasures of a Sunday meal that transcended mere sustenance. And as I indulged in this culinary delight, oblivious to the concept of tipping, I marveled at the notion that such earthly delights could be had for a mere $1.50—a modest price for a taste of culinary bliss. In the annals of memory, The Old German Restaurant remains a cherished oasis of gastronomic delight, a testament to the simple joys that punctuated my summer days in Ann Arbor—a time of discovery, camaraderie, and the pursuit of pleasures both humble and profound.

My diligent work ethic and financial savvy paved the way for a promising academic journey at the University of Michigan. The U of M Regents Alumni Scholarship is a testament to my academic prowess and dedication, providing me with the means to pursue my studies without the burden of tuition expenses.

Returning home to Gladstone to prepare for the upcoming semester, I demonstrated a practical approach to managing my affairs, ensuring that I had everything I needed to thrive in my collegiate endeavors. My commitment to self-sufficiency and financial responsibility is commendable, setting a strong foundation for my future success. Armed with my hard-earned savings and the invaluable scholarship, I embarked on the next chapter of my educational journey with confidence and determination. My willingness to seize opportunities and overcome challenges speaks volumes about my character and resilience, promising a bright future filled with academic achievement and personal growth.

Norm’s U of M Years

My first year at the University of Michigan, during the fall of 1954 and spring of 1955, was spent at South Quad, a men's dormitory located just south of the Michigan Union and near the heart of the campus. My assigned roommate, Eldon, was from the western side of the Lower Peninsula. I often described him to friends as "different".

Eldon took Spanish to fulfill his language requirement and believed that playing Spanish music while he slept would help him absorb the language through some form of osmosis. This habit annoyed me greatly because the music was loud, and headphones or earplugs were not common in 1954. When Eldon refused to stop playing the music despite my repeated requests, I complained to the dormitory floor resident chief, who eventually got Eldon to stop. Eldon and I had nothing in common. He didn't drink alcohol, while I spent most weekends at the Pretzel Bell (P-Bell), where beer was served by the pitcher.

I did well academically my freshman year, earning a 3.5 GPA out of a possible 4.0. I was a good crammer for tests. I remember taking an English course with an exceptional professor. Despite getting A's on all his tests, I ended up with a B. When I questioned him about the grade, he reminded me that he had mentioned at the beginning of the course that attendance and

participation would factor into our grades. Since I rarely attended or participated, my grade reflected that. Lesson learned!

During my freshman year, I rushed fraternities. I had only one sport coat and no suit, which didn't impress most frats. To make a good impression, you needed expensive Brooks Brothers suits and ties. However, I received an invitation to join Phi Kappa Tau, located at the corner of Tappan and Hill streets. The main reason I joined was that, out of about 70 members, a dozen were from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, just like me. They were "Yoopers," and that made me feel at home.

Jack Stephenson and Keith Keplar were from Marquette. Roy Berry hailed from Ontonagon, Tom Mazenac from Ishpeming, Paul Thibault from Trenary, and Mike Shatusky from Iron Mountain, among others. With so many fellow Yoopers in the fraternity, I fit right in.

I spent a lot of time playing Poker, Bridge, and Cribbage, always for money—even if it was just a tenth of a cent in Bridge. Since money was tight for me, I made sure to stay a couple of shades more sober than my fraternity brothers, which usually allowed me to come out ahead. This strategy worked well, even in Poker, where the house favorite was Three Card Monte.

Our version of Three Card Monte wasn't the classic street con involving a deceptive dealer. Instead, the dealer would deal three cards to each player, with five, six, or seven of us participating. After dealing, the dealer would turn the top card of the remaining deck to reveal the trump suit. Each player then knocked three times on the table, and on the third knock, those who thought they could win at least one of the three tricks in the trump suit would spread their fingers on the table. If a player didn't think they could take a trick, they would keep their hand in a fist. If four players stayed in, everyone knew that at least one person would lose, and that person would have to "match the pot" for the next hand.

Everyone had to ante up whatever amount was established to start the game, usually 25 cents, 50 cents, or a dollar. If six people were playing and the ante was a dollar, the pot would start at $6.00. For example, if the 10 of Clubs was established as trump and five players stayed in the game, but one player had the Ace and King of Clubs and took two tricks while another player took the third trick, there would be three losers. Each loser would then have to match the $6.00 pot, plus put in their $1.00 ante for the next game, making the pot $24.00 for the following hand. If you stayed in and didn’t take a trick, you would have to put in $25.00 for the next hand!

I was adept at figuring out the best cards to discard in Cribbage and understanding the bidding and play in Bridge. Choosing the best partners was crucial, as a good partner was half the battle. Playing Smear and Cribbage with relatives in my youth as a Yooper had groomed me well for these fraternity games for money. I had a knack for knowing my chances in Three Card Monte, whether I had a 100%, 80%, or 20% chance of taking a trick. I would soberly bet accordingly and often came out ahead.

In my senior year, my fraternity brothers honored me by electing me President of the fraternity. This role involved ensuring our finances were sound, hiring a good cook and kitchen staff at reasonable costs, conducting our pledging properly, and handling our alumni relations, especially on football weekends. It was a significant learning experience, and we managed to get through the year successfully. As Fraternity President, I automatically became a member of the Interfraternity Council, which included the heads of other fraternities and sororities on campus. These organizations sponsored many events, including sporting competitions, further enriching my experience.

There were several things I wish I had handled differently. I lacked the maturity or perhaps the courage to make necessary changes. One regrettable tradition was the initiation of our pledges, which involved taking them out of town and making them find their way back on their own. Additionally, the final initiation included some fairly severe paddling, which never should have happened.

A particularly shameful aspect of our fraternity was its exclusion of Jewish members, dictated by our national charter. This policy prevented Bernie Fine, a fellow student from Marquette, Michigan, who often joined us for lunch and dinner, from becoming a member. Reflecting on this, I am deeply ashamed of our insensitivity to his rights and liberties, and I extend my apologies to Bernie and his family.

To highlight the absurdity of this exclusion, when our fraternity brother Jack Stephenson got married in Marquette around 1955, many of us stayed at Joe Fine’s cottage (Bernie’s father) on Lake Superior, just east of Marquette. We even visited Joe Fine’s Bar in Marquette for a shot and a beer. Joe Fine’s Bar, a well-known and perhaps historic establishment near the Ore Docks, had no tables and was a popular spot for workers to stop for a drink after their shifts. I am truly sorry, Bernie and Joe, for our insensitivity and exclusionary practices.

Two or three times during those years, I hitchhiked to Chicago with my friend Duane Peterson. To save money, we stayed with Zip Woods in Cicero. I had gotten to know Zip and Millie Woods when they visited his aunt's home near where I lived on U.S. 2/41 north of Kipling. Zip and Millie had two boys, several years younger than me, and I had gotten their address from Zola. Duane and I would go to a bar with Zip and have a few beers. One time, Zip pulled out his wallet and showed us his driver’s license. It had a paper clip holding a $20 bill to the back of it. Zip explained that he had a "lead foot" when driving and often got pulled over. He said he always received a stern warning but had never been ticketed! Stuff happens!

Summers during my undergrad years were interesting. One summer, I worked on the paint crew for the University of Michigan, earning good pay and staying at the Phi Tau fraternity for very low cost. Another summer, I worked as a lifeguard at the City of Gladstone Beach and learned how to golf one-handed at the Gladstone Golf Course, doing quite well. One summer, I got a camp counselor job back at the Bay Cliff Health Camp. Earning money during the summer was always important to help put myself through college.

I graduated from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration in the spring of 1958. The ceremony took place at the Big House, and I vividly remember both Exior and Zola attending. It was the first and only time I recall them coming to Ann Arbor.

In the fall of 1958, I began my journey at the University of Michigan Law School. However, it wasn't a particularly enjoyable time for me. While the professors were excellent and the classes challenging, with some having over 100 students, I struggled to find my footing. The Socratic method of teaching was especially daunting—being put on the spot in front of a large class and asked to think on my feet was nerve-wracking.

Perhaps due to a lack of maturity or various other factors, by the fall of 1959, I found myself enrolled in graduate Business School at the University of Michigan. Graduate Business School proved to be an interesting experience. One of my first classes was Statistics, taught by Professor Paul McCracken. Professor McCracken, who had served on the Council of Economic Advisors for President Eisenhower and later became its chairman under President Nixon, was an exceptional instructor.

In one memorable class session, he posed a thought-provoking question: "Let me see, there are about 75 of you folks in class today. What do you think the odds are that two of you had the same birthday this year? I don’t mean that you were born in the same year also, just that your birthday this year is on the same day.”

Quickly calculating in my head, I realized the odds were approximately 5 to 1, given there are 365 days in the year and 75 people in the class. It was a simple yet fascinating illustration of statistical probability. If there were 375 days in the year, it would indeed be exactly a 1 in 5 chance!

Professor McCracken's explanation certainly illuminated the complexity of the situation. I quickly realized my oversight in considering the probability of multiple pairs of students sharing the same birthday. It was a valuable lesson in understanding statistical concepts more deeply. Despite the initial miscalculation, I remained dedicated to Professor McCracken's class, never missing a session. I learned a great deal under his guidance, and he ultimately rewarded my efforts with an "A."

My time in graduate school was fruitful, and I successfully obtained my Master’s Degree in Business Administration in the spring of 1960. It was a rewarding accomplishment after a period of intense learning and growth.

Margaret Joyce Cotter Derrick

In 1959, on a typical Sunday, I found myself at the Neuman Center in downtown Ann Arbor, a place I frequented for Sunday mass. Father Bradley, the man in charge, always delivered homilies that resonated with me, grounded and sensible. On this particular day, as I

entered, three girls caught my attention. One of them, with a friendly smile, called out to me, asking if I played Bridge. Without hesitation, I replied affirmatively, and soon I found myself seated with them, cards in hand. Little did I know, my life was about to take a significant turn.

Among those girls were Joyce Derrick and Fran Krauss; the name of the third eludes me now. Our game of Bridge quickly turned into an invitation to Tice's Tavern. With Joyce behind the wheel of her vibrant red Volkswagen convertible, we embarked on an adventure out to Jackson Road. Laughter and camaraderie filled the air as we enjoyed each other's company.

It was Joyce who captured my attention, and I was keen to pursue our connection. I obtained the phone number to the apartment she shared with six other girls near the University of Michigan campus, and soon we began dating, our fondness for each other mutual.

My journey with Joyce took an unexpected turn when she invited me to accompany her to Brooklyn, New York, to visit her mother, Mary Derrick, who resided in an apartment within the sprawling Parkchester Complex in the Bronx, home to approximately 70,000 people. Our days were filled with exploration as we navigated the bustling city streets, riding the subway downtown to visit museums, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Macy's, and more. One unforgettable evening, Joyce surprised me with standing-room-only tickets to "Camelot," starring the illustrious Richard Burton and Robert Goulat. Witnessing Burton's rendition of a song was a revelation; his performance was unparalleled. It was during these cultural excursions that I realized Joyce's intention—to infuse a bit of culture into the life of a simple Upper Peninsula native like myself.

After our eventful escapade in New York, I decided to introduce Joyce to a different side of my life by taking her up to Gladstone to meet Exior and Zola. Understandably, the experience was stressful for Joyce, navigating the unfamiliar territory and meeting my family for the first time.

During our time together, Joyce shared a surprising connection to my family. She had attended the wedding of my brother Roger to Pat Sirosky in Wyandotte back in 1958. It was an amusing anecdote how Joyce initially declined an invitation to the Sirosky wedding, citing her lack of familiarity with the couple. However, peer pressure from her friends at the Newman Center convinced her otherwise after Pat's invitation was displayed on the bulletin board.

Meeting Zola, my ever-prepared relative, proved to be an eye-opening experience for Joyce. Zola proudly showcased a large folder brimming with photographs from Roger's wedding, regaling Joyce with tales of the extravagant affair. The sheer scale of the event left Joyce in awe—over 450 guests for brunch, over 800 for dinner, and an open bar that seemed to flow endlessly throughout the day and night. Zola even recounted the amusing detail that there were attendees who hardly knew the bride or groom, much to Joyce's amusement and relief.

As Zola flipped through the pictures, Joyce couldn't help but feel a twinge of apprehension, fearing her face might inadvertently appear in one of them. Thankfully, her worries were unfounded, and her presence at the reception remained undetected. I chuckled inwardly, pondering whether Joyce ever divulged her covert attendance at Roger's wedding to Zola.

Both Exior and Zola held Joyce in high regard, considering her the best thing that ever happened to me. Their approval only strengthened my resolve to take our relationship to the next level. In the spring of 1960, I mustered the courage to ask Joyce to marry me, a moment I had been eagerly anticipating. To my delight, she agreed, albeit with one stipulation: I needed to secure a job first.

This condition propelled me into the daunting task of finding employment. Despite my academic achievements—being valedictorian of my high school class and holding both bachelor's and master's degrees in Business Administration with respectable grades—I found myself facing unexpected challenges in the job market. I couldn't help but wonder if my disability, my single arm, hindered my prospects, although I never had concrete evidence to confirm this suspicion. I've always felt a deep empathy for individuals who have experienced the loss of a limb or were born without them. In a sense, I consider us "Partners in Arms," whether we have them or not. Nevertheless, I persevered, determined to overcome any obstacles standing between me and a stable career that would fulfill Joyce's condition for our marriage.

In the early summer of 1960, I landed a job as a claims adjuster at State Farm Insurance in Port Huron, Michigan. My colleague at the time, John Meade, became my mentor, imparting invaluable knowledge about the ins and outs of claims adjustment, particularly in the realm of settling claims with attorneys. One memorable afternoon, John took me to the Brass Rail Bar, a local haunt, on a mid-afternoon Friday. There, I was introduced to a cast of characters who frequented the establishment. Among them were Sal David and Helen David, the proprietors of the Brass Rail, and Jerry Migan, a prominent local attorney who served as the legal counsel for State Farm Insurance. I also met Dick Shonck, the St. Clair County Prosecuting Attorney, and Jim Corden, who held the position of Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney at the time.

Every Friday afternoon, like clockwork, this group of individuals would gather at a corner table near the entrance of the Brass Rail from Huron Avenue. The table, which could comfortably accommodate about eight adults, often saw additional chairs squeezed in to accommodate more guests. As the evening progressed, other legal professionals would join us, including Gerry Barr, known for his expertise in wills and estates, who later ascended to the position of St. Clair County probate judge, and Wilber Hamm, a seasoned attorney specializing in criminal defense who eventually became a St. Clair County District Judge. Our gatherings would sometimes spill

over into adjacent booths, as more attorneys and court reporters joined the lively discussions. John Meade was a constant presence at these gatherings, and often, Lyle Minnick, the AAA insurance adjuster, would join us as well. Occasionally, our conviviality would extend beyond the Brass Rail as we ventured out for dinner after a few drinks and spirited conversations. These gatherings not only provided camaraderie but also served as a forum for professional networking and lively exchanges of ideas.

The Brass Rail indeed proved to be a hub of connections, providing me with the opportunity to mingle with judges, attorneys, and other professionals while enjoying the camaraderie of the local scene. Although I had few claims to settle with the attorneys I encountered there, their familiarity with me proved invaluable. They would often share insights and information about other attorneys in St. Clair or Sanilac County, making my job significantly easier.

But I digress from the main thread of my narrative. The most significant outcome of my State Farm job was that it provided me with steady employment, fulfilling Joyce's requirement. With this milestone achieved, we wasted no time in planning our wedding at the Newman Center for the University of Michigan students in Ann Arbor, set for September 10, 1960. Father Dan Bradley, a beloved figure at the Newman Center, officiated our ceremony, adding a personal touch to our special day.

Our wedding was an intimate affair, attended by about 40 close friends and family members. Among the guests were Joyce's mother, Mary Derrick, her roommates (including Fran Krauss), Exior, Zola, my brother Roger and his wife Pat, as well as some of Joyce's friends, fraternity brothers of mine, and my dear friend Duane Peterson with his fiancée June Koch. The morning ceremony, held at 10:00 AM, was followed by a delightful brunch at a local restaurant, before we embarked on our three-day honeymoon. Despite the brief duration of our getaway, it was a cherished time of celebration and reflection before returning to the demands of work at State Farm.

Joyce and I often reminisce about our honeymoon, a whirlwind adventure filled with spontaneity and serendipity. Despite not having any reservations, we were fortunate enough to find accommodations each night, sparing us from the discomfort of sleeping in the car. One standout memory from our journey was a delightful dinner at the charming [Insert Name] restaurant in Marshall, Michigan. However, much of the rest of our honeymoon remains a blur, lost to the passage of time.

Upon our return, Joyce embarked on her career as a social worker with the Bureau of Social Services for St. Clair County. Her trusty red Volkswagen convertible became her companion as she traversed the county, attending to her diverse caseload. Among her colleagues was Celeste Repp, another dedicated social worker based out of the Port Huron office. Celeste was married to James Repp, an engineer with Detroit Edison Company, working at their power plants.

In the fall of 1960, both Joyce and Celeste received joyful news—they were expecting. Our oldest son, Mark, came into the world on July 3, 1961, marking the beginning of our journey into parenthood. Coincidentally, the Repp's eldest child was born just a few days apart from Mark, forging a bond between our families that has endured for over 57 years.

Early summer of 1961 was a time of fresh beginnings for Joyce and me. We rented a three-bedroom house on Jeddo Road, just west of M-25, running north-south along Lake Huron's western shore. Our landlord, Doer Hoyt, owned an 18-acre cherry orchard, offering us endless sour cherries to savor.

I took it upon myself to plant a garden, cultivating a variety of vegetables—potatoes, tomatoes, corn, peas, beans, cucumbers, squash, and more. Despite this abundance, unlike my earlier days off US 2/41, we didn't can a single thing. It was a season of pure, fresh indulgence straight from our garden to our table.

Back in those days, without cell phones or computers, we had a “party line” phone that connected 7 or 8 homes. It was a whole new level of nosiness—Joyce and I never eavesdropped, but it seemed like everyone else did. Every time I received a call, whether for work or pleasure, I'd hear clicks as others picked up their phones to listen in. It became a game of sorts: after my caller hung up, I’d stay silent on the line. Within 5 to 10 seconds, there’d be a telltale “click,” or sometimes even a “click-click” or “click-click-click.” Apparently, some folks had nothing better to do than listen to our conversations!

One early morning, I woke up to an unusual chorus of mooing. Peering outside, I was greeted by the sight of about 25 cattle running circles around our house! They had broken through a fence on their farm and somehow decided our place was the perfect spot for their impromptu parade. With 17 acres of unfenced cherry orchards behind our house, they had plenty of space to roam, but they seemed fixated on circling our home. Humans don’t usually circle when lost, but these cows were determined. After about an hour, some folks showed up and herded the cows, driving them west along Jeddo Road. Hopefully, they were headed back to their own farm.

Early in 1962, after about a year and a half as a claims adjuster, I realized I was missing the boat and needed to return to law school. My decision was heavily influenced by my work with

attorneys; about half of them, especially those handling fewer bodily injury cases, weren't getting reasonable results for their clients. They significantly underestimated the value of their cases. I felt I could do better on the other side of the desk.

Law School

By March 1962, I had applied to both the University of Michigan Law School and the University of Detroit Law School. U of D accepted me right away. Joyce was pregnant with our second son, Stephen, so we chose U of D. We managed to find low-income housing at Herman Gardens in Detroit, which made the decision even more appealing—$28 a month for a two-bedroom unit, including heat, gas, and electricity! With $5000 saved from my job at State Farm and Joyce's job, we felt confident we'd make it through.

The University of Michigan accepted me in June of 1962, but we had already committed to U of D and Herman Gardens, so we had to turn them down. Our two years at U of D are detailed elsewhere, but here's a summary: Dean Charbormean at the law school took a liking to me. He secured me a job teaching 8th grade afternoons at Jesu grade school near Woodward Avenue and 6 Mile, granted me a full tuition scholarship for law school, and got me my first law clerk job at the Corporation Counsel Office for the City of Detroit. I worked afternoons from noon to 5 PM, five days a week, earning $1.50 an hour. I returned the favor by graduating first in my class, with money in the bank.

Our daughter Anne was born on February 3rd, 1964, at Mount Carmel Hospital in Detroit. I believe I took the bar exam in June 1964 while we were still living at Herman Gardens. Around July 1964, we moved back to Port Huron and I became an associate at the Walsh, O'Sullivan, Strommel, and Sharp Law firm in Port Huron, with a princely salary of $8,000 per annum.

Attorney Life

As a new associate at the law firm of Walsh, O'Sullivan, Stommel, and Sharp (The "Firm") in the summer of 1964, Joyce and I bought a three-bedroom home at 1314 Union Street in Port Huron for $11,900, which fit our $8,000 per year salary.

The Firm represented key clients in 1964, including Mueller Brass Company, a major player in copper tubing, brass, plumbing, valves, and refrigeration parts, controlled by the Riggin family. With plants in Fulton, Mississippi, Ontario, western Michigan, and elsewhere, Mueller merged with U.S. Smelting, Refining, and Mining in 1965. I had to draft real property deeds and assignments for over 280 parcels of real property to Mueller Brass, a subsidiary as part of the merger—an incredibly time-consuming task, especially with Mueller Brass's clerical and technical

workers unionizing at the time. The Firm assigned me to handle the National Labor Relations Board proceedings.

Shortly after the 1965 Mueller Brass merger, the decision was made to sell Mueller's Black River Golf Course to its members. I was directed to handle the sale on Mueller's behalf. The Firm continued to represent Mueller Brass, albeit in a more limited capacity, for about 25 years after the merger with U.S. Smelting.

There was also Michigan National Bank, the largest bank in the Port Huron area in 1964. It was headed by the president, Frank McCabe, the vice president (Gerald Edson), and two community stalwarts in the greater Port Huron area. I was assigned to handle all mortgage foreclosures on behalf of the bank.

Port Huron Hospital, founded in 1882, was the largest hospital in the area. Our Firm, established in 1889 by Joseph Walsh, was later joined by his brother William Walsh and then by Clifford O'Sullivan in 1920. It's been said that a member of the Firm had been on the Board of Trustees/Directors of Port Huron Hospital since the late 1800s. In 1964, W. Grafton Sharp was on the board, and I joined around 1978.

Back in 1964, hospital legal work was minimal. A noteworthy case, Parker v. Port Huron Hospital (1960), ruled that nonprofit hospitals could be held liable if patients were injured or harmed by negligent acts of hospital employees. However, it wasn't until the 1990s and 2000s that cases like Bad Baby incidents became more common. During the earlier years, most of the legal work revolved around property acquisitions, construction projects, and similar matters.

Huron Plastics was founded by my senior partner, Ken Stommel, in 1963. Ken handed this client over to me in late 1964, and under our guidance, Huron Plastics became a highly successful injection-molding plastic manufacturer. They doubled the size of their St. Clair plant, built two plants in Croswell, two more in Port Huron, and acquired an additional plant in St. Clair.

The original owners, Ernie Oskins, Art Sackison, and Jim Varty, also expanded their operations by creating Harbinger Plastics in Harbinger, Texas, with Fred Smith as Chief Executive. They established Scottburg Plastics in Scottsburg, Indiana, with Joe Wolf as Chief Executive, and Omega Plastics in Macomb County, Michigan, with Tom Kacperski as President. They also formed Huron Products Incorporated, with Roger Preede as President and CEO, producing automotive "quick connect devices" licensed from inventor Don Barthalomew. Huron Products eventually grew to about six plants, mainly in Macomb County, and achieved roughly $100 million in annual sales.

Many other key employees and officers were integral to the success of the Huron Plastics group, including Art Goodsel, Chuck Anderson, Bill Maddock, Stan Liniarski, and Kelly Goodsell. The company's strategy was to sell out to the "Mr. Bigs" at the peak of their performance, which resulted in providing me with 1,000 hours of legal work.

In 1964, F. Granger Weil was president and owner of the Port Huron Times Herald newspaper. Alongside community pillars like Frank McCabe, Fred Riggin, and John Wismer, he was a central figure in the local community. I undertook considerable legal work for the Times Herald, including overseeing the construction of their new printing plant and offices on Military Street and their eventual sale to Gannett.

However, my relationship with the Times Herald came with its share of ups and downs. During the 1970s, while I was chairman of the board of St. Clair County Community College, the Times Herald ran several editorials against me. They accused me of holding "secret meetings" of the college board to discuss and resolve personal matters. This was before the Open Meetings Act for public institutions in Michigan, and such meetings would have been permissible in "Closed Sessions" even after the act was passed. Nevertheless, it was a bitter pill to swallow, being criticized by my own client!

Claude Lawrence, a former gasoline distributor in mid-Michigan, ventured into buying three White Rose gasoline stations in the Port Huron area in the mid-1960s. My partner, Pat O'Sullivan, incorporated him and then handed Claude over to me. We uncovered some unique opportunities within the Michigan Liquor Control statutes, allowing us to establish convenience stores that sold beer and wine while also selling gasoline from pumps out front. They eventually set up over 20 By-Lo/Speedy Q outlets across Michigan's thumb area, naming the convenience stores Speedy Q Markets.

Claude's sons, Charley and Craig, started working in the 1970s and bought out their father in 1980. A standout aspect of working with Claude and his sons was their prompt payment of my legal bills, always by return mail and never questioned. When I once asked Claude about this, he said, “I find that with CPAs and attorneys, if I pay their bills immediately, I get prompt and good services from them. If I ever don't get prompt and good service from them, I immediately fire them!” My services were always prompt and, I presume, good!

In the mid-1960s, I began providing legal services for Collins Brothers Oil Company out of Mt. Vernon, Illinois. The company was owned by Dick and Floyd Collins, with their nephew, Mike Collins, overseeing their Michigan operations. I handled various legal tasks for them, including drilling, order title opinions, curative work, and some litigation cases in St. Clair County.

In 1969, we settled a case against Shell Oil Company in Gaylord, Michigan, just as the jury was being selected. Collins Brothers offered me a 1/32 override on the lease instead of my legal fees, which amounted to about $20,000. I had to decline since I had to share my fees with four other partners. A few years later, when I controlled 100% of my fees, I wouldn’t have hesitated to take the override. Three wells were drilled successfully, but each was limited to 300 barrels per day under state proration rules. Live and learn!

Sometime between 1976 and 1981, I got a call from Ray Straffon, the City Planner for Port Huron. The city of Port Huron, Fort Gratiot Township, the city of Marysville, and Port Huron Township had recently come together, passed an operating millage, and established the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission (BWATC). Ray had been appointed as the

“Commissioner” from Port Huron, and Mike Benedict as the Commissioner Representative from Fort Gratiot Township. Ray and Mike asked me to serve as the local attorney for BWATC. Despite the low hourly rate, I agreed. Having drafted opinions for the Detroit Bus System and utility departments as a law clerk for the Corporation Counsel of the City of Detroit, I felt confident that handling BWATC matters would be manageable.

To my great surprise, my very first assignment involved obtaining possession of five or six buses from Transman Incorporated, a private company providing busing services in Port Huron. Contractually, they were required to hand over their buses to BWATC, but Transman claimed BWATC owed them thousands of dollars and refused to release the buses until paid. They had hidden the buses in the old Chickory Plant near Port Huron Paper Company, barricading the doors with six-foot-high concrete slabs!

My only solution was to get a court order compelling Transman to unblock the Chickory Plant doors and deliver the buses to BWATC. I filed a lawsuit in St. Clair County Circuit Court, and luck of the draw, the case was assigned to Halford Streeter, the Senior Circuit Judge at the time. The BWATC Commissioners had sworn the complaint under oath.

When I met with Judge Streeter to seek the court order, he asked, “Norm, tell me what this is all about?”

I outlined the facts and concluded with, “...and Transman has also barricaded the buses from the handicapped!” Knowing Judge Streeter was active in supporting the handicapped, I figured this would resonate. He immediately signed the court order, forcing Transman to turn over the buses to BWATC.

Norm Meharg, the St. Clair County Sheriff and a personal acquaintance, joined me with a couple of deputies to serve the court orders on Transman personnel at the Chickory Plant. You’ve never seen concrete moved so fast! In no time, BWATC’s new drivers were removing the buses and driving them to BWATC's quarters. We never paid Transman a cent—they were truly owed nothing. Over the years, BWATC expanded from a handful of buses to over 85! It’s always a pleasure to work with clients who grow, prosper, and provide valuable public services.

In the mid to late 1960s, one of our law firm's valuable business clients wanted to file for divorce. W. Grafton Sharp, the second leading partner in our firm, asked me to handle it. I told him I had no intention of dealing with divorces! For a while, it seemed like the firm and I might part ways. In the end, cooler heads prevailed. As a result, in over 50 years of law practice, I never handled a divorce, child custody case, or any other domestic matter. I probably slept better because of it.

The moral of the story is that one should have a firm written agreement outlining which areas of the law one will and will not handle when joining a law firm.

Example 1

In 1968, I was appointed to represent a Black gentleman from Detroit who had been arrested at the Blue Water Bridge returning from Sarnia, Ontario, for carrying a concealed weapon—a .38 caliber revolver. This was just a year after the 1967 race riots in Detroit and nationwide.

My client, a retired Teamster Truck Driver with a heart condition, had no children, and neither he nor his wife had any criminal record. Living in a troubled area of Detroit, his home had been broken into three times. He purchased and registered the revolver, keeping it wrapped in a towel in his garage for protection. When he arrived home, he would take the gun out; when he went out, he would wrap it back up before entering his car.

On the day of his arrest, he had the gun in his car while washing it in the alley behind his home. His next-door neighbor had been shot and killed in the alley, so he wanted the gun nearby for protection. His brother-in-law then invited him to go fishing in Port Huron, a trip they had made many times. In his haste, he forgot the gun was still in the car. After fishing in Marysville and Port Huron without luck, they went to Point Edward to buy fish. On their return, the bridge authority searched the car and found the gun. He was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon, a four-year felony.

It was clear to me that my client had simply forgotten the gun was in the car, as his car was always searched upon returning from Canada—likely racial profiling, since I, as a white man, had never been searched despite many crossings. I quickly determined that carrying a concealed weapon is a crime of “specific intent”—one must intend to carry the weapon for offensive or defensive purposes. My client and his brother-in-law were credible, and this case should be dismissed since he had no intent to carry the gun for any purpose.

In all felony cases, there must be a preliminary examination where the prosecution presents sufficient evidence before the District Court Judge to show that a crime was committed and that there is probable cause the accused committed the crime. In the preliminary examination, after the Prosecutor presented the two customs/immigration officers who had searched the car and found the gun, I called the Teamster, his wife, and his brother-in-law to testify. They recounted the story of forgetting the gun in the car, the same explanation they had given at the time of arrest. Despite this, the District Court Judge bound the Teamster over to Circuit Court for trial. It was then that I realized some District Court Judges are “Prosecutor's Judges”, binding over cases regardless of the facts, law, or reasonable application of both.

At the Circuit Court trial, the customs officers chided me, saying, “My God, plead him guilty, the gun was right there in the car and he admits it was his gun! You are just wasting all of our time!”

I replied, “Just wait until the jury comes in!” The jury took about nine minutes—just enough time to elect a foreman and take a quick vote, likely with little to no discussion. They returned and, almost barking at the prosecutor, declared, “Not guilty!”

Justice prevailed, though in a case that should never have been charged in the first place. There are several morals to this story:

Racial profiling is wrong.

Prosecutors should know the facts and the law before charging.

District Court Judges should not bind over cases with no merit.

Indigent persons should have reasonable legal representation when accused of a felony.

Black people should not buy fish in Canada if they have to come back over the Blue Water Bridge.

Example 2

In another case, I was appointed to represent a young man, let's call him "Hombre," who was accused, along with three others, of breaking and entering (B&E) into a home in the North Hills area of Port Huron Township, just west of Port Huron. This defense was particularly complex because one of the alleged participants, a woman, admitted to the crime and testified for the prosecution.

She claimed that early one evening, they drove past the house where the B&E occurred, somehow got the owners' names, and looked up their phone number. She swore that Hombre went to a payphone, called the number, and reported that no one answered after many rings. They then returned to the house, broke in through a back door, and stole valuables, including a piggy bank with coins and currency. She convincingly described how Hombrei broke open the piggy bank in the car, retrieved the money, and threw the broken pieces out the window.

Hombre's version was that he was not involved in the B&E at all. The woman who turned state's witness had been his girlfriend, but they had broken up, and she now had a new boyfriend (who was present in court during the trial). He believed she fabricated the story as retaliation.

In criminal cases, legal ethics dictate that an attorney cannot put a client on the stand if the client has admitted guilt but plans to deny it at trial, as this would make the attorney complicit in perjury. Hombre always maintained his innocence to me, and I intended to have him testify at trial. The prosecution and the state's witness claimed the B&E happened around 8:00 p.m. on a

specific date. Hombre told me he was in Battle Creek that day and night, attending a party with several witnesses who could verify his alibi. I confirmed this with the witnesses, subpoenaed them for trial, and notified the Prosecutor of our alibi defense. A few days before the trial, the prosecution informed me they had made an error regarding the B&E date, and the actual date was the day after the originally claimed date. I requested and received a several-week postponement.

When questioning Hombre about his whereabouts on the new date, he told me he had been returning from Battle Creek that evening and was sure he had cashed a check from his employer at a bank in Almont, Michigan. I verified the exact amount of the check with his employer and contacted the bank. A Vice President of the bank confirmed that the check had been cashed at 8:20 p.m. on the specified date. At trial, the Vice President presented a 15-foot-long printout of each transaction that evening, and his testimony about the 8:20 p.m. cashing time held up under cross-examination.

Keep in mind, this trial took place in the late 1960s. Sometimes, fortuitous things happen at trial. During my direct examination of Hombre, I asked him to point to the State's witness. She was sitting in the second row with her new boyfriend, laughing at him. I'm certain the jury noticed this. It didn't take them long to return with a "not guilty" verdict, as there were too many reasonable doubts for a conviction.

Example 3

I was appointed to represent a young man from Detroit, accused of a drug-related breaking and entering. After interviewing him in the St. Clair County jail, I began preparing for the preliminary examination. Then, I received a call from fellow attorney S. Martin Tweedie. He informed me that the accused's family had retained him and asked if I would sign a Stipulation and Order to substitute him as the attorney. I promptly signed the order.

S. Martin Tweedie managed to negotiate a plea deal for a lesser charge. However, at sentencing, the young man received the maximum sentence, which he clearly did not expect. In a fit of rage, he turned and punched Tweedie in the nose, knocking him out cold. Reflecting on this case, I often think, "There but for the grace of God I go."

Example 4

I was appointed to represent a 30-something indigent man, accused of driving the getaway car for a younger accomplice who robbed a gas station and injured the attendant. The jury found him guilty. As a convicted felon, he was entitled to one appeal. Judge Streeter ordered me to obtain a trial transcript and file an appeal. Since this was before the establishment of the

Michigan Court of Appeals in 1969, the appeal had to be made directly to the Michigan Supreme Court.

When I argued the case in Lansing, Justice Eugene F. Black recused himself due to his longstanding animosity with my law firm, Walsh, O'Sullivan, Stommel, and Sharp. Senior partner Ken Stommel had often said, "When your adversary was represented by Eugene F. Black, the gloves were always off!" Ironically, I had become good friends with Black's son, Douglas.

The Michigan Supreme Court reversed the guilty verdict on procedural grounds and remanded the case for retrial in the St. Clair County Circuit Court. Once again, the jury found the defendant guilty. I don't know if there was a subsequent appeal, but if there was, I didn't handle it.

This case remains significant to me because it was the only one I ever argued before the Michigan Supreme Court. Although mandatory indigent assignments made me a more well-rounded attorney, this particular scenario led me to become the first attorney to remove my name from the indigent assignment list when Judge Streeter permitted it around 1970. He noted that there were enough young attorneys willing to take these cases, rendering the “Mandatory Order” unnecessary.

Example 5

In the mid to late 1960s, the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department had a deputy sheriff named Ed Salkowski who became an expert in interpreting lie detector results. The Prosecutor's office also trusted Ed's conclusions. I got to know Ed well and found him to be an honest, competent lie detector interpreter, unlike some prosecutors and judges who seemed eager to condemn.

When an indigent defendant was involved in a specific intent crime and, based on my interview, did not seem to have the intent to commit the crime, I would bring in Ed Salkowski. At that time, I could draft the questions that, if answered truthfully, would exonerate the accused. I presented these questions to Ed and the prosecutor in advance, ensuring they couldn't be twisted to implicate my client in a different, possibly related crime. I have about three notable examples of such instances.

Example 5a

I was appointed to represent a biker from a motorcycle gang who was found in possession of a stolen Harley Davidson motorcycle worth thousands of dollars. He was charged with possession of stolen property over $100, a felony. This biker, who I'll call "Biker", was dangerous. He told me he loved to fight and shared a story about how he went to the Pink Elephant Bar in Smith's Creek, identified the toughest guy there, dragged him outside, beat him up, then returned to the bar to drink his beer. Biker claimed the bike wasn't stolen. He said it was given to him by "One Eye," the former leader of his gang, and he had no idea it was stolen. Ed Salkowski confirmed that Biker had indeed received the bike from One Eye and didn't know it was stolen. Case dismissed.

Example 5b

I was assigned to represent a young man who was at a drug party with about a dozen other people. The St. Clair County Drug Task Force raided the party. When they entered, he was in a room in the house and, upon arrest and handcuffing, he had known drugs on him. He was charged with possession of the drug closest to him on the floor—let's say it was cocaine. He claimed he never owned, touched, or used cocaine at the party. Enter Ed Salkowski. Ed determined that the young man truthfully never owned, touched, or used cocaine at the party. Case dismissed.

Example 5c

I was appointed to represent a middle-aged gentleman (from here on out called “Deviant”) who was accused of attempting to sexually assault a teenager in a home in the southern part of the county. Deviant's story to me was that he had gone into this bar and met this woman that he had met several times before, and had ended up taking her to her home and had sexual relations with her. On this particular evening, he had a lot to drink but still managed to bring this lady home. However, he had fallen asleep on the couch. He later woke up and went into the bedroom and climbed into bed. Deviant was trying to commence sexual relations with the woman, when she screamed. He realized it was not the woman he thought, so he went back to the couch and went back to sleep. The woman later came home, with another man. Her daughter told her what Deviant tried to do. She called the police and they came and arrested him for sexual assault. The lie detector test confirmed that Deviant thought he was getting into bed with the mother! Case dismissed.

From my experiences with court-appointed indigent representations, I drew several key conclusions. First, indigents accused of felonies genuinely need legal representation. Appointed counsel must dedicate the same time and effort to these cases as they would for paying clients. Additionally, the charges brought by prosecutors can sometimes be incorrect and often excessive. Lastly, courts should give more weight to lie detector tests.

Oil and Gas

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, I represented several pipeline companies needing to condemn numerous easements in St. Clair County to lay oil and gas pipelines under landowners' parcels, mostly farmers. This involved extensive legal work, including determining the best route for the pipelines, obtaining a Certificate of Public Necessity and Convenience from the Michigan Public Service Commission, and establishing fair market value for the condemned easements through competent experts. Title work (usually abstracts of title) had to be reviewed and title opinions rendered to establish ownership of each taking. Owners had to be offered fair market value for each taking, and only after rejection could a lawsuit be commenced to obtain the condemned property rights by court order. I represented pipeline companies in dozens of condemnation actions during the 60s and 70s.

I recall attending a seminar for attorneys in Oklahoma City in the 1960s on oil and gas law. One presenter stated that landmen representing oil and gas companies would approach landowners in areas with potential discovery wells and present an oil and gas lease form, claiming it was the standard Producers 88 Oil and Gas Lease form used by drilling companies in the area. However, there were over 400 different variations of the so-called Producers 88 Oil and Gas Lease forms being used in Oklahoma!

Despite my initial work with pipeline companies, my instincts, feelings, and sympathies lay more with landowners than with oil companies. So, in the 1970s, I began representing landowners. One of my first cases involved the condemnation of landowners' properties to put the Capac Gas Field into underground gas storage. Representing landowners against oil and gas companies posed a challenge because it required competent oil and gas engineers, reservoir engineers, petroleum engineers, geologists, or similar experts to analyze reservoirs, oil wells, future production, and more. The problem was that these experts were already working for the oil and gas companies and did not want to jeopardize their future economic well-being by testifying against them.

In recruiting my first oil and gas experts, I contacted over 20 petroleum engineers and geologists in Lansing, Mt. Pleasant, and Traverse City, and contracted with several of them. Eventually, I secured commitments from two experts in Ontario. One was the retired former head of the Ontario Oil and Gas Commission, and the other was a petroleum engineer from London, Ontario. Both had the credentials to testify as experts in oil and gas cases and provided invaluable advice and testimony in numerous cases for me.

Along the way, my expert from London, Ontario, asked me to invest in a well he was drilling in Lambton County, south of Sarnia. He assured me it was a "sure thing" as far as oil and gas parlance goes. Of course, it turned out to be a "dry hole".

By the early 1980s, I had four of my circuit court oil and gas cases appealed to the Michigan Court of Appeals, including my Wronski case in 108 Michigan Appeals 178 (1979). The Michigan Supreme Court denied leave to appeal, and I won all these cases.

Several times, the Michigan State Extension folks asked me to attend meetings of farmers and discuss safeguards landowners should consider when evaluating oil and gas leases. In 1985, I decided to sponsor my own “Landowner's Oil and Gas Seminars”. Within a few months, I held seminars in Roscommon, Clare, Saginaw, and St. Clair counties. These three-hour seminars often extended to four hours. Topics included special landowner lease provisions, improving landowner compensation, avoiding topsoil and tile damage, handling unitization proposals, pressure maintenance, secondary recovery situations, seismic evaluation requests, and more.

As a result, I received more calls and requests to handle landowner oil and gas leasing situations than I could manage. The issue was that many of these requests came from landowners with small parcels—1 acre, 3 acres, 7 acres, or 20—where it was economically prohibitive to have a lawyer negotiate a lease. Consequently, I stopped conducting the seminars.

The advice I pass on to our grandchildren and great-grandchildren from these experiences includes:

1. In training and work, no matter the field—be it doctor, lawyer, dentist, salesman, architect, engineer, chemist, or chief—specialize!
2. In attracting customers to your specialty, leverage the internet.
3. Choose your clientele carefully so you can provide valuable services to them while ensuring you receive reasonable compensation.

This last piece of advice echoes what I was told on my first day of law practice by my senior partner, Ken Stommel: “Norm, never take on any legal matters unless you know you can do a reasonable job for your client and also receive fair compensation for yourself.”

This principle, undoubtedly, applies to other professions as well. For example, when my wife Joyce had some tooth problems, one of her friends recommended Dr. Carl Misch for tooth implants. We managed to get an appointment, and Joyce received her first implant. Dr. Misch had established a new specialty in dentistry, instructing dental implant surgery in over 50 countries worldwide. We also secured an appointment with him for our daughter-in-law Aliki, who was living in Kazakhstan. Remarkably, her Kazakhstani dentist had already heard of Dr. Misch. Dr. Misch identified a need and created a new branch of dentistry.

Reflecting on oil and gas matters, by the early 1990s, I had been involved in several gas storage situations in Michigan, including the Capac Gas storage field, the Collin Gas storage field, the Washington 10 storage field, the Belle River Mills gas storage field, and peripheral

situations involving the West Columbus and Columbus Gas storage fields. I concluded that landowners were at a significant disadvantage in securing fair compensation for their gas storage rights, gas in place, and related rights when a depleted gas or oil and gas reservoir was turned into storage. Gas storage companies had been paying $75.00 per surface acre for storage rights in St. Clair and Macomb counties, where over 20 storage fields had already been established.

I also toured a gas storage field near Dallas, Texas, where an oil field with a substantial gas cap had been converted to storage. Surprisingly, the operator injected interstate pipeline gas with a BTU content of about 1000 BTU per cubic foot. When the stored gas was withdrawn from the field, its BTU content had increased to about 1075 BTU per cubic foot. The storage company paid for the gas and sold it on a BTU basis. This enrichment continued at about 5% after 15 years of storage. The significant learning point for me was that the storage company continued to pay 1/8 or the agreed royalty to the landowner on the BTU enrichment of the gas.

Ant Farms

I first met Father Simeon Iber in the late 1990s or early 2000s after he became an assistant pastor to Father Rene DeMarias at the Newman Center in Port Huron. However, I didn't get to know him well until he became the pastor for St. Mary's Church and school in Port Huron during the summer of 2006. I was chairman of St. Mary's Finance Committee for the three years that Father Simeon served as pastor, from July 2006 through June 2009, when he returned to teach at his seminary in Makurdi, Nigeria.

In July 2006, we hosted a party for St. Mary's parishioners at our home to welcome Father Simeon. Over 200 people from St. Mary’s and the old Newman Center came to greet him, testifying to the great reputation he had already built in the Port Huron area. As pastor at St. Mary's, Father Simeon took a special interest in the school, visiting classrooms several times a week and getting to know every student by name.

In 2007, the Archdiocese of Detroit requested that St. Mary's construct an additional four classrooms to bring back the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, which had been moved to the old St. Stephen’s School about 15 years prior. Within a few short months, $565,000 was raised to build those classrooms—a feat that many pastors would struggle to accomplish, but not Father Simeon!

We formed the Reverend Simeon Community Development Fund (the “Simeon Fund”), a non-profit corporation in Michigan, and obtained a Section 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS, making contributions to the fund tax-deductible for local donors. The sole purpose of the Simeon Fund is to support educational, healthcare, and sanitation potable water projects for villages in Benue State, Nigeria. These good works are carried out through the Center for Development and

Social Justice (the “Centre”), a non-profit company that Father Simeon established in Nigeria. Father Simeon also recruited over 30 volunteers to contribute to the projects the Centre has undertaken in Benue State.

Father Simeon is an outgoing priest. He visits the sick, those in hospitals, and nursing homes. He's particularly attentive to children, especially school kids. He has an exceptional memory for names and faces, and everyone who meets him comes away with a deep sense of love and appreciation for him. What is it about him that draws people in? When you're near him, he makes everything about you and your family—never about himself.

I've known people who have arranged for Father Simeon to marry their children in distant places. Some have even postponed funerals for weeks so he could conduct the service and deliver the eulogy. At every funeral I've attended where he officiated, he adds personal touches that make the deceased seem like a true saint.

Joyce and I have gone on three pilgrimages with Father Simeon and Father Couganhour, a former pastor of St. Stephen’s Church. The first was to Greece, tracing the footsteps of St. Paul. The second was to Ireland to visit churches and shrines. The third was to the Amalfi Coast and the Vatican in Italy. It was refreshing to have daily Mass at shrines and historic places, including an impromptu Mass atop a small mountain in Greece. What impressed me most was the care and attention Father Simeon gave to every attendee, particularly non-Catholics. Whenever a non-Catholic asked if they could take Communion, he would readily grant permission after confirming their Christian beliefs, despite the Vatican's then-current guidelines.

On every trip, Father Simeon becomes part of a social group that naturally forms after dinner for drinks and laughs. He's also a key participant in donning the wigs and wild hats I usually bring to such parties. Our last pilgrimage to Greece in October 2017 featured Mary Fran Liberty, our old Newman Center guitar player and singer, and Lois, our new piano player and singer at St. Stephens. Their after-dinner performances, with Father Simeon present, kept everyone laughing well into the night.

In the summer of 2009, Father Simeon returned to his seminary in Makurdi, Nigeria, for a six-year stint on the faculty. Joyce and I have since made a dozen trips to Europe and Asia, but our best trip was visiting Father Simeon in Makurdi, Nigeria, in March 2020. Getting passports was a challenge, but getting over $1200 in Typhoid, Malaria, and other shots from the St. Clair County Health Department was even more daunting.

Father Simeon met us at the airport in Abuja, Nigeria, and the adventure began! We spent two nights in Abuja, taking in the highlights of the capital. We also visited a famous Catholic priest who had written a book condemning political corruption and the atrocities committed by Boko Haram terrorists in northwestern Nigeria. It takes a special kind of person to take on the government in Nigeria.

While in Makurdi, we stayed in Father Simeon's home—a nice place he had built while serving as pastor at St. Mary's. However, it's hard to sleep when it gets to 100 degrees during the day with no air conditioning, and the electricity is quite spotty. Joyce and I have clearly gotten too comfortable with our modern conveniences in the USA!

One day, we were hosted by St. Joseph's Secondary School in Makurdi and its principal, Sister Lucy Vlashima. We were entertained by a group of singers, dancers, and drummers, and even joined in the dancing. During lunch, one young man performed a fantastic Michael Jackson interpretation. We toured the school facilities and were shocked to see only two archaic computers and no microscopes or chemistry equipment. Moved by this, we donated several thousand dollars through Father Simeon to acquire computers and chemistry equipment for the school. We later received a thank you from Sister Lucy with pictures of the new computers and microscopes they had acquired.

The Centre that Father Simeon established had previously given out about 20 mosquito nets for pregnant mothers and young infants. However, about 20 additional mothers showed up who had not previously received nets. Joyce distributed an additional batch of mosquito nets while we were there. Despite this, many more mothers and infants arrived, so Father Simeon agreed to further distributions. People in need somehow always find a way to be accessible!

The volunteers at Father Simeon's Centre had been trained in teaching good sanitation and hygiene to local villagers. We attended one day's training while in Makurdi. In late March 2010, we went with Father Simeon to the village of Agbatala, about 90 miles north of Makurdi, which he had “adopted”. I expected to meet the tribal chief and a few leaders, but over 1,000 members greeted us! About 20 of Father Simeon's Centre volunteers came in a separate bus and interpreted for Joyce and me as Father Simeon instructed the tribal leaders on what they needed to do before the Centre drilled two boreholes (water wells).

The tribal chief agreed that his community would:

1. Ensure each hut had a sanitation pit for defecation and urine purposes. (The interpretation was necessary as Father Simeon and the Agbatala Elders spoke in the TIV language, which is spoken by about 3 million people in Nigeria).
2. Contribute 5% of the cost of the boreholes for hand pumping water, which was about $300 since the initial cost of a borehole was $6,000 as potable water was about 225 feet below the surface in this area.
3. Establish committees for the control, maintenance, and equitable distribution of water.

The Centre's project manager, Timothy, later confirmed that the Agbatala Community had already dug most of the feces pits and collected the 5% of the costs. We were so impressed with the Centre's commitment to sanitation, hygiene, and healthcare needs that upon our return in

2010, we wrote a $6,000 check to the Reverend Simeon Community Development Fund, and the first water well for the Agbatala Community was drilled.

Our commitment to drilling water wells has grown since 2010. Personally, we have now financed the drilling of 16 ½ wells in at least seven communities adopted by the Centre: Agbatala, Kohou, Ahundu, Agidi, Vandeikya, Mbaeh, Mboyom, and Akpachai. Accomplishing these works gives us great satisfaction!