

Chapter 15. My Attempt at Explaining My Philosophy

WHY DO I NEED TO EXPLAIN WHAT MAKES ME TICK?

Because of my reticence to put myself forward socially or even with my family, a lot of what I believe is locked up in my brain and, unless someone has charted my every move, may not be evident even to those who are close. Most of my belief systems have been built over the last 40 years. It was in my late 30's or early 40's, that I read an article or book (probably an article since I have never possessed a copy to refer to) that posited that bodily functions were to some significant extent governable. It suggested that since the human brain in conjunction with various glands and organs control all those physical roles that keep us operating, we could positively accept our own control of certain activities such as the relief of pain. Holistically, we could determine what decisions we should make to affect our mental and physical wellbeing. One of the decisions that I made after reading that article was to avoid use of any medicine that simply masked undesirable symptoms in order to avoid identifying and correcting the cause. For the last forty or more years, I have not taken any over-the-counter pain medicine, cough, or cold remedy. I may have taken pain medicine prescribed by a doctor or dentist, but I don't recall having to do so; in fact, I do know that I have several times just ignored getting such a prescription. I have an extremely high threshold for pain and discomfort, and rarely have had the flu or colds. I feel this may have developed from allowing my body to control any aches and pains that I feel, and it may have improved my immune system.

I have a few absolutes to which I have *tried* to live that guide most of my actions and reactions.

1. It is important to me that I treat everyone with respect and integrity. I decided early in my business career that no one was ever going to force me to lower myself to their level of interpersonal activity because of their actions towards me. I, also, have found that those who act in anti-social ways are most likely seeking attention, so the less attention you pay to them the less effect they will have on your awareness. I believe the benefits of my attitude have been borne out in many ways, but mostly because I believe that I have never made an enemy or even caused animosity toward me due to any negative relational dealings on my part. I extend this particularly to service personnel that I encounter who may not always perform at the highest or even adequate level. I have never berated a person for lack of satisfactory service or assistance. I directly supervised workers at several operation levels for about 25 years, so I know that people do not always function at their best. I had to qualify their short-comings, or I would not have had time to do anything else but criticize and rebuke. I think that I have become a good judge of nit-picking. My answer was to spend as much time training as possible and leave disciplinary action to deal with important failings. This probably dates to my experience of being the Supervisor of Training for the Pittsburgh District of Graybar Electric where most of my time was spent in group and individual on-the-job training.
2. I feel much better and happier when those around me are enjoying themselves in a pleasant atmosphere. I have always tried to do whatever I could to make things go smoothly both personally and professionally. Quite often, this means anticipating difficulties that might happen between parties that have differing points of view or agendas. Sometimes, it means being a peacemaker. Occasionally, it is necessary to provide rationale for avoidance or delay. I must admit that I have not always been brutally honest if I thought that informing someone about what might be a contentious issue would simply add fuel to the fire. I have always cautioned against confrontation but would insert myself if I thought that the situation was serious enough and that I might possibly have a positive effect. I do admit that I have at times, over-thought a circumstance that seemed to me to be a disaster waiting to happen and thanked God that I did nothing.
3. I am much happier giving than receiving. It is important to me to know that other people value my being in their life, but it is not the end of the world if they do not focus their attention on me. I do not have the expectation that all my gifts will be returned in kind or even be acknowledged. I know what I have done and am happy that I was able to do whatever I could. St. Francis of Assisi said, "For it is in giving that we receive."

However, I am not as altruistic as Jesus would commend; for he said in Matthew 6:25:

“Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?”

4. Over the years, I have practiced moderation in most things. First, in my dealings with others, I try to take the path of least resistance, if that is at all practical. Secondly, in taking care of myself, I believe that most food, beverages, and activities are good for you if taken in balance. For quite some time, I have limited myself to one cup of coffee a day; one or two caffeinated, carbonated beverages a week; one cup of hot tea or one glass of iced tea per day; and two balanced meals and 1 or 2 snacks a day. I, also, try to avoid taking chances where the gain is minimal in relation to the risk.
5. Financially, my outlook would be described as significantly more than just moderate or conservative. Having been born and brought up for the first 30 years of my life in situations where every nickel was important, I can sometimes be very frugal. For the most part, I don't believe in spending money on things that you can't afford and/or don't **really** need. At times, I have probably carried this to extremes, particularly in our early married life - for example, not owning a car until almost 30 and not owning a home until almost 40. I can claim, however, that I have never had any truly serious financial difficulties.
6. I believe that my ability to listen (probably because I was not always searching for something to say), was helpful in many ways, but most fortunately because it allowed me to absorb and understand what was being said. While others were searching their mental databases for something relevant to say, I could analyze and put what I was hearing into perspective. Stephen R. Covey in “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change” said “Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.” Even in business, I employed one strategy that articulates this reserve. If I felt that a specific course of action was correct but was widely misunderstood or not popular, I would generally not stress my support for that course but would work for it behind the scenes and wait for a more opportune time to champion it. The problem with this strategy is that it requires that I know without any doubt that the actions I am suppressing would not prevail at the present time. I think that this means that I must listen more and evaluate better. In business meetings and informal business and social discussions, I learned to express what I think and know. If only I had tried to be more open in other settings.
7. I believe that I have practiced – for the most part – the “Power of Positive Thinking”. This approach elucidated in the books by Dr. Norman Vincent Peale appealed to me in its simplest themes. Several of its key take-aways are essential to my own way of life – among these are:
 - a. Believing in oneself is crucial to the mindset needed for success and happiness. People can create their own success and happiness, which begins in their mind with positive thoughts.
 - b. Finding inner peace, which can be done through fervent prayer and practicing faith (whatever that means to each person. (my qualification)) often results when people create more positive mindsets for themselves.
 - c. Religion is often thought of as a stuffy, socio-cultural tradition with a heavy history plagued with wars and tensions. However, religion can be thought of in a more practical sense, even as a science.
 - d. Slowing the pace of one's life will enable positive thoughts to enter the mind. Negative thinking can lead to mental or emotional illnesses, which can manifest as physical symptoms that can negatively impact physical health and performance.
 - e. Positive thinking means adopting an attitude that doesn't believe in defeat as a possibility, and that perceives obstacles not as roadblocks but as challenges to be overcome.

8. I probably have a higher opinion of my own abilities and brainpower than is warranted (my score on the high school IQ test showed me to be 30% brighter than average), but I never felt that any task that I approached was beyond my capabilities. There are some challenges that I have where I have, over time, concluded that the chances are not high that I could reach the standards I would set for myself. This is true of my ability to write fictional stories. I don't have the imagination to write the fiction that I would be interested in reading. I also have decided that I reached in my career a point beyond which I probably lacked the leadership skills that higher office would have required. However, I have always tried to be positive in my approach with other people. Whatever success I may have had was probably advanced by my ability to get along. I didn't need religion to spur me to do the "right thing"; but it was always helpful to be among people who were mostly striving to a positive goal. While I enjoyed the occasional perks that my job presented to me, I never went out of my way to make that my "way of life". I have seen many examples of people who had negative outlooks on life and saw very few – what I would call - positive outcomes for them.
9. I have no trouble telling "fibs" when I feel the situation calls for discretion in passing on information that I know to someone who may either take the "news" the wrong way or make too much of the meaning of what I have passed along. Sometimes, that means keeping quiet altogether; sometimes, pretending ignorance of the topic; sometimes, it means telling an untruth. In any case, I can only justify this to myself if the matter is of minor consequence and it does not involve finance or health. It is also much easier when I can truthfully say to myself (or occasionally out loud), that this is "none of your business."
10. Everybody makes mistakes. Henry Ford's first prototype automobile – the "Quadricycle"- was too large to fit through his workshop's door; so, he had to take an axe to the door jamb to get it out. I acknowledge making many mistakes and unfortunately still make too many for my own peace of mind. Knowing how fallible I am allows me to be generous to those who make unintentional mistakes of commission or omission. I must have serious proof of malign intention to criticize what I feel are grave errors of interpersonal activity. I do not believe in "nit-picking", so I try to overlook small transgressions that don't rise to the level of a "hill of beans".
11. I have recently realized that in a marriage partnership one of your most important functions is to keep your partner happy. This often means that you may have to accede to requests or hints or demands for actions or activities that you might not be in concert with. You really need to gauge your partner's level of concern, desire, and interest at the time.
During our marriage, I usually made all the significant decisions. We always talked things through, but I realize that I did most of the talking and consequently the deciding. I know that I did follow her lead on a lot of things, but they were mostly easy to accept. JoAnn ran the house and I tried to do things her way. She was a consummate housekeeper and was better at it than anyone I have ever known. When this required changes in my modus operandi, I made them.
In the last years of her life, she was not happy with losing her ability to do all the things that were a part of her life for many years. Unfortunately, I spent so much of my efforts on trying to find a way to make her better and I should have done more to make her happy.

Chapter 16. *Retirement Years in Winter Garden*

Working as a consultant for Graybar was enjoyable both physically and mentally as well as rewarding both monetarily and professionally, but it did tie us down to St. Louis. Having found the home of our dreams in Florida, I allowed myself to leave the job that I had enjoyed (mostly) in the place we had grown to love for the last 20 years. I felt that, probably, I would want to find some part-time job that would allow a significant amount of flexibility (see the resume' in chapter 11 that I prepared). That never happened; full retirement was too much fun. When they asked me what I was going to do in retirement, I said "My wife and I intend to travel more and play more golf". I think the rest of this account of our life in retirement will show that we did that and much more.

In December 2004, at the age of 69, I resigned from my consulting position with Graybar. In January 2005, we cancelled our trip to Hawaii and Australia due to the purchase of our new home in Florida and necessity to sell our house in St. Louis. We sold the house in St Louis for \$258,000 (\$8000 over asking price) before the first open house and purchased JoAnn's dream house in Winter Garden for \$434,701. It was more than we needed but it was what we had been looking for several years in St. Louis and Florida.

We sold the house much quicker than we expected and had to make plans to accommodate the new schedule. Since we had leased our new home (which was one of the 2 model homes in the development) to the builder until June and we had to move out of our Missouri house on March first, we decided to spend the intervening time on the road. We went from Creve Coeur to Niles, Ohio and on to Weston, WV and Berkeley Springs, WV, all to visit relatives. We then spent a week at Fairfield Glade, TN, where we had previously gone about a half dozen times for golfing. We went from there to spend a week at Tidewater Golf Club and Plantation in Myrtle Beach, SC. After that, we spent 5 weeks at three different resorts in Orlando sandwiched around a week we spent with Carol and her family. We moved into our new home in May. We did have some difficulty with the move as our furniture, etc. from St. Louis was split into two shipments which arrived more than a week apart. I couldn't complain because I had received a really good deal on the move.



12313 Westfield Lakes Circle, Winter Garden, FL And our Ford F150



We finally had an in-ground pool



In July, our kids planned a reunion to celebrate both our 50th wedding anniversary and our 70th birthdays. We had already given ourselves a beautiful Grandfather's clock to celebrate this. All our kids and grandkids (except David) were there (4 more were born after this).

In August 2005, hurricane Katrina hit the gulf coast with devastating effect, particularly near New Orleans. Charles drove to the area afterward to help relatives of Christina. Hurricane Katrina was probably the most destructive in U.S. history although it was not the strongest. The main reason for the enormous destruction was the failure of the levee system around New Orleans. 2005 was also a foreboding year for Florida because of the confirmation that "citrus greening" had reached Florida. Citrus greening is a condition in citrus trees caused by an Asian insect. It has reduced the Florida citrus crop from 170 million boxes in 2007-08 to a mere 40.7 million in 2021-22.

In October, we drove to Lehigh Acres, FL to visit Antoinette and play golf. Our kids had given us tickets to the Tour Championship golf tournament at East Lake Country Club in Atlanta, GA for our 50th anniversary. We drove to Atlanta in November for the tournament and stayed at Fairfield Plantation at Villa Rica.

In November, we sold our 2000 Ford F150 pick-up. We decided that we no longer needed 2 vehicles. I went to the bank immediately after getting the bank draft for the purchase. They wouldn't cash it because it was made out to and signed by our buyer. Fortunately, I was able to find them still at the registration office that was close by, relieving me of the headache of contacting them as they lived some distance away. JoAnn's Aunt Mary died December 19. We flew to Cleveland and drove to McKinley Heights for the funeral. While there, we visited with Rusty and David Brill, my brother Bud's sons who lived in Poland, OH and Struthers, OH.

We started a new health regimen that included walking two or three times a week with a group at West Oaks Mall in Ocoee. We both lost about 25 pounds and felt a lot better. Carol walked with us most times. Later we joined Silver Sneakers at the YMCA a few blocks from our house. We went to that for all the years that we lived in Winter Garden. We met a lot of wonderful people through Silver Sneakers. I am sure that the attention to our physical health helped us a great deal.

We flew to Kauai in January 2006 for 8 weeks where we golfed 38 rounds of at least 18 holes. In May, we spent a week at a Lehigh Acres golf resort while we visited my sister Antoinette in Fort Myers. In July, we flew to Burlington VT and stayed at Mountainside Resort in Stowe, VT while visiting with Jon Jr.'s family who were all at an R.A.D. conference (Rape Assault Defense) in Burlington, VT. Jon is both a trainer and an instructor of trainers for R.A.D. In May, we drove to Lehigh Acres, FL to visit Antoinette and play some golf. In December, we drove to Tampa to attend the annual Graybar Florida retiree's luncheon. We stayed at Celebrity resorts of Bellaire Beach overnight.

Kaitlin Danielle Brill was born to Ken and Karen on March 13, and we flew to St. Louis to see her and Hannah.



Kaitlin Danielle Brill and Grandad

On January 9, 2007, Apple CEO Steve Jobs revealed the iPhone to the world at a price of \$500 to \$600. On January 10, 2007, the Federal Minimum Wage was raised to \$7.25 by a vote in Congress on which more than half of the GOP congressmen voted "No". That figure went into effect in 2009 and has not increased since. On January 26, Nadya Suleman gave birth to 8 babies from in vitro fertilization (IVF). The babies were born after 31 weeks by caesarean section and were from 1 pound 15 ounces to 3 pounds 4 ounces, six boys and 2 girls.

In February we flew to Las Vegas for our first trip to the gathering of the 10th annual Graybar Electric "Omega" (Older More Energetic Graybar Alumni) retiree's reunion. I was awarded the prize for the retiree, in attendance, with the longest service in the company (46-1/4 years). We got to see quite a few friends who I had worked with or worked for over the years. The reunion is held every year at the Orleans Hotel and Casino in early February. One of the retirees had worked for Graybar in Las Vegas and had connections with the hotel that got us special deals such as reduced-price accommodations and a meeting room where we could furnish our own refreshments.

In May, I bought my first Magellan GPS for \$300, and we drove to Lehigh Acres, FL to visit Antoinette and play some golf. In June, we flew to Las Vegas. We drove from there to Green River Utah for a few days. From there we went on to visit Arches National Park, and Canyonlands National Park, and then on to Indian Peaks at Winter Park, CO for a week. From there we went to the Royal Gorge on the Arkansas River in Colorado, and Mesa Verde National Park. We drove on to our timeshare at Wyndham Flagstaff, AZ for a week, where we visited the Grand Canyon for the 6th time as well as Sedona and the other sights near Flagstaff. During this time, we purchased additional timeshare allotments in Las Vegas (trading in our timeshare in Branson) to make all our properties in Hawaii fully bankable in the new Wyndham Points system. In September we visited Cypress Gardens with Carol and family. On June 29, the first version of the iPhone went on sale leading to sales of over 2 billion over the years.

On September 29, 2007, the Dow-Jones Average on the stock market fell 778 points, the largest point-drop in history. By the end of 2008, I had lost over 21% of my investment. I probably had more optimism than most, but the "Great Recession" had begun and lasted 18 months by which time the stock market had dropped 50% and the unemployment rate went from 5% to 10%. Fortunately, the new administration, in 2008, took steps to avoid disaster in the banking, insurance and auto industries, and my investments went up 29% over the next 5 years, approaching their previous highest point which had been reached in October 2007. More to the point, the business of Graybar Electric expanded and the value of my company stock went up 92% in that period.

In late October 2007, we drove to Richmond as JoAnn's brother Joe Exline was in the hospital recovering from complications from a heart valve replacement operation. We drove from there to Jane Lew, WV to see Emaleen, to Berkeley Springs, and to West Chester to see Jon and Shannon.

Spencer Reid Brill was born on December 26 in Gainesville, FL.



Spencer Brill with Grandma

In February 2008, we flew to Kauai for 8 weeks with a side trip to Hilo on the Big Island. We played 40 rounds of golf. About 10 days before leaving Kauai, JoAnn fell and hurt her back at the golf course and was in the emergency room twice. She was so strongly medicated that I had to bring her home in a wheelchair. Within a week I had to take her to the ER because she was not lucid. She was suffering from a reaction to either Valium or morphine, both of which the doctor in Hawaii had prescribed and she was kept overnight. Fortunately, I had stopped giving her the morphine after we left Hawaii and I cut down on the Valium. Sometime later we received a letter from the drug store in Hawaii that we used for the prescription. It seems that they had received a shipment of morphine that was twice the marked dosage. I believe this fall and the treatment that she had was the cause of most of her future pain and mental problems.

In May, JoAnn had recovered enough to travel, and we drove to Lehigh Acres, FL to visit Antoinette and play golf. In June, we flew to the west coast for 3 weeks which included the U.S. Open Golf Championship at Torrey Pines Golf Course in San Diego. We stayed at Worldmark Wine Country in Angels Camp, CA, which was where Mark Twain set his short story "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." We also stayed at Tahoe Seasons Resort in Lake Tahoe, CA where we again visited Yosemite National Park and the Liberace home and museum. Our final stop was at Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort in Carlsbad, CA. where we stayed during the golf tournament. We also enjoyed Muir Woods National Monument to see the many Red Wood trees while we were in San Francisco as well as the big Sequoias in Calaveras Big Tree State Park.

In September, we drove to Fairfield Glade, TN for golf. We drove from there to St. Louis to see granddaughter Victoria Marie Brill who had been born prematurely on August 25.



Hannah, Victoria, and Kaitlin

We came back to Fairfield Glade for another week. We drove from there to Pittsburgh to attend the 55th reunion of the McKees Rocks High School 1953 graduating class. After that, we went to Jane Lew, WV to visit Emaleen and Harry and then to Beaverdam, VA to see Joe and Janet before returning to Winter Garden. I had cataract eye surgery in October and for the first time in over 60 years no longer needed glasses except for reading.

The Dow-Jones Average fell 4.42%, on September 15, 2008, which solidified the “Great Recession” which technically began in December 2007 and ended in June 2009. The after-effects of the recession lasted much longer; the GDP did not recover until the third quarter of 2011 and Household Net Worth until the third quarter of 2012. Personally, JoAnn and I lost 20% of our household net worth in 2008 and didn’t fully recover this for 5 years; of course, we also lost 5 years of gains that we could have had. The fact that we had such ineffective laws to prevent the shenanigans that went on within the housing market caused trillions of dollars damage to our country’s economy.

On February 12, 2009, Colgan Air Flight 3407 crashed near Buffalo, New York, killing all 49 on board and a person on the ground. It was the last fatal U.S. airline crash and reshaped safety regulations for air travel and because of that is historic

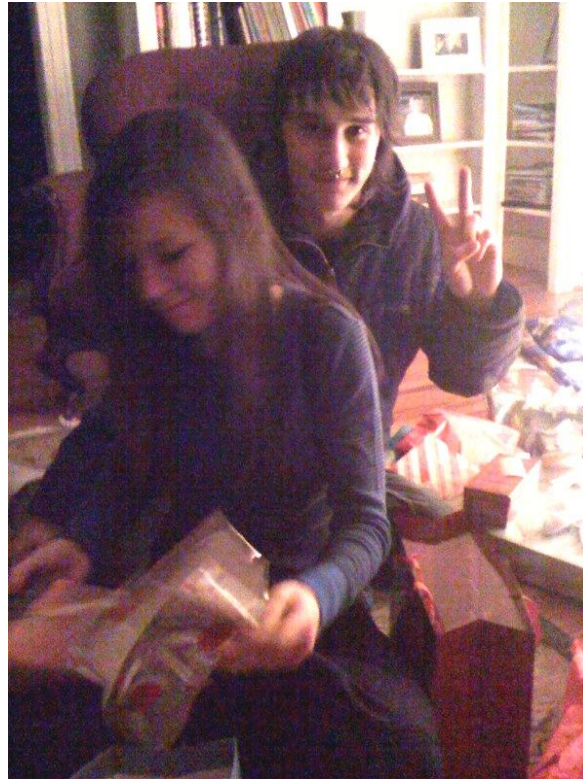
In February 2009, we flew to Las Vegas for the annual Graybar Electric “Omega” retirees’ reunion. We stopped in St. Louis to see Ken and Karen’s family on the way back to Winter Garden. In April, we drove to Lehigh Acres, FL to visit Antoinette in Fort Myers and play golf. Carol and David separated, and she came to stay with us for about 6 months, along with Jonathan and Benjamin. She later got an apartment of her own. In July, we flew to Norfolk, VA and stayed at Wyndham Patriot Place in Williamsburg, VA with Jon Jr. and his family who were attending an R.A.D. conference in Norfolk. In August, we flew to Spokane, WA to visit our friends the Breitenfelds who we have golfed with in Hawaii for about 20 years. We went on to Stoneridge Resort in Blanchard, ID where we visited Glacier National Park in Montana. After that we drove up to Panorama Resort in British Columbia, Canada, where we stayed for a week and visited Banff and Calgary. Our only problem in crossing the border was that they wouldn’t allow us to take an apple with us.

The “Affordable Care Act” was signed into law by President Obama on March 23, 2009. At the time about 46 million were uninsured. By 2016 that was reduced by 20 million. The act made it illegal for insurance companies to cancel or refuse coverage for preexisting conditions. It also allowed children to remain on their parent’s insurance until the age of 25 under certain conditions. It expanded Medicaid coverage to families of four with income of less than \$30,000 with the federal government paying at least 90% of the cost. Many states still haven’t approved this coverage for their poor citizens strictly because of political reasons. A provision that included a penalty if a person did not have coverage was stricken by a provision in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, signed by President Trump. That allows those who don’t want to pay insurance to free-load on the medical system if they choose to not pay their medical bills. This act, mostly referred to as “Obamacare”, was targeted by Republicans who tried to dismantle it several times; even taking it to the Supreme Court in 2021.

On October 9, 2009, President Barak Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. On October 24, President Obama officially declared “swine flu” a national emergency. The pandemic of the medically designated H1N1 orthomyxovirus had probably begun in Mexico sometime in September 2008. A vaccine became available late in 2009 and the total estimated worldwide death toll was 284,000. This resulted in the administration setting up a framework to deal with future pandemics. The Trump administration in 2017-2018 largely dismantled this and discarded the planning that was left for it. Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell admitted he was mistaken in claiming that the Obama administration had failed to leave a pandemic playbook for the Trump White House. In December, we drove to Lehigh Acres, FL to visit Antoinette in Fort Myers and play golf.

On January 7, 2010, we drove to Wyndham Ocean Walk resort in Daytona Beach for a week. On January 15, JoAnn’s Uncle Ben died in McKinley Heights, Ohio; we were not able to go to the funeral. Uncle Ben was a Staff Sergeant in the Army Air Corps during WWII. He was captured and wounded as a prisoner of war during the defense of Bataan in the Philippine Islands, and I think he was part of what was called the “Bataan Death March”.

Our 19-year-old great-nephew Aaron Webster Moss died on February 3, in Berkeley Springs. We drove that day to Berkeley Springs to be with Susan and Pete for the funeral and spent the week there.



Aaron and his girlfriend Mimi

I couldn't sleep the night before the funeral and sat up writing a poem to commemorate his short life. We had been to his graduation from flight training at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and his father had told us about a rock concert that he took Aaron to and that they both enjoyed that trip together so much. I tried to weave some of the lyrics that they heard that night into this poem.

WHEN IS A LIFETIME?

A Grandmother who loved him undyingly knew him only as the infant she held tenderly to her mortal body.

His recollection of her was of the adoring cradler who cooed feelings that he understood as love; that is the only way he knew her in life.

"And she's buying a stairway to heaven" ¹

The Uncle watched this one grow from the age of the toddler to the age of the teen; and had great fun with the boy's joie de vivre.

He knew his uncle as an elder applauder of his jokes and pranks; saddened when the man with youthful appreciation was called from his journey.

"He is a feather in the wind"²

Each friend knew him for some period of their shared youth; and they revelled in each other's interest in life as they felt it.

He saw them for what they were; and looked into their inner thoughts to fathom how he could open up to them.

“The greatest thing you ever can do now is trade a smile with someone who’s blue now”³

The parents who wanted this marvelous child of theirs to witness all, experience all, benefit from all, and take pleasure in all the wonderful possibilities of the life they had breathed to his body, knew him for his journey of 19 earth years.

How blest that he was able to know the best pal and tour guide a kid could have, and the most adoring nurse, protector, confidant, and proponent that any child could want, for all of those love-packed years.

**“And if I say to you tomorrow. Take my hand, child, come with me.
It’s to a castle I will take you, where what’s to be, they say will be.”⁴**

Time can’t be measured solely as a wandering earth circles its sun; aren’t there actions and interactions that make some time more meaningful than other?

Multiply his time on earth by the people he touched, and the love that he felt, and confidence that he gained, and the plans that he shared. When is a lifetime!

¹ Stairway to Heaven - Led Zeppelin

² All My Love - Led Zeppelin

³ Friends - Led Zeppelin

⁴ What Is and What Should Never Be - Led Zeppelin



Mobile at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Where Aaron learned to pilot an airplane

On February 19, 2010, we flew to Kauai for 6 weeks. We managed to get in 21 eighteen-hole and 6 nine-hole rounds of golf. On 2/27 an earthquake in Chile generated a tsunami that was projected to reach Hawaii about 11:00 AM the next morning. We were told to leave our hotel which is on the shore. JoAnn’s sister Emaleen called us at 4:00AM to warn us that she had seen on TV that a tsunami was headed our way. We decided to pack all our belongings in our car and go to the golf course which was on top of a small mountain. There were, eventually, hundreds of people on that golf course waiting for the tsunami. When the time came (at the 6th hole of our second nine), we could not see any change in the surf below us on the coast. The tsunami caused little damage on Kauai.

This event recalled the disastrous Tsunami that wreaked havoc on Hilo, a city on the east side of the “big island” of Hawaii on May 22, 1960. Sixty-one people died from the 35-foot wave that destroyed more than 500 homes and businesses. That also began from an earthquake in Chile. Previously, in 1946, an earthquake in Alaska caused a tsunami that hit Hilo and killed 96 people there. It struck Kauai earlier. Over 160 people were killed in the Hawaiian Islands. This was before Hawaii was a state.

We flew to St. Louis, in May, to see Kenneth and family. We drove from there to Fairfield Glade, TN for golf. From there we drove to Jane Lew, WV and Berkeley Springs, WV. After that we drove back to St. Louis to fly home.

On June 12, 2010, Hope graduated from High School.



We flew to Albuquerque, NM in July to spend 2 weeks with Jon Jr. and family. They were in Albuquerque for an R.A.D. conference and we all then spent a week at Wyndham Flagstaff, AZ, where we visited the Painted Desert and all the other sights of the Flagstaff vicinity. Unfortunately, we got rained out on our visit to the Grand Canyon.

In late September, we drove to Fort Myers and stayed in Lehigh Acres to be with my sister Antoinette who was in the hospital and terribly ill. My sister Mary Bess stayed with us during some of that time and again when Antoinette died on November 1, and we all returned for her funeral.

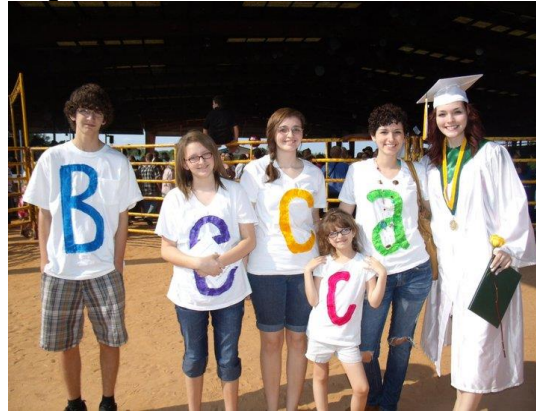
We drove to Jane Lew, WV in October to see Emaleen who was ill and went on from there to Berkeley Springs. Jon, Shannon, Lauren, and Allyson flew down from West Chester to Winter Garden for Christmas 2010.

In February 2011, we flew to Kauai for 7 weeks. During this time, we played 30 eighteen-hole rounds and 9 nine-hole rounds of golf. On March 11, there was an earthquake in Japan with a projected tsunami to arrive in Hawaii at about 8:00 AM the next morning. Again, as for the previous tsunami, we were told to immediately leave our condo on the coast to get to higher ground. Since this order came about midnight, we left our condo to sit in our car all night at the Walmart parking lot in town. Walmart stayed open and provided coffee, etc. There was truly little damage on Kauai from the tsunami although the earthquake and resulting tsunami on Japan created the worst accident to a nuclear power facility since the Chernobyl, Ukraine disaster in 1986.

In April, we drove to Wyndham Ocean Walk resort in Daytona Beach, FL where we visited The World Golf Resort and St. Augustine. While there, we looked at a full-service retirement community that guaranteed full medical services as well as maintenance of the property for the rest of your life. It also included meals at a very well-run dining facility. The property you leased would revert to the community at the death of both occupants. It was very expensive but seemed to be an ideal situation. After several visits and discussions with the management, we decided not to do that. The main reason was that we both felt that we were healthy for our ages and most likely would not need most of the medical services for a long time. This has been borne out by the fact that 10 years later we were still taking care of ourselves way beyond the expected life span of 76 – 78 years. And, although we were not in perfect health, nothing that was wrong with us was life-threatening.

In April and July, JoAnn had operations for breast cancer. Her annual mammogram had shown a small tumor and after a biopsy confirmed cancer, we decided to have an operation to remove the tumor in her right breast and the lymph nodes in her right side. That would be followed by a course of radiation and chemotherapy. Unfortunately, we soon were confronted with a difference of opinion between the radiologist and the surgeon as to whether the surgeon had removed enough tissue around the cancer. Rather than go through another operation in addition to the radiology and chemotherapy, JoAnn decided to have a radical mastectomy that would only require a follow-up 5-year course of hormone therapy and no radiology or chemotherapy. No further problems occurred following this plan of action.

Rebecca graduated from High School in June.



In June, we drove to Tampa for the annual Graybar Florida retiree's luncheon. Later in June, we drove to Jane Lew, WV where JoAnn's sister Emaleen was hospitalized again, and we learned that Emaleen was much worse. She had been in the hospital for a month with leukemia and internal bleeding. The previous week her daughter Judy had taken her outside and had sent some pictures to us. With the latest bad news, we were just hoping that we could make it in time for Emaleen to see her only sister. We went to the hospital on arrival Monday to find Emaleen soundly asleep or comatose. She seemed to respond to JoAnn's voice and touch and blinked her eyes a couple of times. We saw her twice more on Tuesday with little change. Emaleen passed early Wednesday morning, June 29th, a few hours after her daughter left for the night. We changed our plans to return so that we could be there for the service which was held in Weston on Friday evening. This service was attended by twenty-some close family members and over 100 friends and extended family. Another service was scheduled to be held Saturday afternoon at her burial church in Augusta, WV, but JoAnn and I had to return to Winter Garden for an appointment with her surgeon on Tuesday.



Emaleen and Harry's 50th Anniversary invitation

Mary Emaleen Saville was 79 years old and married to Harry Saville for 58 years on June 21. In addition to her daughter, Judy Loose, she had two sons, Harry Jr., and Timmy. For about the last 15 years she had lived in their big farmhouse in Jane Lew, WV. She was a gentle soul whose biggest joy in life was caring for lost and damaged animals.

On August 6, Standard and Poors rating agency cut the credit rating of the United States from AAA (the best rating) to AA+. The reason, they said was: "The political brinksmanship of recent months highlights what we see as America's governance and policymaking becoming less stable, less effective, and less predictable than what we previously believed." This was followed by a Stock Market drop of 5 – 7% on August 8 which capped a drop of over 15% in the previous 2 weeks. This all was precipitated by broad disagreements on a required debt ceiling increase with nearly all Republican legislators opposing any increase in taxes and the large majority of Democratic legislators viewing tax increases as necessary along with spending cuts. As an example, the debt ceiling was raised 18 times and there were 4 tax increases in the administration of Reagan even though democrats controlled Congress during most of that time.

In October, we drove to St. Louis to see Kenneth and family as well as to meet with our financial advisor and financial attorney as we needed to have our Living Trust updated. Jon, Shannon, Lauren, and Allyson came down for Christmas. I decided to get a new car and purchased a red Lincoln MKZ Hybrid. I sold our 1995 Lincoln to Jon who flew down in January to pick it up. With this purchase, I finally had a GPS in my car for travel assistance. In February 2012, we flew to St. Louis to see our granddaughter Chloe Renee Brill who was born 1/13/2012.



Chloe Brill

From St. Louis we flew to Las Vegas for the annual Graybar Electric "Omega" retiree's reunion. We flew from there to Kauai for 6 weeks. We played 22 nine-hole rounds of golf. We stopped off in Las Vegas on our way back to Winter Garden. During 2011 at least 5 asteroids between 20 meters and 400 meters in size passed by earth. At least one came closer than the moon. It passed by on November 8, our wedding anniversary and if the asteroid had crashed into Earth, it could have caused a 4,000-megaton blast and a magnitude 7.0 earthquake, according to scientists at Purdue University. If it fell into the ocean, it could have caused a 70-foot-high tsunami within 60 miles of the crash site, the experts said.

On April 14, 2012, Jonathan Wolff married Emily Adams. We attended the rehearsal, wedding, and reception in Winter Garden.



Emily joins the Wolff family

On July 1, 2012, David Matthew Wolff married Mary Lopresti in Leesburg, VA



Mary joins the Wolff family

We flew to Baltimore Airport and drove to Ashburn, VA for the wedding. In May, we spent three days at Wyndham Ocean Walk in Daytona Beach. We drove to Lehigh Acres, FL in August for some golf. We flew to St. Louis to spend a week in September with Kenneth and family at the Silverleaf's Holiday Hills Resort in Branson MO. They moved later that year to a farm property they had purchased in Irondale, MO. We drove to Fairfield Glade, TN in October for a week to golf. We took a river tour on Florida's St. John's River and tributaries with a group from the Audubon Society in October.

JoAnn, while trying to bring some boxes down from our upstairs bedrooms, slipped and fell down the 20+ steps of the stairwell. Fortunately, I was at the bottom of the stairs and was able to slow down her descent. After getting a checkup at the ER, we started seriously talking about downsizing after that and decided that we would do that before we were 80 in 2015.

In January 2013, we drove to St. Louis to see Kenneth and family at their new home. We stayed at Silverleaf Resort. Kenneth's family stayed with us most of that week. In February, we flew to Las Vegas for the annual Graybar Electric "Omega" retiree's reunion.

On February 15, a meteor, slightly less than 15 tons and about 60 feet in diameter, exploded over the southern Ural region of Russia. It exploded at about 20,000 feet and resulted in injuries to at least 1500 people. It is estimated that the explosion was about 30 times the energy released by the atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan.

On March 13, 2013, Jorge Mario Bergoglio was elevated to be Pope Francis at the age of 76, the first time that I was older than the Pope. We spent a week playing golf in May at Lehigh Acres, FL where we put flowers on my sister's grave for Memorial Day.

On April 17, an explosion at a fertilizer plant in West, Texas, killed 15 people, nine of whom were first responders. The cause was the storage of a highly dangerous fertilizer in close proximity to a school, a nursing home and an apartment house.

In June Emma Graduated from High School.



In July, we made a down payment on a new home in Trilogy of Orlando in Groveland FL. Since we had already planned a European trip, we did not put our house on the market. We flew to New York and took a city bus excursion and a harbor boat excursion.

From there in NJ we flew to Frankfurt, Germany. I rented a Mercedes E300 sedan. It had GPS but I could not get it to speak English. We took it to a Mercedes dealer which was about an hour's drive from our first vacation condo. They were unable to figure out what was wrong and said we could pick up a replacement rental car but had to drive another couple of hours to do that. Since I had brought a portable GPS with me, we decided to carry on using both systems to guide us. We had reservations to spend one week at Residenz Mandelgarten in Deidesheim; one week at Fierclub Oberstau in Oberstau, and our final week at Gemuender Fierpark Salzburg in Gemund Schleiden, Germany. During each week that we spent in a different area, we visited the local historic landmarks. Among the sights were the royal castles of Neuschwanstein, Hohenschwangau, Hohenzollern, and Rastatt Fortress. We also spent a day at Hochwildpark, Rheinland which was a combination zoo and family park.

When we stayed in the vicinity of the area that our Brill family had emigrated from, we spent one day in the little village of Böckweiler that my fifth great grandfather, Martin Brill left from. There was a small church that we looked through, that was built 1000 years ago and quite possibly could have been attended by my ancestors. The first mention of this church seems to be in 1149.



Church of St. Stephan (Stephanuskirche)

We encountered a local schoolteacher named Fritz Schunk, who went to college in Baltimore, MD. We surveyed a local cemetery at the Hornbach Monastery that Fritz had suggested we visit. In the meantime, he got a book of church information from his mother-in-law and brought it to us there. I searched through that book of local births and deaths. There were many Brills listed for that period in the early 18th century, but no names that I could recognize as part of my genealogy.



The Hornbach Monastery

In October, we flew to St. Louis to see Kenneth and family, to discuss repairing the house they had moved out of last year; and to see our financial advisor and financial attorney. We also visited a local clergyman who I had been told had some books that recorded births and deaths in the area of Germany that we had just visited. Unfortunately, I could not find any references that would lead to information on my family roots. We received a letter from a district administrator in Germany regarding an incident where my photo was taken while exceeding the speed limit. I responded to it as guilty after getting the teacher that we had met in Germany translate the document. I never heard anything more

Since we had a clause that allowed us to extend the closing on our new house in Groveland, we were able to put that purchase off until December when we came to an agreement to close at a reduced price from \$245,596 to \$230,596. Since it appeared that we might have to pay two mortgages until we could sell our Winter Garden home at a lower price than we wanted, we were offered a \$15,000 reduction in price. Shortly after we reached this agreement, we received an offer on the Winter Garden house that was lower than we expected but was acceptable.

We knew that we had purchased the Winter Garden house near the top of the market, so we accepted with regret the selling price of \$370,000 which was about \$15,000 below our latest asking price. In December, we moved into our new home in Trilogy of Orlando, a gated community for those 55 years of age and older. The amenities are spectacular, and we felt it was almost like living at a Hawaiian resort all year round.



The clubhouse and pool at Trilogy of Orlando



172 Balmy Coast Road, Groveland FL

We have since found that our neighbors are friendly, helpful people and we have become acclimated to this smaller house. There is still some yard work that is not taken care of by the HOA but nothing that we cannot handle on our own. We haven't used the amenities as much as I expected we would, but that will hopefully change.