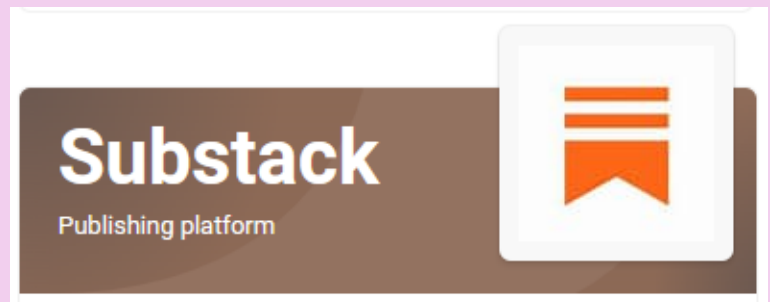




COMMENTS ABOUT ANYTHING



**HOLY SHEPHERD
WRITING GROUP**

TOM TRELOAR

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

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Eighty-One seasoned years, retired and looking for a new challenge. Born and raised in the Denver Metro area and I have a lot of memories and stories to share. Many subjects will be covered and no set routine.

The secret of getting ahead is
getting started.
Mark Twain

Back To Writing

April 17, 2024
Word Press



The decision was made last summer. I have had WordPress site since 2009 and I let it go dormant until last summer. I also opened up a Sub Stack account at the same time since I forgot that I had this account. Now I am posting on both accounts.

Over a year ago I had a life-threatening event and I thought I was going to breath my last breath. Miraculously I survived this serious event. My blood clot During the three days in ICU, I had plenty of time to search for the purpose of my survival. I still feel there is a reason I was given a second chance. After six months of recuperating and still searching for the reason I survived, and I had the thought maybe I should share my thoughts, ideas and stories in a blog type format. I heard about Sub Stack on a news article and started blogging and then I remembered about my WordPress account and revitalized it. I now have over 200 posts on WordPress and over 50 on Sub Stack. Some posts are the same on both sites. I also Have a Blurb account.

blurb.com/user/tomtreloar that I have also had for a long time with a selection of books I have published. I then discovered that they now have a magazine publishing section, and this would fit perfectly for me. The name is **Ramblings Magazine**. Recently Writers Digest started following me on **X** (formerly twitter) and this news excited me. People must be noticing this mere spec in this gigantic universe. Now I have seen about freelance copywriting. I am retired and it appears that my finances will last longer than me, so I do not need the money. However, I will

consider the opportunity if it happens to come my way.

In conclusion, deciding to resurrect writing and posting has been a good decision for me. It gives me something else to do and I am learning more about the internet and software used. Where this all goes, who knows?

Early Morning April 19, 2024 Word Press

To be honest the first thing that comes to mind in the morning is,
I really have to Pee!

My Eyes are Killing Me.

April 19, 2024 Word Press



It is that time of the year again. Spring allergies have attacked me full force. A couple of days ago my nose started to run and I looked around and sure enough, the trees were starting to leaf up and the fruit trees were all filled with blossoms. I thought, oh no, it is the time of year for itchy, scratchy, red eyes.

Before I turned fifty, I didn't have allergies, but as I got older, they started to attack me and the older I age the worse they get. I read that this is a characteristic of the aging process in some people. I guess I am stuck with the problem. Fortunately, it only lasts a couple of weeks and once the trees are finished doing their thing, I am ok.

Over the counter medication such as Alavert and Claritin work for the runny nose discomfort and the runny nose can be tolerated. The itchy, burning,

running eyes are another issue. I don't know how many eyes drops and ointments I have tried and to no relief. The best that has worked for me at the moment is Thera Tears and Pataday. Unfortunately, my itchy eyes bother me for about two weeks. I have learned to not rub my eyes no matter what. That only makes it worse. It sure has been difficult to refrain from an automatic response.

I have talked to eye doctors, and they just told me allergies are caused by your immune system and it thinks the pollen is a threat to your eyes and attempts to protect your body from infection.

Apparently, they do not have any suggestions for the discomfort. one consolation is that it only lasts a couple of weeks, and it will all be over.

Time to go back being uncomfortable and grouchy.

Unfortunately, high school was a difficult time in my life. I guess it was the hormonal change and just the period of growing up. But, during that time I was angry and mad. I was mad at myself, my parents and everyone around me. I do not know why. I graduated from high school, and I never attended one high school reunion. I never kept track of any high school friends.

On to full time employment and a period of army time and making friends. On to married life and raising children, making more friends. Life continues and retirement happens and a move to a new home. More friends.

I have had many friends throughout my life. However, my biggest regret is I never kept in touch with the friends. Once a period of life is over, I would lose contact with the friends. My wife Dee has kept contact with friends throughout her life. In fact she is having lunch with three from her grade school tomorrow.

Therefore, my biggest regret is that I never kept in contact with friends out of my past and I could have been friendlier than what I was.

My Regrets

April 23, 2024

Word Press



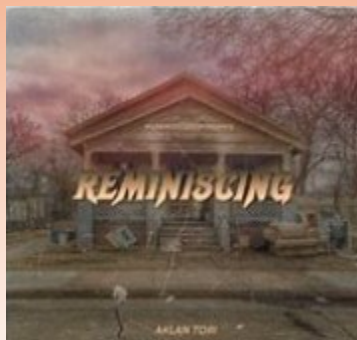
As I reconcile my life, I have come to the conclusion that my biggest regret is that I could have been friendlier than what I was and kept in touch with friends throughout my life.

In my young years I was scared. Life scared me. I was afraid to try things and go places. The first day of kindergarten was traumatic. All those strange kids and a new environment really scared me. For safety reasons my mother walked me to school and would be waiting for me when school was out. Telling me to "don't talk to strangers" didn't help me either. I survived and went to junior high and high school next. During that time, I made many friends and did what was normal for the period.



Reminiscing is My Interest

April 26, 2024 Word Press



I think of the past more than the future. I am in my senior years and have over seventy-five years of memories, experiences, and good times. I am sure this is obvious in my articles I post. If it wasn't for my past, I would have nothing to write about.

I am just a mere mortal. I don't jump over tall buildings or stop speeding bullets. I have not done or accomplished anything spectacular in my life. I love my country and I am experiencing the American dream. I am praying that the American dream continues for many generations to come. I have been retired for over fifteen years and my American dream is close to being over. If you have read previous postings, you see that most are about memories or past experiences.

Friends and relatives have said I should print out my articles so they would not be lost. I said, "that is the purpose of TomT2.0 on WordPress." However, that did make me think and that is when I came up with this Ramblings Magazine idea. Where this ends up only time will tell. I started with the WordPress postings and the next resource will be articles from a writing group I was a member in and then articles from Yourhub.com published in the Rocky Mountain Newspaper that was closed around 2012. I estimate that I have enough articles for over fifteen issues. What happens after that who knows?

Therefore, if the people who said that they would be interested in having a printed copy they have the facilities to order a copy of the magazine and it will be mailed to them. Talk is cheap and will see how many put down money for a printed copy.

Camping Tales

April 29, 2024 Word Press



When I was Young the exciting thing to do during the summer school vacation was to sleep outside between the houses or in the back yard. Two or three of the neighborhood kids would have a campout. It was spooky and scary staying outside with no parents nearby. Of course, this was before your parents had to be concerned about rampant crime and many things could be done without that fear.

My next camping experience was after I started work full time and some co-workers were campers and they would invite me to go with them to camp up in the

mountains. Fishing and camping over the weekend. What an experience. I never did like sitting around the campfire though. It seemed like the smoke from the fire always followed me and my eyes would burn, and my clothes would retain that smell of smoke for a long period.

My next camping experience was during basic training. You received a shelter half and you had to find a buddy so the shelter half could be combined to make a pup tent. The army didn't call it camping though, they had their own name, it was called bivouac. Then in Germany they had maneuvers and had these large tents that held eight or ten troops. I can't remember what kind of tent they called them.

My final tale was after I was married and had two sons. We had friends that had a van, and I became enthused about a camping van. I bought a delivery van from the company I worked for and converted it to a camping van. The kids would sleep outside in a tent and the adults slept in the van. It was a fun time of my life. Unfortunately, I became divorced, and the budget could not afford a van and camping.

After my life became more stabilized, we occasionally went camping. I would rent a RV for the weekend or the week. It was fun, but I did not enjoy driving the wide RV and the length of the RV. I learned to take a tranquilizer before I started the trip. It was fun and enjoyable though and it gave me many good memories.

My camping days are over now.

Past Experiences

May 2, 2024 Word Press



What gives me direction in my life? Everything that I have learned or experienced in my life. From birth until now everything that I have learned or experienced in life gave me direction. I learned the necessities in life like going to the bathroom in the toilet instead of my diaper. My mother raised me as a Catholic and that gave me direction in my young years. Going to kindergarten and twelve more years of schooling added on to this direction of life.

Army service gave me a vast source of knowledge of how to deal with many different personalities and cultures. You meet hundreds of people from different parts of the country, and this was a great help in my later years dealing with people. This learning experience was very helpful in my journey of life and do not regret it one bit.

Employment in private industry, marriage, raising children, divorce and the heartaches and hurt involved in all of the above made me realize that the perfect life I have dreamed of may not come true. These events made me realize that my dreams may not be the purpose for my time on this planet.

After a period of time, I found a new direction with a new loving wife and her loving family. This told me there is light at the end of dark tunnels. Following this I retired and discovered that "Every day is Saturday." and the stress of full-time employment is over. We also moved into the home of my dream. These events also gave me a direction in life.

A little over a year ago I was standing in front of death's door and Dr. Death was holding the door open. I survived and as my wife says, "your room was not ready yet." Again, another life experience has changed my direction in life. Life is not over and according to statistics the survival rate of my illness was three to five percent.

In conclusion, many events in my life and learning experiences has changed my life. I believe the purpose in life is to learn, and one should learn as much as then can in this short visit on planet of earth.

[A BoneFish Grill experience](#) Published 4/23/2008 YourHub.com

On Monday April 21st Dee and I went out to dinner for our anniversary. We were planning on going with another couple; however, the man of the other couple woke up with an abscessed tooth Dee and I decided to go anyway because we have never been to this restaurant and we still wanted to celebrate our anniversary. With that in mind, here is our experience We went to the one on South Wadsworth and Crestline Ave. in Southwest Denver. The reservations were for 5:30 and there was about six other tables occupied at that time. When we finished, I would estimate that two-thirds of the tables were occupied. It is a nice atmosphere in the restaurant with the bar on one side and the dining area on the other side. The tables are placed so that you have enough room without feeling cramped. The waitress knew the menu and was very knowledgeable about the product Bonefish Grill has to offer. They have a wide selection of wines. I don't have a clue on what is a good wine or a not so good wine. We just had of glass of Berringer Zinfandel. Dark red wines and I do not get along. It was \$5.50 a glass. I don't know what the market price is for a glass of wine these days. We drank it and enjoyed it and didn't worry about the price. They have a broad selection of meals. There is about nine starters or appetizers and three types of salads. You can pick from four different side vegetables. Their specialty is different types of fish. However, they also offer meats and pasta plates. I chose the sea scallops and the gulf shrimp. My wife tried the Fontina chop, which is a fancy name for a pork chop. We shared a salad together. The salad was very good. I thought the scallops and shrimp were tasty. They use a wood burning grill to cook their fish dishes. My wife's pork chop must have been over a half inch thick. It looked very tasty from my side of the table. Dee said it was good. The entrees are served with a vegetable garnish and this was very good. You also get to pick a side from the following: garlic whipped potatoes, potatoes au gratin, angel hair with marinara, herbed jasmine rice, or steamed Vegetable Medley. I had the angel hair and Dee had the potatoes au gratin. We had the same comment, kind of flat with no taste. Overall, we thought the dinner was good, not terrific, but good Adding a little research to this article I went to Bonefish Grill's website and found out that the place started in St. Petersburg Florida on January 15, 2000. They are now in about twenty-five states and have three in the area, Westminster, Littleton, and Greenwood Village. The website is pretty comprehensive and you can view the menus for each location. Finally, in my opinion I would say this restaurant is one step above an Applebee's, Olive Garden or a Black-eyed Pea

Vicks VapoRub and Toenail Fungus May 4, 2024 Word Press



Some years back a nurse friend of mine were talking and I mentioned that I had some pain and discomfort on the top of my big toes. She said I could have fungus underneath my toenails and that more than likely is the reason for my discomfort. She suggested using Vicks VapoRub to help alleviate the discomfort. I thought "what are you smoking?"

Anyway, I gave it a try. After showering I put lotion on my calloused heels and started applying VapoRub on the top of my big toes and around the cuticles. After a week or so I started to feel the difference and in a couple of months I had no discomfort at all.

At my next wellness exam with my PCP when she was checking my feet, I mentioned about the VapoRub procedure and she said, "oh that is an old wife's tale that has been around a long time." She didn't recommend it or discourage it.

When writing this story, I thought about going to the internet and found this.

[Vicks VapoRub is a topical ointment that may help treat toenail fungus¹. Its active ingredients, camphor and eucalyptus oil, have been found to have a "positive clinical effect" in treating toenail fungus¹. To use Vicks VapoRub for toenail fungus treatment, you should²:](#)

- Thoroughly file the nail.
- Rub the Vicks VapoRub on the toenail, the affected part, and the edges of your toes.
- Wear socks to prevent the ointment from soiling your sheet.
- Do this continuously for at least nine months to completely get rid of the toenail fungus.

I am not suggesting or recommending this procedure. I am just sharing this story.

Mother's Day May 12,2024 May 12,2024 Word press



Today is Mother's Day and a couple of days ago I realized that it has been over forty years since mom passed away. I was in her body for nine months. She nourished me, kept me warm and protected me while I was just growing inside her. I am sure I created her a lot of pain since she commented to me that I was a large baby.

From birth until my twenties, she fed me, protected me, taught me many things about living and life. As I look back at my life, I was a handful during my young years. One time while standing in the grocery store behind this lady. The lady turned around and said to me, "you little snot!". My mother asked her what the problem was, and the lady replied. "Your son just pinched me on the butt!" I then received the lesson that you don't pinch ladies' butts.

The teenage years were very difficult for me which today I still do not know why. I was angry at the world and didn't like myself. I took everything for granted and gave my mother many trying times in those years. I got involved with the wrong crowd of teenagers and was very fortunate I didn't get arrested or paid long term for any deeds we did. My mother continued to love me and never left my side.

When I was drafted into the army, she faithfully wrote me a letter every week. If it wasn't for the letters from mom, I would have received very few letters from home during military times. I had very few friends at that time. I am the type of person that does not attempt to continue a friendship.

Coming home from the military my parents welcomed me back into their home and allowed me to live there until marriage came into my life. I did have to pay room and board while I lived there though. It was good for me because I needed to realize in this world nothing is free. Mom loved me just as much as she did when I was young.

Through marriage, a divorce, living alone mom was always beside me. Her love never faulted. I now regret that I took this love for granted and I wish I would have done more and showed more appreciation for this everlasting love. I am sure mom is looking down at me now and saying, "Tom, I still love you".

Mom, I love you. I am sorry it took me so long to realize how much I love you.



I should have done more. May 12,2024 Word Press



Since I am in my seasoned years, I think it is too late to think about an improvement I could make.

However, I can think about what I could have done differently. Throughout my life there was a telephone. In my younger years the phone was a four-party system, and each party had a special ring, so the parties knew whether to answer or not. It is amazing how this technology has progressed.

Throughout my years I always waited for the phone to ring and very seldom started a call. It is one of the many questions that I don't know why. I still do not like to make phone calls. Therefore, I should have made more phone calls instead of just waiting for the phone to ring .

A World of Fruit _ May 13,2024 Word press



Without a doubt my favorite fruit is bananas. A half of banana with my boring breakfast cereal. My doctor recommended that I eat a half of banana because of the high sugar content, and I am prediabetic. You peel them instead of wash them, how convenient.

Next is the grape. I prefer green grapes over red. But they do say red grapes a better for you because of the additional antioxidants. Oh well, life is not perfect.

The third pick is oranges. We have become attached to the small Cuties. Some call them clementines. Standard size oranges are just too large for me and the sometimes can be a job to peel.

One must not forget apples. An apple a day keeps the doctor away.

Finally, are olives. I enjoy green olives. Sometimes I eat 6-7 or a dozen at a time. These are the small olives, not the martini size large olives. The olive haters ask me, "how can you stand them, they are too bitter?" I reply, "In a previous life I was a Roman soldier and during a march to a new battle we would stop by the olive orchard and eat them right off the tree." If you believe this tale, I have a bridge in Arizona you can buy.

A Leader and a Follower May 15, 2024 Word Press



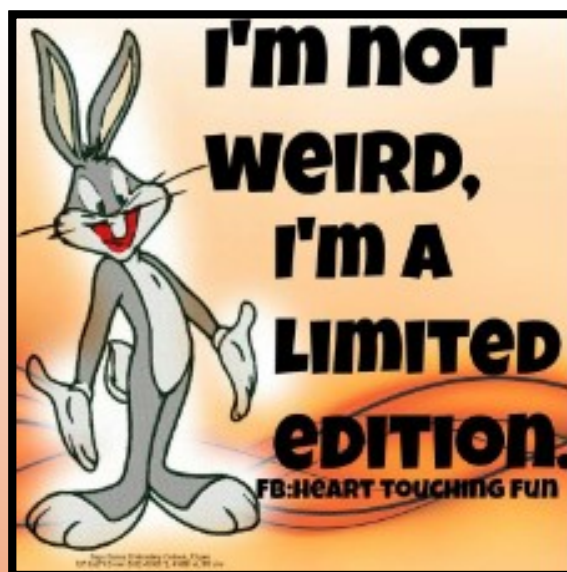
I have been a leader and a follower. In my growing years I was a follower. You learn to lead by following. Throughout my growing years I was never a head boy or the leader of a school club. It was easier to follow in army period than lead.

After army life I decided it is time for me to move forward in a private industry. I became a team lead and worked my way up to swing shift supervisor. Two or three years later I became a department manager for a large electronic manufacturer. I held that position for over twenty years. I think that could be classified as a leader.

During that time, I hired and fired for a department of over fifteen employees. We had office workers, warehouse personnel, delivery drivers, and outside salespeople. There was also a building. I had to get the contractors to maintain the building, lease delivery vans and have a solution for any unforeseen problem. The only requirement from corporate office was to show five percent net profit every year.

It was an experience and sometimes very stressful. Unfortunately, when I was only forty-six the corporation closed 13 warehouses across the nation, and I became unemployed. I survived the transition from a high paying executive to a person that had a difficult time finding a second career.

Now it has been over eighteen years since I retired, and all things worked out well.





I have been a **X** user (Formerly twitter) since 2010. I have fun with **X** and have enjoyed this trip. Some have negative feelings after Elon Musk made the purchase. I can't really see much difference. Recently they introduced The Grok. I do not really understand the platform or why I have access to it because I am not a premium+ member. I just have a blue check mark. Grok is an AI platform where you can ask questions and AI comes up with the response by accessing the information from **X**. I have just asked stupid questions and I am having fun with it.

I asked Grok, "what is the purpose of Grok?" AI replied, "*The Grok platform, developed by xAI, is an AI-powered chatbot designed to assist users in various domains, including Blockchain technology, Crypto, and more. It is specifically built to help with tasks such as no-code smart-contract programming, debugging, market analysis, and even creating NFTs. Grok distinguishes itself by offering a unique and fundamental advantage: real-time knowledge of the world via the X platform. This allows it to provide up-to-the-minute information and insights into trending topics and conversations.*" Do you understand that? I don't.

I then asked Grok, "who is Tomt 2.0?" This was the response. "*Tom T2.0 is a persona behind various online platforms, including tomt2.com and a blogspot domain. He seems to be a senior individual with a rich history, reminiscing about his past and sharing his experiences through his writings. Tom T2.0 has a strong interest in reminiscing and has over seventy-five years of memories, experiences, and good times to draw from. He is also a proud American, expressing his love for his country and the American dream. His online presence includes posts about personal experiences, such as memories of Thanksgiving and Mother's Day. He has also shared information about his life, including his military service and his regret for not appreciating the love of his mother more. Tom T2.0 has mentioned being involved with the wrong crowd in his youth but was fortunate to avoid long-term consequences. Additionally, Tom T2.0 has discussed his health, mentioning a near-death experience and his ongoing battle with allergies. He also shared an anecdote about his love for olives, which he attributes to a past life as a Roman soldier. In summary, Tom T2.0 is an individual who shares his life experiences and reflections on various online platforms, with a focus on reminiscing about his past and his love for his country.*"

I have no concerns what Grok found on me. However, it is concerning how fast this information was retrieved. In less than thirty seconds AI composed this paragraph. Just think of all the information that could be retrieved on you after a longer amount of time. In conclusion, I will continue to ask Grok dumb questions until they want me to become a premium+ member.

New Mother Celebration

October 26, 2006 Writing Group

The clouds were still dark and scary after this big thunderstorm just passed. It was still storming badly to the east of us. However, this storm did not spoil the celebration for the new mother. I guess you could call her a new mother. It was just verified that she was to be a mother in about 6 ½ months. It is our tradition to celebrate when a new mother is blessed with a child. We had a band and music. The food was terrific. Everything was perfect except for one thing. No one remembered to invite the new mother to be!

This was an in-class exercise. You were to select 4 random numbers from 1 to 10. After you selected your numbers, you were given a sheet with “character time”, “setting”, and “situation/challenge”. Then according to your numbers, you selected would compose a story around the settings. My numbers came out to be “a new mother”, “a celebration party”, “after a big thunderstorm has passed”, and something embarrassing has just happened.

Touched by God November 26, 2006 Writing Group

When I first started to think about this topic I immediately thought about when I was put in danger and for some reason, I survived these dangerous encounters. For example, I cut my left arm by falling on a broken bottle. This could have ended my short life if the broken glass severed the main artery in my arm. Did God touch me? When I was a young and reckless teenage, I did many stupid and dangerous things and survived. Did God touch me? I was in two vehicle accidents when I was in the army, which could have very easily ended my life. Did God touch me?

I then started to envision other aspects of my simple life. I started to look at things we take for granted. You can look at this world and universe and look at how unique and beautiful this world is. This world provides all the necessities of life. Look at all the beautiful flowers and plants. Look at the sunsets and sunrises. The mountains and weather are an amazing system. I have fathered two sons and I am very proud of them. I had to go through the pain and hurt of a divorce. However, this painful event resulted in meeting another woman who has a terrific and loving family. We married and now I am enjoying a special kind of love from her and her children and family. Look around you and think did these wonders just happen? Or have this world and you been touched by God?

Recall events in your life. Think about your childhood, your accomplishments and your family. Did you have an accident in your life and did you survive? Do you have family and friends that you truly love and cherish? Remember the births of your children. Is that a special event in your life or just the correct combination of cells that created life? Where did this life come from? You meet a special person and the two of you connect in a special way. Did this encounter just happen? I can recall many events in my life that appear to have suspicious results and as I become older and hopefully wiser, I am beginning to believe that these events were put in front of me for a specific reason. Did God touch me?

In conclusion, I am convinced that God has touched all parts of my life from the beginning of my life to now. God was there. Many times, I was the normal selfish human and took his presence for granted. Now that I am getting closer to the end of my journey, I am beginning to realize that God has touched me. Has God touched you?

My Favorite Machine

March 27, 2007 Writing Group

My favorite machine has to be the computer and the software available to run the computer. Many times, I am sitting in front of the computer and I think where would I be if computers were not available? If it wasn't for computers, I may not be in this group tonight. Before computers it seemed like I spent more time correcting, retyping, and duplicating than expressing creative thoughts and ideas. Spell check, cut, copy and paste sure has made writing less cumbersome and more creative. This may be one of the prime reasons I waited so long in my life before I pursued this desire to put my thoughts and ideas on paper. One never knows what today would look like without a modern convenience that we are so accustomed to using.

Cell phones, satellite TV, microwave ovens and many other conveniences have progressed so much in the last 10-15 years. There is nothing that I can currently think of that I don't like or strongly disagree with. I guess the one I do not have much desire to have been a camera merged with my cell phone. I am happy with the cell phone that makes and receives calls. If I want to take a picture, I will use my digital camera.

Retirement

Not sure of date Writing group

The big day came in September of 2006. That big day was retirement. I had good thoughts and bad thoughts. For example, the absence of the stress of a responsible job will be good. I won't have to get up or be at work at a specified time. I can plan and do things that I never took time to do when I was working. I could go on and on about the benefits of reaching and being able to enjoy retirement.

On the other hand, I had reservations about retirement. Will my financial planning be adequate? Will I fall into the rut of being bored and not have enough interest in my idle times? I also thought about that I am now on the downside of my life and the inevitable will happen sooner than later. Also, will my health remain to be good?

In reality, I am enjoying retirement very well. It has been six months since I retired and people ask me, "what do you do?" I respond, "I am recuperating from the last forty-five years. Sure, I still have stress in my life and things don't go as expected. However, every day is Saturday and what I don't get done today I can do tomorrow. My outlook remains to be good and I pray that I retain this outlook as retirement and the later years of my life evolve.



Title and date unknown Writing Group

The best sellers of this period were adventure stories. My first thought was there was even adventure in those times. Any period has adventure. During this time the adventure may not seem as exciting as it was during the actual time. I don't have a clue where this is going. I don't have enough information about the sentence. It doesn't even fit in the title. Oh well, better luck next time. Everyone is still writing so I suppose I had better continue writing and I will look like I am inspired. However, I am really not. It will be interesting to see where the exercise goes.

Don't Let Your Hormones Run Your Life

June 28 Writing Group

This occurred when I was a young teenage. My mind was growing as fast as my body. I was experiencing feelings and emotions that I never had felt before. Hair was growing on my face and other parts of my body. Some people would say I was experiencing puberty. During this time, you could say I was very unruly and out of control. I remember the day my mother looked at me and said, "don't let your hormones control your life." I believe that short sentence gave me a different outlook on the responsibilities of life. It is difficult to say that my life would be different if I never heard those words. However, I believe it made a big difference in how I looked at the interaction of people I have encountered in my life. It was such a good phrase that I used the same sentence when the time was right for my sons. Again, I don't know whether it made a difference in their life. I hope it helped when they were making life's decisions.

What Matters

July 26th Writing Group

As you go through life different things at different times matter. When you are a baby, you have basic priorities. The basic elements of having a fresh diaper, food in your stomach, and being comfortable are what matters to you. These are not as important in your later years. What matters to a three-year-old is entirely different than that of a newly born infant. You can take a trip through your entire life and what matters now more than likely did not matter at a different time. However, there are things that matter for some people most of their life. A spiritual belief can be one of the matters that is important to many people all of their life. Humans are social animals and the interaction Time is up.



Frit and Leo

September 27th Writing Group

Frit & Leo
Louisiana alligator
Baseball hat vest
Voodoo skull necklace top hat
Don't like shrimp cottage cheese
Fried chicken grits
Voodoo religion Baptist
Baseball Cards Butterflies

I forget what were the rules. I think you had to pick from above and write a story.

Frit and Leo were twins. Born in the swamps of Louisiana on June 5 1980. Other than that, they were very different. Frit always wore his baseball hat and Leo had his collection of vests with his favorite black top hat. Frit Followed voodoo and always wore his voodoo skull necklace. Leo picked up the Baptist religion from the traveling missionary and he was always attempting to convert Frit to the Baptist following. They didn't even like the same kind of food. Frit hated shrimp but loved fried chicken. Leo could not stand
Time ran out.

Don't remember title or date Writing Group

I don't remember very much about the Korean war. Except for the Movie Tone News that they used to play in the schools at that time

After that came the Vietnam war. This war affected me the most since I was at military age during this conflict. I was drafted into the army in March 1964 and I wondered if I would have to go to Vietnam. The day I was drafted seven other men were drafted the same day. We got together after our tour and they all went to Vietnam. Fortunately, I was sent to Germany and I was

Time ran out

My Broken Toilet

July 15th Writing Group

It needed fixing. The valve in the toilet would never shut off completely. Something had to be done. Should I spend two hundred dollars and have professional plumber come out or should I go to Home Depot and spend ten dollars for a new toilet valve and save \$190.00? After all I am on a fixed income and money management is important. Well, my Scottish ancestors took over and said, "Tom, you can fix it and spend the savings on your wife, Dee. She will appreciate it."

I went to Home Depot and purchased the higher priced valve. One was \$9.98 and the cheaper valve was \$7.98. The valves were both made in China. Except for the price I don't have a clue what the difference was. Everyone that has repaired anything knows that least two or more additional trips are required to pick up some item you failed to get the first trip.

I am home and I start on this great project. I turn off the valve underneath the toilet and flush the toilet to drain the reservoir. After the reservoir is drained, I disconnect the line from the turnoff valve to the toilet. Wouldn't you know it. The turnoff valve did not shut off completely and a steady stream of water continued to flow from the line. To stop this leak, I had to turn off all of the water in the house.

Another trip to Home Depot for a wall mounted shut off valve. I get to Home Depot and discover that there is more than one type of that chrome looking valves. I ask the attendant to lead me to the most common one. He points it out, I pay for it and come home.

I removed the valve from the wall. This was a job in itself. It must have been twenty years since that valve was touched. Would you know it the valve
Ran out of time

Hardest Part of School Year August 28, 2008 Writing Group

The hardest part of my school years was returning to school after summer vacation. This time was very difficult for me. I became apprehensive and nervous. This time of year, gave me my first lesson and experience of stress. As usual I would let my imagination run wild. What would I wear? Would I know anyone from last year? What kind of supplies should I bring? These are just a few of the things I would fret about. Changing schools was also a frightening experience. Going from grade school to junior high and then to high school just compounded the stress level of returning to school in the fall. There were even years that this stress made me sick to my stomach and I would go to school not feeling very well. What a way to start off the New Year. I went to school all stressed out and to my surprise almost everything turned out to be fine. My imagination was just playing tricks on me. Did this affect me throughout my life? Sure, it did. This stress taught me about the stress I must deal with most of my life. Fortunately, somewhere I learned to deal with the stress of life. I was able to use stress to my advantage and some of my best moments were in stressful times. I would say thirty to forty years I had stress conquered. As I age now, I have noticed that stress is beginning to win again. Stress is beginning to be harder and harder for to deal with and I am beginning to succumb to the stressful ways of my young years.

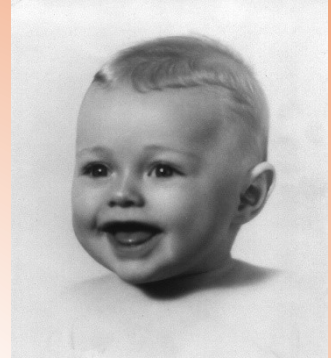
A Piece of Clothing September 27, 2008 Writing Group

The first piece of clothing that came to mind was this dark green kind of a furry, not animal fur, jacket. I had this jacket many years. In fact, I may have had it rat holed somewhere in my garage. If my memory is correct, I think it was the first jacket I purchased with my own money I made from working at the Denver Public Library while I was in high school. I wore it for many years in the winter. It was warm but as I think about it, it was ugly. However, at the time I thought it was pretty nice. As the years went by this jacket was relegated to the back of the closet and largely ignored. In my younger years, eighteen to twenty-eight years I was an avid fisherman. This furry woolly jacket became my fishing jacket. It was warm and the dirt did not show up on this jacket. I would always throw it in the car with all my fishing gear. In fact, it became an important part of my fishing equipment. This coat was part of many memorable fishing adventures. Maybe that is why I thought of this jacket as the first piece of clothing when this prompt was given. Now that my interest has been re-ignited, I will go home and see if I can find that ugly dark green furry jacket that has so many memories attached to it.

A Day of reflection

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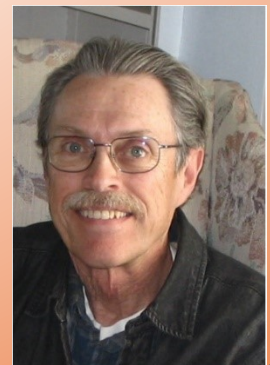
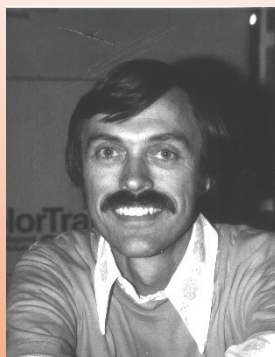
Sunday was my birthday, sixty-six years old. I woke up at five thirty in the morning and started to reflect on my past years. As one might say, "a lot of water has passed under that bridge." I have had good times, bad times, made many mistakes, and made a few good decisions. I have been very fortunate with my health. No major illnesses to speak of. Oh, a bout with an infected kidney, pneumonia, childhood illnesses, but no major life-threatening illness. Health issues have been absent in my life so far. In spite of smoking for over twelve years and drinking in excess more times than I want to admit. I haven't smoked for over thirty-five years and my drinking days have passed. I even exercise three times or more each week. I recently had my yearly physical examination, and the doctor gave me a clean bill of health. If I don't have any illness, I will come back in a year



I read an article in the newspaper about the five-year anniversary of the Iraq war, and I would guess this made me think of how many wars there has been in my sixty-six years on this earth. I was in my mother's womb when World War II started. Therefore, my life started with a war in progress. After that was the Korean War. I was at military age during the Vietnam War. Fortunately, my military time was spent in Germany instead of the jungles of Vietnam. After that was the First Gulf War. Now I am living through the Iraq War. In my life there have been five wars. I speculate that the war on terrorism will continue long after my passing from this world. That is a lot of wars for a sixty-six period of history. Close to half of my life has been during a war time. I consider myself very fortunate I have not had to experience the pains of war. I missed the pain of Vietnam and my son served two tours in Iraq and returned alive and unharmed.



I have escaped from being a victim of violent crime in this society. A couple of my vehicles have been stolen. However, violent crime such as murders, assaults, and armed robberies has missed me. Daily you see on TV and read in the papers all the crime and violence present in the everyday world. Hopefully I will live my remaining years without experiencing any of this pain and suffering.



My life hasn't been perfect. I have made mistakes. I should have applied myself harder when I was going to school, and I should have continued with more education. During my teenage years I was very hard to be around. Looking back now, I would say I was a king size jerk during that time. I hated the world and the people around me. The only thing that made some sense to me was two years in the active army. During that time, I met many people from many walks of life, and this helped me realize that the world and people are not against me and out to get me. I consider myself very lucky that I survived those difficult years

I had to experience love and a divorce to better appreciate a meaningful relationship. Sometimes learning is a slow painful process. Without this learning experience I don't believe I would be where I am now. I think I have it right this time. I have known Dee, my wife, for close to twenty-five years and I love her and her family. They have put so much enjoyment in my life that I will never be able to repay them.

Here I am sixty-six, retired and happy. Did I plan it that way? I have to say no. Many parts of my life I did very little planning. I would say the reason I am where I am is because life has been very easy and generous to me. I tried to learn from my mistakes and capitalize on the things I did correctly. I could say I should have done this or not have done this, and my life would have been different. However, at the time I did what I thought was best to fit the current situation and made the best of it. There is one thing no one can take away from you and that is your life experiences and the mistakes you make and how you live and correct your mistakes

2008 was not the year to be elected president

Published 11/7/2008 YourHub.com

In the last two days, the DOW has dropped over nine hundred points. Unemployment is over five percent. Recently I heard Donald Trump state that banks are not loaning money even with that gigantic bailout package. The U.S. automakers just visited Washington with their hands out looking for a twenty-five billion dollar help package. This is not the year to be elected president.

There will be a democratic president. The house and the senate will be controlled by the Democrats. What happens in the next two years will be their responsibility. President Bush will not be around to bash and blame. The next two years will be directly on the Democrats shoulders. The days of accountability are here.

For the last eighteen months I have heard that the way to stimulate the economy is to give ninety five percent of the taxpayers a tax cut and make the upper five percent pay more taxes. In the over forty years of my employment, I have never worked for a middle-class employer. I do not understand this philosophy. I depended on the rich or a collection of investors who wanted a return on their investment to provide me with a job. Over tax the rich and they just may take their money out of the country and invest in a friendlier environment.

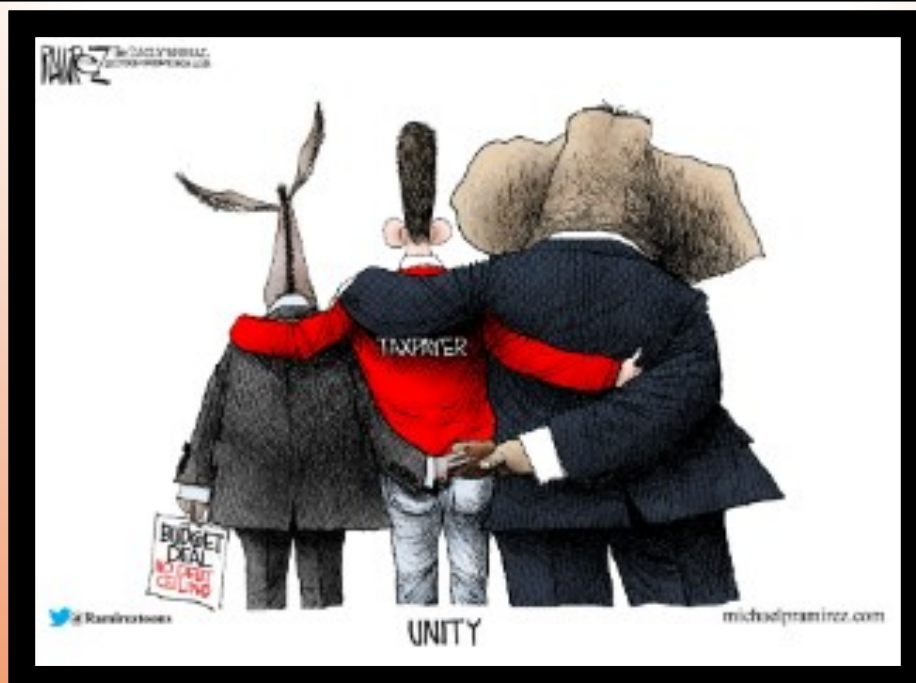
This is a global economy, and companies go where they get a good return on their investment, such as China. Oh, I forgot they will be taxed more if they send jobs out of the country. This is an empty threat in these times. This higher tax philosophy just may cost more jobs and money to relocate overseas.

I have heard that the capital gain taxes will be increased. I am retired and I live off Social Security, a pension and capital gains. I am a small investor in the stock market and if the capital gains taxes increase, I intend to pull out of the stock market and sit it out until the market becomes more inviting. How many investors are thinking about the same action? Maybe this is what has happened to the stock market in the last two days? More money will not be available for American corporations which will probably mean more lost jobs.

I hear that the death tax may return. If that happens, I will be sure that the government does not get a red dime of my estate. I worked all my life for me and my family, not to give my estate to the government in taxes after I was gone. I just may take a trip around the world if the death tax returns.

Where is the money coming for health insurance for everyone? Probably more taxes for everyone. Another thing about universal healthcare is that the additional seventy-four million uninsured will swamp the current healthcare system. Have you ever wanted to see your doctor and you had to wait two or three days to get in? I am sure it did not make you very happy. Add another seventy-four million into the system and you just may have to wait two or three weeks for an appointment. How happy will you be then?

The clock begins to tick on January 20, 2009. The Republicans had their chance, and they blew it. Now the democrats have their chance to show that they have what it takes to make life better in the good old U.S.A. The next congressional election is 2010. If America is not any better off in 2010 the pendulum will begin to swing in the other direction and the balance of power will again shift to the Republicans. Will we be better off in 2010? Let the race begin!



Want to take a trip to Italy? You just can't fit it in your budget at the present time? You could get a little touch of Italy from a local church. On the first Sunday of every month Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church at 3549 Navajo Street Denver, has a "Prima Domenica Mass" at 9:00 am. This is not your ordinary mass because it is spoken in Italian. Following the mass is a cultural reception in the parish hall. I am not of Italian heritage; I am an IBM, (Italian by marriage). I go with my wife Dee and her soon to be ninety-year-old mother Rose Ann. I don't speak Italian and would not have a clue what was being said if it wasn't for the dual language folder handed to you when you arrive. On the left side column is the Italian language and the right column in the English translation. My wife and mother-in-law don't speak very much Italian either. They are both Italian and have long time ties to Mount Carmel Church and the Denver Italian community. This is just one way to keep Italian traditions from being lost in this busy world. I would speculate a large portion of the congregation has moved to other sections of the Denver Metro area. They come back to support and continue Italian traditions they were raised with.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church was established in 1894. It has a rich Italian American history which can be viewed at this link. Inside you will see an altar adorned with many statues, very similar to the churches found in Italy. The outside kind of makes me think of church you would see in a Clint Eastwood spaghetti western out on the hot desert of Arizona or New Mexico.

The cultural reception is basically a meal where you eat and enjoy family and friends. The menu this Sunday was pancakes, sausage and an egg casserole. Coffee and juice is also available. Normally the meal is a free will donation. The following businesses sponsor the reception, Valente's Restaurant, Let's Go Now Travel, Vinnola's Italian Market, Bova's Restaurant, Three Sons' Restaurant, Lombardi's Roman Garden, Vincenza's Bakery & Deli, Delmonico Hall, Nuth'n Fancy Gifts, and Win Home Inspection. There have been times that the turnout almost exceeded the size of the parish hall.

In conclusion, I enjoy the event. This is another piece of Denver's rich history one can enjoy for very little expense. They just had their four- or five-year anniversary of the event and hope to continue for many more. Friendships have grown and nurtured because of the receptions. I experience a culture different from the German, English heritage I was born and raised with. I will be back for more.



And the Winner Is..... Published 12/27/2007 Your.Hub.com

On Dec. 10th I published a blog asking for suggestions on what to get my wife for Christmas. I received some really good suggestions and I thank everyone for their comments and suggestions. Now I know I can depend on my fellow **YourHub.com** bloggers to lead me in the right direction when I need help on anything in the future. Yes, I went with one of the suggestions. Before I announce the winner, I will briefly cover all the comments with a reply to the comments.

Brendan commented, "I think a chocolate fountain would be appropriate. Definitely unnecessary, though. " Good suggestion, however, my wife says chocolate gives her pimples. Sorry, complexion wins. Brendan must have a thing about chocolate, he brings the subject up quite often

Karin commented, "She's wearing a necklace and pin in the photograph, so I vote for jewelry. It doesn't have to be expensive, if she'd disapprove of extravagance; just look through the stuff she has to get an idea of what she likes. " Another excellent idea, I save jewelry when I am in trouble. She has a large selection of jewelry already.

Michael comment was, "Jewelry always works, or maybe a day at the spa with her best friend. Susan still talks about that ..." I covered the jewelry subject, Maybe next year for the spa suggestion.

Charmaine suggestions were "Ha! I always ask for more pants for Christmas. One can never have enough pants. Or socks. I like to pretend I'm a wine aficionado, so I would suggest maybe a nice wine rack or a wine opening kit (I gave one of those as a wedding present), with, of course, a bottle of wine. "Good idea, however, She is not into wine and I'm into cheap wine.

Gladys commented "Does she like to read? I love to get novels. You are a great looking couple. " Thanks for the compliment; we do love each other. However, she is not into reading books.

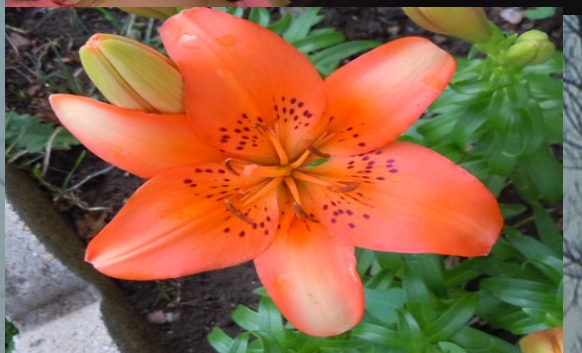
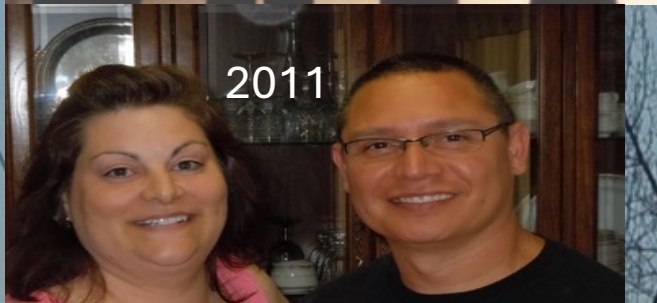
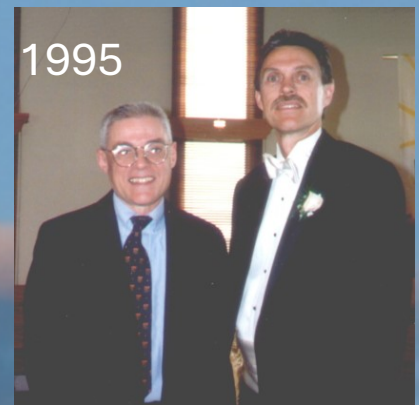
Nikki said, "I am a big fan of pedicures. Somewhat necessary as toenails DO need to be trimmed regularly, but still the added extravagance of having someone else do it for you. Best of luck in your present shopping! Merry Christmas! " Good unique suggestion, however, at the present time I don't know where to find someone who does this. I need to do some research for a future Christmas.

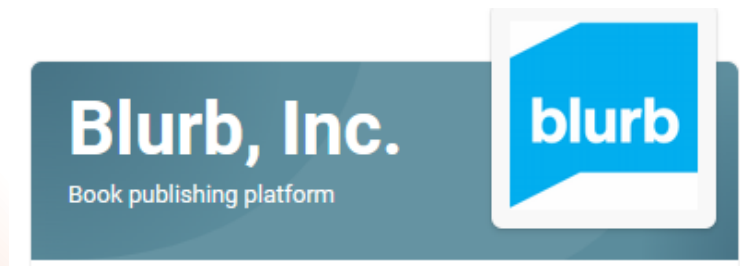
And the Winner Is ...

William his suggestion was, "Take a chance on the jeans, write a love letter, and put it in the pocket. " I went with this idea and the gleam in her eyes was priceless. Thank you William, you big romantic.



PHOTO MEMORY SECTION





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