

# *RAMBLINGS MAGAZINE*



**TOM TRELOAR**



**2023-2024**

# **WORDPRESS.COM**

Many have commented  
that my blogs and  
memories should be in a  
printed format.  
This is the purpose of  
Ramblings Magazine

**Author website**  
<https://tomt2.com/>

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# BIOGRAPHY

Some may ask, who is Tom T 2.0? I was 2tts and I am sure not very many know the story behind Tom T 2.0. Therefore, I will give you a brief biography.

Born and raised in Denver Colorado, a long time ago. I was in my mother's womb when Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese. I lived in the same home until after high school. Grandma, my mother's mother lived with us and a brother. It was a small house, 864 sq ft. But it was home, and we all loved the home.

After high school I got a job with the company who was building the Titan ICBM missile for the government. There was the military draft during that time and was drafted maybe three or four years later. I then became a Viet Nam era veteran. I don't know how this happened but the seven men I was drafted with went to Viet Nam and I was sent to Germany. I'm still proud that I served the country during that time.

After my military service I started working for a large television and electronics manufacturing company in their distribution of the products arm. I met my future wife, got married and have two sons with this relationship. Life was what every normal healthy male dream of. Unfortunately, this dream only lasts about eleven years. I became divorced and my job disappeared because the company was sold and closed thirteen distributing warehouses across the nation. Here I was mid-life, divorced and out of work.

For about five years I had many jobs, mostly temporary employment mainly because the unemployment rate was around seven percent. My parents also passed away during that time also. First, my mother with cancer and two years later my father from a heart attack. This was a tough period in my life.

Finally, I found permanent work in a high-tech environment where they used lasers to cut micro components used in the electronic industry. This was a very interesting position and I enjoyed working there. During that time, I also met my future wife and have been happily married for over thirty years now. We met after childbearing years, but she blessed me with two stepdaughters and two stepsons. I love them as much as my biological sons.

Around thirteen years later it was time to retire. That was seventeen years ago. Since my parents both passed away in their mid-seventies, I thought I would follow the legacy. I have passed this legacy by over five years, and I predict I will have many more years now since I experienced a near death experience around six months ago and survived. The doctors and lab tests all say there appears to be no long-term damage and the chances look good for many more years.

For many years I have been **2tts**. After my near-death experience I feel that there is a purpose for this opportunity. Now I am **Tom T 2.0**. It has been close to eight months since the near-death experience, and I am still searching for the reason. Maybe this site is the opportunity I am looking for.

In conclusion, life has been good. I do not regret any part of my life, even the tough times. In the good times and the bad times, I always think, what did I learn from this experience and how will it make me be a better person?



- In this issue will be an article about Halloween facts and some memories.
- I have a strange tale to relay about an old girl friend.
- I share my story about smoking and the hard time of quitting the nasty habit.
- Ever wonder what attracts you to a person, I have.
- What kind thoughts do you have when you wake up?
- I have had two cataracts removed, this is my story.
- There are four computers in our home, how many do you have?
- After retiring, every day is Saturday for me.
- Reading about current events, it is hard to stay positive
- My journey of faith and religion. This is a long one and continues in the next issue.

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Why don't pirates take  
a shower before they  
walk the plank?

They just wash up on shore.

**"You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough."**

— **Mae West**

**"Instead of worrying about what you cannot control, shift  
your energy to what you can create."**



# HALLOWEEN FACTS AND FIGURES.

November 1, 2023

**Halloween** is a holiday celebrated each year on October 31, and Halloween 2023 will occur on Tuesday, October 31. The tradition originated with the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, when people would light bonfires and wear costumes to ward off ghosts. In the eighth century, Pope Gregory III designated November 1 as a time to honor all saints. Soon, All Saints Day incorporated some of the traditions of Samhain. The evening before was known as All Hallows Eve, and later Halloween. Over time, Halloween evolved into a day of activities like trick-or-treating, carving jack-o-lanterns, festive gatherings, donning costumes and eating treats. [link to History Channel Halloween 2023: Origins, Meaning & Traditions | HISTORY](#)

**Movies:** There are thousands of movies related to Halloween. The purpose of all these movies is to scare you. Remember Dracula, Frankenstein, vampires and hundreds of other characters to scare you.

**Jacko lantern history:** A jack-o'-lantern is a carved lantern, most made from a pumpkin, or formerly a root vegetable such as a rutabaga or turnip. Jack-o'-lanterns are associated with the Halloween holiday. Its name comes from the phenomenon of strange lights flickering over peat bogs, called jack-o'-lanterns. It is suggested that the name also has ties to the Irish legend of Stingy Jack, a drunkard who bargains with Satan and is doomed to roam the Earth with only a hollowed turnip to light his way. The Irish immigrants brought this tradition to America where pumpkins were used instead of turnips as they were more readily available. Today, carving pumpkins is an integral part of Halloween celebrations in America. [Link to History Channel How Jack O'Lanterns Originated in Irish Myth | HISTORY](#)

**My memories:** when I was young our parents did not have to be concerned about their children running around the neighborhood after dark. Our purpose was to collect as many goodies as possible. The only rule do not cross the busy streets. There were a busy street two blocks west of us and two blocks south of our home. East and north had no limits. We used pillowcases to collect our bounty. That plastic jack o lantern was just not big enough. We couldn't go trick-or-treating until evening supper was eaten. We would rush to eat and get out as soon as possible and we had to wait until it got dark. After a hurried meal we started. First, the block we lived in and then the blocks west and south of our home. Then the large area north and east of us. Normally we would start around six and finish around eight-thirty. The pillowcase would be close to half full and would last close to Thanksgiving before the Halloween bounty was gone. Most gave out packaged candy and a few gave out apples or oranges, Boo!

We also carved the traditional jack o lantern. They were really crappy. Our artistic skills were missing. Then the burning candle in the pumpkin gave off a bad odor. All costumes were hand made. No store boughten costumes for us.

**Sales:** Total Halloween spending is expected to reach a record \$12.2 billion (about \$38 per person in the US), exceeding last year's record of \$10.6 billion (about \$33 per person in the US), according to the National Retail Federation's annual survey conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytics. A record number of people (73%) will participate in Halloween-related activities this year, up from 69% in 2022. [link to NRF | Halloween Spending to Reach Record \\$12.2 Billion as Participation Exceeds Pre-Pandemic Levels Halloween ranks seventh in holiday spending.](#)

**Past and present:** when I was young you did not have safety concerns compared to the present day. Our parents did not have to check our bounty for unsafe items. This era was before the razor blades in fruit and to have concern about opened candy. Our parents did not have to go with us like you see many times these days. You would hear about vandalism but very seldom saw any. In conclusion, I will take my memories of Halloween over the ones I see and hear about today's Halloween events.



Halloween 1984



Halloween 1986



Halloween 1994 hooker



Halloween 1993



See what is behind us?



It has been a terrific journey



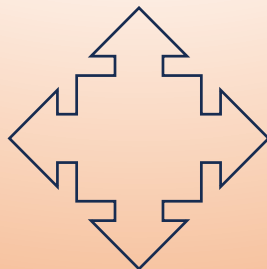
## A STRANGE TALE

November 3, 2023

The night of April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010, I had a strange dream. This involved a girl, (woman) I have not thought about for 68 years. This was Sandra. I went to grade, junior, and high school with her. In grade school Sandra and I were very close. The first time we met we were attracted to each other. That was over sixty years ago, and I can't say that I can remember that much about that time. We did make it a point to be next to each other and would look for each other when there was a gathering. I do remember one event that still is important to me. During that time there were tables the size where two individuals sat at the table. We always made it a point to sit at the same table if we were able to. Anyway, the teacher was rambling on, and I was on the left Sandra was on the right. Our arms were resting on the table, and they were barely touching each other. I was starting to get this tingling feeling from my elbow down to my wrist where our arms were interacting. This felt great! I can still feel the tingling going up and down my arm. Sandra was having the same response. She looks at me and smiles. I will never forget this moment. This was before sex ever became involved or thought about. One could say she was my first girlfriend, maybe even my soul mate and didn't realize it.



We went on to high school and began to drift apart. My teenage years were very hard for me. I was angry and mad. I didn't like myself. I didn't like the feelings and thoughts I was having. Those apparent hormones were doing a number on me. I had a loving family, All the things a teenager could expect. Driving at sixteen, a part time job and money in my pocket. Looking back at those times, I would say I was a jerk. Because of this I killed the relationship between me and Sandra. We went our separate ways, and I didn't think of her until April 11, 2010.



In this dream Sandra came to me and said, *"Tom, I was meant (created) for you. However, you rejected me. Our lives would have been totally different if you would not have rejected me."* This dream was a visual and moving dream. This bothered me because I wondered why I dreamt of Sandra after not seeing or hearing about her for over fifty years or more. Finally, on April 18<sup>th</sup> I thought I would search for some information about Sandra. Going to my yearbook newsletters I found out she was married to Ed. I did a Google search and came up with an obituary stating that Sandra passed away April 8, 2010. **That was only three days before I had my strange dream.** This really shocked me and leaves me with more questions than answers. Was this a visit from someone who recently died. Would my life have been different? Would it have been better or worse? I will never know. I have had a good life and I feel I have made more good decisions instead of bad decisions. Did this change my outlook? Yes, it did. I have never been a strong religious person even though I was born and raised a Catholic. They teach that there is life after death. But I always had in the back of my mind, that may be wrong. However, after this dream I am convinced that yes, there is something after death. This dream occurred in 2010 and the dream relieved me of that thought ever since. death is not final. You can come to your own conclusion. Life is one large teaching experience. From birth until death, you are learning. I have other life changing events. One involved the death of my mother, and my grandmother. Also, a life changing voice came to me.



1950

ME



1951



# TALES OF A FORMER SMOKER

November 4, 2023

Colorado in 2008 was having a debate to outlaw smoking in public establishments. Casinos say that the smoking ban will more than likely affect their business. Approximately twenty percent of Colorado residents are smokers. Bar owners ask appeals court to overturn the state smoking ban. These are all headings of stories about the statewide smoking ban. Smoking is still an issue. The major majority voted for a smoking ban in recent years. There are still twenty percent who feel they are being unfairly treated with the smoking bans. I have been on both sides of the issue. I was a smoker and quit many years before any smoking ban took effect.

I started smoking when I was in the eighth grade. Why did I start? I would say because of peer pressure. Everyone I ran around with started smoking about the same time. It was cool! Many movie stars smoked. You would go to a movie and smoking was always featured. Fred Flintstone and Barney smoked and advertised Winston cigarettes. Smoking was the thing to do if you wanted to be cool. My Dad smoked. The local parish priest smoked. Many neighbors smoked. This was all before the adverse effects of smoking were known. No one cared about the addictive effects of nicotine, or the tar build up in your lungs. I remember when I first started smoking. You would inhale and suddenly become dizzy. I never did get sick to my stomach though. After a period, the dizziness went away and the addiction to nicotine took over. You were hooked.

I smoked through high school and beyond. I was drafted into the army in 1964 and at those times most of the new recruits smoked. I recall the saying, "smoke them if you have them". A cloud of smoke would rise from the company of troops where only a half a dozen or so did not smoke. The red butt can with an inch of water in the can lined the center of the barracks. Sometimes I think cigarettes were more important than bullets.

I was still smoking when I got out of the army and continued to smoke for a few more years. At that time there were no regulations about smoking. I would smoke one to two packs a day. That was when a pack was around twenty-five cents. I smoked everywhere. I would smoke in the grocery store checkout line. I smoked in the house and the car, throwing out the butts through the window. I was a rude ruthless smoker. I didn't care about anybody's rights. I stunk from cigarette smoke and my fingers would turn yellow from the tobacco-burning cigarette. Nicotine really had me hooked.

Here I was twenty-five and I would huff and puff going up a flight of stairs. The effects of smoking were becoming known, and I was beginning to experience the effects. I began to realize smoking was affecting my health. I decided that I wanted to live a long healthy life and continuing to smoke was going to hamper this desire. I decided to quit. For the next two to three years, I must have quit two hundred times or more. I finally succeeded; I no longer am addicted to nicotine. It took me about a year before I did not have that nicotine urge. Two more years passed before the smell of smoke ceased to smell good and I wanted to have just one cigarette. I knew if I had one, I would be hooked again. I was 28 when I finally succeeded in quitting. **Stopping smoking was the hardest thing I ever did in my life.**





Where am I now? It has been over fifty years since I finally quit smoking. I speculate that if I did not quit smoking, I would be dead from heart disease or lung cancer. In the late seventies my father was having circulation problems in his right leg and his primary doctor referred him to a specialist. The first question the specialist asked my father was, "how long did you smoke?" We asked why he asked that, and he responded by telling us that circulation problems in the legs are characteristic of smokers. Well, the specialist was not able to save my father's leg and the last five years of his life was without his right leg. My father was seventy when this happened. I was forty-five and I am hoping I am not going to continue the legacy of my father. I see people my age that are dependent on their oxygen tank. Seeing these people makes me very thankful that I can still breathe on my own. Maybe I quit soon enough in my life to bypass these bullets.

After reading this you may think, "he is really anti-smoking, he wants stronger no smoking laws." I don't really agree with the current smoking laws. In my opinion I feel that smoking or no smoking should be up to the individual business owner. If a business owner wants to cater to the twenty percent of the smoking population, they become a smoking establishment. If they want to do business with the eighty percent of the non-smoking population, you become a no-smoking establishment. Businesses are either smoking or no smoking, no combination establishments would be allowed. As a consumer I can elect to go to the establishment I want to. Let the market forces determine whom you want to do business with.

In conclusion, I made a big mistake when I smoked that first cigarette. You become addicted to nicotine faster than you imagine. There is no easy way to quit once you become addicted. If you are young and consider smoking that cigarette, think twice and say no, it may save you a lot of pain and suffering. No, I did not follow my father's legacy of passing away at seventy-five. I am now over eighty and still very thankful that I was successful in quitting smoking when I was twenty-eight.

About two years ago my son who was forty-six years old at that time had to have a life-threatening heart attack to realize that smoking can shorten your life. He has not had a cigarette since that life threatening event.

This was originally published by me on yourhub.com in 2008. I have edited it to fit the times now.



## WHAT IS THE ATTRACTION?

November 4, 2023

Ever wonder why you are attracted to someone, more than someone else? I have wondered about that through my years. It must be more than just physical even though that plays a part in some parts of life. In my opinion, interaction between other humans is the most important segment of our lives. Memories are built from these contacts we have throughout our life. Friendships, marriages and unfortunately enemies come from human interactions. As life continues you meet a large quantity of people. A relation is started when two people are attracted to each other. I am not an expert. I am just quoting my experiences and opinions.

As you begin to grow up your world expands. You meet neighbors, new people from church gatherings and school that expands your life. Why was I attracted to Doris the neighbor from Lola. I do not have a clue. All the boys in first grade had a crush on Miss Lee the first-grade teacher. Our hearts were broken when she married the math teacher. In second or third grade I met Sandra. She was special. I was attracted to her, and she was attracted to me. We were very close friends through elementary and junior high and most of high school. What happened is a story for another publication.

As you continue your life you may find out that the attraction that someone shows to you may have selfish reasons. For example, I went into the army and was shipped over to Germany for almost two years. In an orientation meeting we were warned that many of the German young women will do anything to get a ticket to America. That included lying to you, sex and getting pregnant. This wasn't attraction, this was a planned plot to get to America. You may be attracted to her, but she may just be desperate to improve her life. One had to be very careful.



For close to twenty years, I hired and fired hundreds of employees for a large corporation. This included women to work in an office environment. On rare occasions during the interview the prospect would offer services outside of the office to get the job. This wasn't attraction, this was desperation to get the job. That killed her possibility of becoming hired. Qualifications are important but I also found out attraction is also an important part of the decision process. This also applies to male applications. I don't mean sexual attraction. All my life I have been a normal healthy male and have not had any sexual attractions to my fellow males. I also consider ease of conversations to be a part of the attraction. Some individuals are so easy to have a conversation and continue the conversation. Others, not so easy. Eye contact is also



important. I was surprised how many could not look you in the eye during the interview. It made me think, "what are they hiding from me?" I discovered I had more success in hiring individuals that had this attraction and would stay on the job for a longer period of time.

There is physical and sexual attraction. Those hormones are powerful chemicals affecting your decisions and your body. Most humans are driven to marriage or having a significant other. Most want to leave the legacy of children. That is just life. Most healthy males enjoy the eye candy offered by the sight of the human female. I would speculate females are attracted to the male eye candy available too. So, you go through life, and maybe get married or find a significant other. But these physical attractions are still knocking at your front door. Do you stay loyal or let temptation take over? That is a decision you must make throughout your hormone driven years. Been there done that. Yes, it is tough to decide at times what avenue do you want to travel down. Feelings and hurt can be devastating. I remember telling my sons when their hormones were starting to flow. "Son, don't let your hormones lead your life, there are other important things in life, that must be considered, such as compatibility, comfort, trust and love." I guess it helped, they both appear to be happy with their lives and relationships.

I also discovered there can be attractions in the cyber world too. I have been on twitter, now X, since 2010 and have acquired over 5000 followers and I follow around the same amount. Most are silent but there is the small amount that you start conversing quite often and the attraction starts to emerge. In



many cases you do not have a clue what they look like because many use avatars instead of actual photos and they are spread all over the country. You can tell the gender by name, but the eye candy luxury feature is not there, and you do not know the age gap. After some conversations you can figure out the age gap though. Now I am fantasizing that it would be nice to meet these attractions face-to-face and see if the attraction is real. I am quite sure this will never happen though.

Have you ever considered that these attractions may happen more than just coincidence? Do you meet these people for some unexplained reason? Are you meant to learn something from these attractions? Many times, I have the feeling that I meet a person for a reason. Of course, the reason for this encounter is the difficult part to figure out. Life has been an adventure and there must be a reason for this life of many learning experiences.

In conclusion, I more than likely will never know why I am attracted to someone and not another. This is just one of those mysteries of life that will never be answered. It has been interesting writing about it though.





## THOUGHTS WHEN WAKING

November 5 2023



What do you think of when you wake up in the morning?

- Oh, crap I am going to be late.
- I don't want to go to work.
- When will I ever learn to stop drinking so much?
- Hope today is better than yesterday.
- Wish my wife would wake up so we could do a little loving
- Boy, do I have to go to the bathroom.
- Why am I so tired?
- I'm hungry.
- Today will be great.
- Thank you, Lord, for another day.

These are just ten of the millions of thoughts one could have when waking up. Your wake-up thoughts will be different as you go through different stages of your life. My wake-up thoughts are much different during my retirement stage than my working stage. I do not have the urgency and schedule to abide by when I was in the working stage. I can lay in bed and expand on my immediate thoughts. I would say the most often thought is, "I have to go pee!" After the urgency is taken care of, I can lay in bed and go over items that are important at the time and plan my day. I also reminisce and reconcile about past experiences and events in my past. Without my memories in life, I would be very lonely. Memories are very important to me, good and bad. I also spend time being very thankful that I have been very fortunate in my eighty plus years.

So, the moral of this tale is, there is no moral, this is the first thought I had today and thought it would be an unusual topic to write about



# CATARACTS A FACT OF LIFE

November 5 2024



Here I am over eighty and thirty years ago I had my first cataract removed. Seven years later my second one was removed. As you age a large percentage of people can expect to experience cataracts. It is just a part of the aging process. As you get older your body parts just don't function like they used to and start to wear out. What causes cataracts? Professionals say that there may be a variety of causes. In my case I speculate that I have lived most of my life in the Denver area and the altitude exposes you to more ultraviolet radiation than lower altitudes. Also, when I was a youngster, eye protection was not that common. All summer we ran around with no sunglasses and no shirt. Now, I am starting to pay for this unawareness of the dangers of sunshine. I have had two cataracts removed and one suspicious spot on my nose has been removed. My back looks like the moon surface and my doctor have told me to keep a close eye on my back and call him if I notice any changes in those craters. What you did in the past starts to catch up with you sooner or later.

Cataracts are clouding the lens in the eye. When I first started to notice them, my sight started to show a tint of yellow. Driving at night becomes difficult because the oncoming headlights start to sparkle brightly, and a lot of your view is lost. I think they call that, headlight blooming. After a period of time, it becomes intolerable, and you know it is time to get something done.

Fortunately, cataract surgery is relatively simple now. I remember in the late fifties my uncle came from Meeker Colorado and had cataract surgery. We went to see him in the hospital, and he was laying there with sandbags placed on both sides of his head to immobilize his movement and he was in a lot of pain. He spent a week in the hospital. In those days they didn't have implants and he had to wear big thick glasses to replace the cloudy lenses



The surgery now is an outpatient procedure. The whole procedure shouldn't take more than four hours. This consists of pre-op and post-op time. The surgery probably doesn't take over twenty minutes. The procedure twenty years ago was very similar to today's procedure. Infection is the main concern. I started antibiotics in the affected eye the day before and continued them a week after surgery. You are sedated and your eye is numbed up. However, you are awake and aware of what is going on around you. You do have an IV in your arm and can be put under immediately if needed. You also are fitted with oxygen apparatus just in case. They put this fabric type material over your face and cut a hole in it over your eye. This exposes your eye to the surgeon. I speculate that somehow your eyelid is secured so you can't blink. Your eye is numbed, and you can't feel anything in the eye area. The surgeon does his thing, and the most annoying thing is the bright light in your eye. Your cataract lens is removed, and a replacement lens is inserted.

The incision is so small that no stitches are normally needed. The surgery is over, and you may spend forty-five minutes in post-op. You are ready to go home, and you need someone to drive you home.

On the first surgery, I experienced clear vision the first time I opened my eye. The second time I was not as fortunate. It took about a week for my vision to clear up. Now it is clear, and I had to be fitted for new prescription glasses. I am just amazed how technology has progressed and how a complicated procedure has become a simple common event. After a period, the time varies with the patient, the clear tissue that covers the implant may become clouded and a laser is used to remove that tissue so that clear vision will return. It has been twenty years since my surgery, and I have not experienced this yet.

Finally, if you live to be over sixty, you will more than likely experience cataract surgery. I am confident it will become simpler and simpler as time goes by.

Originally Published 11/11/2007 Yourhub.com, modified to fit this this format

## Before Cataracts



## After Cataracts





# HOW MANY COMPUTERS DO YOU HAVE?

November 6 2023



How many computers and laptops do you have in your home? In my home I have four. One is my primary laptop. The second is an older laptop that the hard drive crashed, and I replaced the drive, the third is a desktop in my workshop. Finally, my wife has a desktop she uses. I suppose I do not really need four computers at the same time. It just migrated that way. Now I have found a use for all of them.

Back in 2008 I purchased new a HP2000 laptop to replace Dell laptop because support for the Windows operating system has expired and I did not want to just upgrade the operating system since it was about seven years old, and we all know how fast technology has changed. I forget where I bought the new laptop but that was the last new computer I bought. This laptop served me well for about nine years with no large complaints.

This has been a good backup laptop for my primary computer. About a year ago the software sent out an alert that the hard drive was going to crash. How the software can predict that is beyond me. Anyway, I got a replacement hard drive for about 25 dollars and went to YouTube and got instructions how to replace the hard drive and keep all the information and operating system from the defective hard drive. After that I thought I might as well put it to use. So, I installed Audacity software which is an audio editing program and started adding music to thumb drives I can use in my vehicle sound system and make audios for podcasting. This is a good backup laptop if for some reason my primary laptop crashes.



**"The computer says I need to upgrade my brain to be compatible with the new software."**

In 2016 we moved into a new home for us. After being in our new home for close to a year and the HP laptop was in service for me for about eight years and I decided to look for a replacement laptop. The problem I had was I didn't want to spend the money on a brand-new laptop since the one I had worked fine. I read or heard somewhere that refurbished computers and thought I might as well give refurbished a try. In my search for a refurbished laptop, I found refurbished laptops on Office Depot's website and purchased a Dell laptop for less than half the retail price, around 300 dollars. It arrived in about a week and has been working great. I upgraded from Windows 7 to Windows 10 since Microsoft offered the upgrade free and support should be available until 2025.

As I previously stated we moved in 2016 and our new home had a workshop. Since I had such good luck with my Dell refurbished laptop, I started to shop for a refurbished computer to be used in the workshop. I found an HP desktop from micomp.com for one hundred dollars with prepaid shipping and a one-year warranty. They purchase computers from corporations when they upgrade their systems. And they are a Microsoft certified refurbisher. It has been working great since 2017. The only thing that went bad, the CPU cooling fan started to squeal, and I had to replace it. I also updated the operating system to Windows 10, free of course from Microsoft. I have CAD software on this computer and an electronic microscope to look at bugs. Also, I install questionable software on this computer to make sure it is safe before I install it on my primary computer.

The last computer we have is the one my wife uses. In 2022 we replaced an HP desktop with a Dell desktop for the same reason. The support for the operating system ended and it was time for a hardware upgrade. It was working fine when it was shut down for the last time. We got another desktop from micomp.com for \$150 dollars, free shipping and one year warranty. It has been working just fine.

In conclusion, I have had good luck with refurbished computers. I have been retired since 2006 and on a fixed income and I do not need a top-of-the-line computer. These refurbished prices fit well in my budget. I am not a computer expert, but I do have more technical knowledge than the average person and that could be a problem for some. The largest problem I have is my wife, she gets in a bind many times on the computer, and I must rescue her.





# IT IS HARD TO STAY POSITIVE

November 8 2023

- Hamas butchers attack Israel, kill, maim over a thousand victims including over twenty Americans. It came as a total surprise, but that is debatable. Many are condemning the attack and others are supporting Hamas and their actions. Many say Israel should refrain from reprisal and others say go destroy the Hamas animals. Hamas still has hostages. [Number of Israeli hostages held in Hamas' 'brutal captivity' increases | Sky News Australia](#)
- Ukraine invasion is now over 600 days and appears to have no end in sight. The United States has sent billions of dollars to support Ukraine, and no one can really say what all this money is going for. Where is all the aid coming from? [North Korea Satellite Images Reveal Worrying News for Ukraine \(newsweek.com\)](#)
- Unfortunately, the southern border is wide open. Millions of illegal immigrants have come across the southern border. Who is coming across? How many terrorists are sneaking across within all these immigrants? How many diseases are coming with them? Every day you can see photos of lines of immigrants waiting to cross. Many large cities are complaining that they are becoming overrun with foreign immigrants and services are becoming stretched to the limits. Are Hamas militants making it across the southern border? [PolitiFact: Hamas militants 'pouring' across U.S.-Mexico border? No. \(usatoday.com\)](#)
- Driving through metro Denver you see homeless camps everywhere. The new mayor was elected with the promise to address the problem. Now many are saying it was and will be just another broken campaign promise. Follow the money on Denver homeless. [Following the money on Denver's homeless | Denver Gazette | Opinion | coloradopolitics.com](#)
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- The national debt is over thirty-three trillion dollars and Congress appears to have no interest in stopping the growth. Someday the reality is going to set in that the country cannot continue to print more money to pay this rampant debt increase. See for yourself how the national debt is skyrocketing. [U.S. National Debt Clock : Real Time \(usdebtclock.org\)](#)
- The political divide is the worst I have ever seen. I am over eighty seasoned years and I have never seen and heard the hate and anger displayed by both parties. One's Opinion of the political divide. [Bridging America's Political Divide — Making Caring Common \(harvard.edu\)](#)
- Strikes all over the place, Hollywood unions, auto workers, healthcare workers, just to name a few. It appears that labor unions are flexing their muscles after many silent years. [Strikes and walkouts extend to the fall. Here's what you need to know. \(usatoday.com\)](#)
- Taiwan is in a dangerous situation with their giant neighbor China, planning to take them over. For years China has said Taiwan belongs to them and will not be happy until Taiwan is a part of China. Taiwan is looking for new friends [A spooked and lonely Taiwan looks for new friends \(yahoo.com\)](#)



## EVERYDAY IS SATURDAY

November 7 2023

The sky is blue, the sunsets are beautiful, and the roses smell terrific. I didn't notice these luxuries before I retired. When I was working, and going through the challenges of life that are thrown at you. I didn't take the time for the simple beauty of life.

Seventeen years have passed since I retired in September. Do I enjoy retirement? Yes, I do! Retirement has been a blessing for me. This is part of the American dream, work most of your life and then enjoy the fruits of your labor. It feels good to see that Social Security and pension payments appear in your banking account every month. Yes, I am living the American dream!

Since I have retired many people have asked me the question. "What do you do now that you are retired?" As if you are supposed to do something. My most often response is; "recuperating from the last forty-five years". I was tired! The first 90 days (about 3 months) I did very little. No, I didn't lie in bed all day, but I took it easy and started to adjust to a slower and more relaxed lifestyle. Now, what I don't get done today, I can finish tomorrow.

I retired in September and during our Thanksgiving gathering someone asked me, "Tom, what do you do all day?" I responded, "every day is Saturday." That means I don't have anything I have to do or any place I must be. That phrase stuck and I still use it today.

My typical morning starts around 6 to 7:00 a.m. No, I don't sleep in. I try to keep regular hours. I usually go to bed around the same time and rise around the same time. When I get up at the above time this gives me time to get my cup of coffee and breakfast. When I first retired, I was an active stock market trader. I guess you could say I was a pattern trader. However, since the 2008 downslide the market has been too volatile for me, and I invest in stable and secure investments only.

Retiring has given me many opportunities to do things I have been putting off either because I just didn't have the time or just too tired to do them. what you don't get done today; you can work on tomorrow, or the next day, or next week.

Last fall I joined a small writer's group at a church in Lakewood. I have always had an interest in writing; however, I never took the time or had the time to cultivate that desire. Now that I am retired, I have the time to cultivate that interest. This small writing group was the catalyst that prompted me to Yourhub.com. Yourhub.com was a bloggers site sponsored by a local newspaper. Once a week they had an insert with blogs they have selected.





During this period, I was fortunate to have them select over seventy of my blogs. This was a perfect medium to get the word out and expose your efforts to an audience. The hard part is to get that audience to read your efforts. This does beat putting your efforts into a file cabinet or hard drive and no one ever reads them. After a period yourhub.com disappeared when the local newspaper went out of business. I didn't write for a while and then I discovered Substack. I then started writing again. At least you have exposed your works to a live and alert audience.

My retirement has had its downsides. One of the big downsides was winter's unusually large snowfalls. It kept me inside more than I wanted to stay inside. I am an outdoors person, and the snowy weather has surely hampered my activities and I was getting a lot of cases of cabin fever. However, spring comes, and I can get out into the sunshine and fresh air and my attitude turns around one hundred percent.

The only thing that changed the entire environment of retirement is health. We have been very fortunate with health issues, and I attempt to live a healthy life by periodic health exams, eat in moderation and exercise regularly. Unfortunately, illness is part of the aging process. My wife has had a couple of mini strokes, fluid accumulating around her heart and a bout of unexplained dizziness that lasted over a year. I have had two cataracts removed. I suffered with an eleven-millimeter kidney stone that they had to go up through the basement to zap it with a laser and bust it up. I passed chocolate milk from my kidney for about twelve hours. I recently experienced a large blood clot between my lungs. I went through the removal procedure awake because that is what the doctor recommended. I survived the procedure. After the procedure was completed, the doctor was talking to me, and he said he thinks the right decision was made to stay awake because if I would have gone under anesthesia, he thought he may have lost me. Doctor Death was holding deaths door open, and I survived. I have recuperated and I am now well again.

I try not to think about ill health. It is a part of life and when it strikes us, we will attempt to deal with it when it happens. In conclusion, do I have any recommendations for an active healthy retirement?. Keep your mind active. I enjoy puzzle books. These books keep the cobwebs out of my brain. I am a member of Silver Sneakers and go to Carmondy Recreation Center to walk my mile and bicycle my five miles at least three times a week. I feel better and sleep heavier since I have taken up this exercise program. Carmondy Recreation Center has many types of physical fitness equipment so you can design your own activity program. Keep up with a social life. We are social beings and social activity is very important for the well-being and happiness in your life.

Attempt to have a financial plan. If you are broke, retirement will not be fun. There are many other forms of entertainment other than television. Enjoy television as a last resort. Finally, be positive, be active, and be happy



# A JOURNEY OF FAITH AND RELIGION

November 9 2023

I was born and raised a Catholic in the forties. I suppose I should say when I was born my mother was a Catholic and she raised me as a Catholic. I had no choice in that matter. I was in my mother's womb when Pearl Harbor was bombed by the Japanese. I am now over eighty and this will be my journey of faith and religion.

First a little history of my family. My mother was a born and raised Catholic. Her mother, my grandma immigrated from Germany around the 1890's when she was seven years old. She was a devout Catholic. She mothered fourteen children, seven of whom did not survive birth or lived less than a year. That is hard to comprehend having that many children. My father was born in Iowa as a Baptist. I heard that he left his parents farm because he didn't agree with the Baptist ways, and they said, "as long as you live here you practice the Baptist ways." He was in his late teens so I would guess he was also ready to go on his own and that was only one of the reasons. He ended up in Denver Colorado.

My mother was born in Minnesota and moved to Denver Colorado with family when it was determined that they should move to a dryer climate because her father had asthma and the climate change may help him. Unfortunately, he passed away soon after the move. There my grandma was in a new city with seven children to feed and support all under twenty years old. My mother was in seventh grade and had to quit school with her older brothers and sisters to start to help bring in money to survive. There were also three sisters below my mother's age that were too young to work. Grandma had no formal education since she was seven years old when she came from Germany. I never heard much about my grandma's history. I never heard who she came to the US with or how she met my grandpa. Grandma brought in laundry and scrubbed floors for income to support the family. In those days assistant programs did not exist. My mother worked at a laundry and dry-cleaning facility. In those days there were no apparent child labor laws. My mother passed away in her seventies from bone cancer and I speculate that those harsh chemicals she was exposed to when working at this laundry was the deciding factor for her acquiring cancer.

I do not know much about the romance of my parents. All I remember is they met because they both worked at the laundry. When they became married my mother was in her late twenties and my father was three years' younger than her. Since my mother was a Catholic, she demanded that they get married by a Catholic priest. Because my father was not a Catholic, they could not get married in the church. They could only get married in the church office. Also, my father had to sign an agreement that he would allow all children to be raised Catholic. During those times mixed marriages were highly frowned upon and did not encourage or make it easy to happen. One may think my mother was probably pregnant at the time. I thought that also and I checked into it and found out they were married in August and my brother was not born until the following October of the next year. Therefore, no, she was not pregnant when they got married. The things she said to me when I was growing up and when my hormones were becoming active, and she believed that sex outside of marriage was very sinful she abided by that belief. That may be the reason she did not get married until her late twenties since most of that time many got married in their late teens or early twenties. The three younger sisters were married before my mother, and I think one or two of them were with a child when they married. Two out of the three sisters became divorced, and one ended up with three or four husbands. In fact, one sister divorced, and the other sister married him. That ended up in divorce also. I would speculate that was another reason for her late marriage by seeing the failures of her sisters.



My mother is Catholic, my grandma is Catholic, and my dad signed an agreement that the children will be raised Catholic. Therefore, I am baptized as soon as possible. At the time the belief was if a baby dies before they are baptized, they do not go to heaven, they go to a place called Limbo and spend eternity in Limbo. I don't have a clue what the belief is now. All I know is that I was baptized at a young age. I do not ever remember meeting my god parents. I think my mother told me who they were, but they were never a part of my life.

Recently my wife asked me if I remember my mother or grandmother saying nightly prayers when going to bed. I told her "No I do not remember anything about that kind of event". Since they were strong believers in religion, I would imagine they did that when I was young. Since I do not remember anything about evening prayers it obviously did not leave a lasting impression on me. I do remember during the day them talking to me about God and what is right and wrong and what is expected to be good. I remember my mother and grandmother sitting there and saying their rosary and they would say they need some quiet time.

At five years old I started going to kindergarten at a public school. These were scary times; the school was maybe ten blocks away and my mother would walk me to school and come pick me up after school, around 3:30 in the afternoon. My world was expanding. Since I was not going to a parochial school, I was told I would have to go to catechism after Sunday mass and learn about my faith and religion. On Sundays my dad would take mom, grandma, and my brother to Sunday mass. An hour later he would come to pick us up. Now he had to make two trips, one to pick up mom, grandma and brother. Then an hour later to pick me up. I never heard him complain about the situation. He did uphold his agreement to allow the children to be raised Catholic. After a period, they decided I was old enough to come home by myself. They did have to bribe me though. They gave me money to buy a candy bar from the drug store on the way home.

In a couple of years, it was time for first communion and first confession. I do not remember much about either event. I do remember that you had to fast until you received the communion. You would eat the previous evening and then must wait until communion time. By that time, you were starving. I do have some photos of me all dressed up in my white clothes though. The first confession was scary. Here I am seven years old, and I am supposed to remember all the sins I have committed. What kind of sins does a seven-year-old commit? I have a feeling I made up most of what I confessed. During that era all were sinners and it was a hard job to make it to heaven.

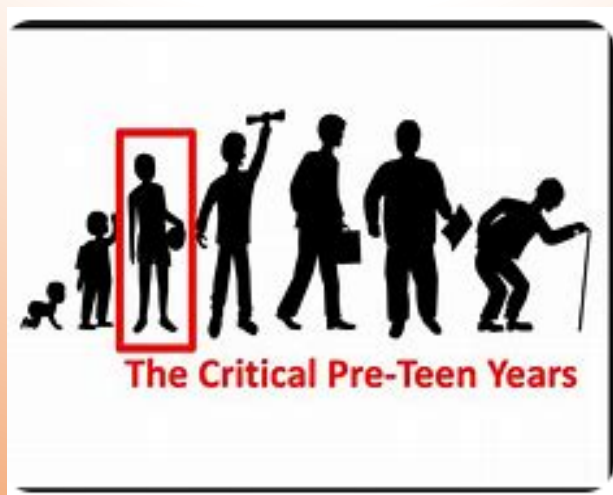


After communion and confession came confirmation. I was around thirteen at the time. This was the sacrament when you confirm your belief in the Catholic beliefs. You become a soldier of God. This ceremony was so important that the bishop had to officiate, not just a mere parish priest. He would ask a bunch of questions to make sure you knew the laws of the church and would give you a lite slap on the cheek to affirm you were willing to die for the church beliefs. I just did what was expected at the time. Now if I had to do it at my age now, I wonder if my response would be the same.

When I was fifteen Grandma passed away. Grandma lived with us all the time I was alive. In fact, I slept with grandma when I was young because of the small home we lived in. She was part of my faith journey. Somewhere in our time together grandma said to me, "Tom, the Lord will never expect you to do something that knows you cannot do." I remember more than many of the statements I heard in religious classes. Also, when she was on her death bed, we would go visit her and she would not take time to visit with us, saying she was busy talking to the two angels in the corner waiting for her. There will be the ones that will say, "she was just hallucinating and there really wasn't anyone there talking to her." I do not care. I remember seeing the peace she was in, and she had no fear of passing on. This experience made me think that there is more than likely something after death. That is more than all the religious teaching I experienced from so-called professionals.

So, this is fifteen-eighteen years of religious experience and teaching in my life. What I got from this was God was someone to fear and you will have to work hard to ever be worthy of a continuance after death. For many years I lived in fear and guilt. I tried to be a good Catholic. I went to Sunday mass, didn't eat meat on Fridays, tried not to think of sexual thoughts and all their other rules of the era. At this age I thought that the chances of making the grade was slim next to none. I was a mere mortal and when I went to the pearly gates the master accountant would be there with the general ledger of all my sinful events. I would never make the grade.

Here I am close to the end of my teenage years, recently graduated from high school and my formal religious education was over. My teen age years were hard for me. I don't know why. It could have been those hormones rushing through my body and I was changing in ways that I did not understand. could have been the conflict I was experiencing between the world I was living in and what my religious training told me the way it should be. Or maybe the neighborhood environment I grew up in. I am sure I will never know why it was a difficult period for me.





I know one thing for sure I was having a hard time dealing with the situation with sex in this world and what my religious training was telling me. The religious training was saying any kind of sex was sinful outside of marriage and once you were married everything was ok. I thought, "how can that be?" The creator made us and now this creation can't be used until the circumstances are right. What about the millions in this world where marriage is not available. Do they have to pay for that?

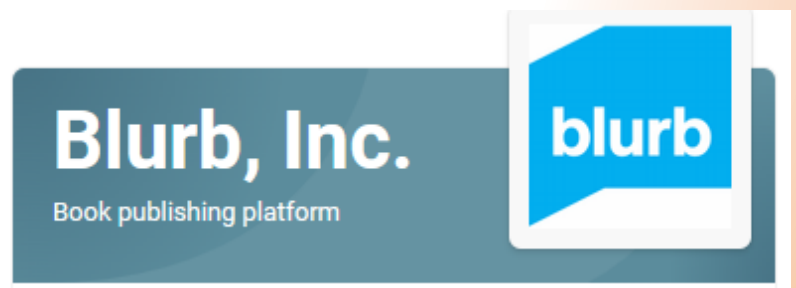
I didn't have a sister in the family, so I learned about the biological differences outside of the family. I remember going to the drugstore with my friends and looking at the Playboy magazines on the upper shelf of the news rack. Whoever created the female body sure knew how to make it desirable to the male population and another source of temptation to sin. My mother also made it difficult for me too. Many times, she said to me. You should marry someone with the same religion. I suppose this came from because she married a Baptist, and she was Catholic and that was the trend in that era to stay within your own religion and race. I met a young girl in grade school, and we really clicked. We were close through our school years. Unfortunately, she was not Catholic and what my mother said many times stuck in the back of my mind. During our high school years, I intentionally made a point to avoid her and got farther and farther away from her. I am sure she wondered, what happened? Well, she went her way, and I went my way. Forty years or so later something happened that I will cover later.

Another thing that my mother told me was, "Tom don't forget that girls, (women) get pregnant. Many women intentionally get pregnant to get their Mrs. Degree. Well, that scared me. Now I started looking at women differently. Are they attracted to me or are they just looking for a husband. I am sure my mother was just trying to make my life easier and avoid possible pitfalls in life and she didn't realize how I took it.

Here I am almost past my teen years. I am a practicing Catholic, not by choice, it was what I was trained and raised up in. In that era the religion was a fear and guilt organization. If you were human, you were a sinner and you had to work hard to be worthy of eternity in heaven. They had mortal and venial sins. If you died with a mortal sin on your soul, you went directly to hell, no ifs ands or buts about it. Venial sins were not as bad mortal sins but after death you would have to spend time in purgatory for those sins. The vision I had of final reconciliation was that the Lord was there with the gigantic ledger, and I had to justify every little thing I did in my life. I always thought, "how am I going to- - - - -"

**THIS STORY WILL CONTINUE IN THE NEXT ISSUE!**





*#BlurbBooks*

