

# A Collection of Memories





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# What stories have you been told about yourself as a baby?



**B**ecause we have evidence in pictures taken, I was a very healthy and fat baby. As my family, uncle and aunts and others always commented how healthy I was. I guess I was probably four over five pounds healthier than other babies my age. I don't know if they had to use sheets for diapers.

Even as I grew older but under 10 years of age, there were comments of my fat cheeks and dimples.



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# Who had the most positive influence on you as a child?



**B**oth of my parents had positive influence on me and all our family. Both my mother and father were proud of their Mexican heritage and wanted to make sure their children appreciated it. This was during a time when Mexicans were not appreciated and even looked down upon. They were the migrant and labor workers of the U.S No question that migrant workers were the backbone of the agricultural economy, and they also worked in the mines and the railroad. They also contributed greatly to all sectors of the economy. Many of us were called "greasers" or "spicks" or other names. In spite of all this my parents, especially my mother, made sure that we participated in the cultural activities of our culture. My mother would always play Mexican music in our home. As children, until we were in our teens, we sang and danced in Mexican cultural celebrations. Both

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of our parents wanted us to know that the Mexican had more to offer than just a strong back. My parents always spoke to us in Spanish, even outside the home. This was a time that schools discouraged us from speaking Spanish and wanted us to only use English. As a result we became ashamed of our parents in public when they would speak to us in Spanish. In spite of all of this some of us maintained use of Spanish and later realized that our Mexican culture had a lot to offer. My mother was a very proud person and wanted to make sure that we had a positive self image. We always had to be clean and well dressed and well behaved around our elders. She shopped like a mad woman to make sure she bought all the bargains of nice clothing for her children. A perfect symbol of Mother's wanting to have clean well groomed children was the need to always have shoes cleaned and shined. This was in spite of always dressing her smaller children in white shoes. On Friday night we would wash the white shoelaces. How hard was this when our yard was mainly dirt and cinders and we had to walk five blocks to church.

Education was a necessity for all the children but college was nothing more than a dream, a hopeful dream for the boys of the family. As part of the Mexican culture a college education was not that important for the girls of the family, therefore my sisters were not encouraged to seek a higher education.

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Probably the most important influence our mother had on us was in self awareness to be proud of who we were in spite of what others may think and say. Even though we grew up in section houses near the tracks, it was always important that we dressed and behaved well and acted like we were proud of who we were.

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# What is one of your fondest childhood memories?



I can think of two of my favorite memories.

1. When we lived in our small three room home on North Temple, Christmas was a memorable time of the year. This would be the years of about 1940-1948. The five children would gather in the kitchen on Christmas eve 1945. Gloria would have been the oldest at 11 years old, me at 9, Maria Elena 7, Rose 5, Vince 3 and Carmen 1. The older kids would gather in the kitchen near the coal stove to keep warm. Most of the day Mom would have spent the day fixing Mexican food for the coming day, but this night she was to weave her magic as we all got to watch and help in making buñuelos. The masa had already been prepared and now we helped in rolling it into little balls waiting to be stretched over a towel covered knee until it became the size of a tortilla. It was then put into the hot grease for just a minute or two then

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taken out to cool. We were allowed to sprinkle them with sugar. There were always some victims that were broken that we got to eat that night. The successes were reserved for Christmas Day. We then all got dressed and prepared to attend Midnight Mass at the little Guadalupe Mission on 4th South.

2. My other childhood memory was taking the train to Los Angeles with my Father. Because he had lived in Los Angeles for about two or three years he liked to return and visit old friends. Every Christmas time he would take me or an older child or my Mom to Los Angeles. It did not cost anything because he was now given a pass to travel free to certain places. I think that I only went twice but loved to take the train to this magic place. We would leave about 6 in the evening and took our seats in a regular car. It seemed that my father knew all the conductors and porters and waiters. As they came through the car he would introduce me to each one. Of course all the porters and waiters were black and very friendly. They would come by and bring us sandwiches.

We arrived early the next morning as the train slowly made its way through orange groves and finally reached the train station.

After checking into a hotel we would make our way to Olivera Street, the magic street lined with shops and restaurants selling Mexican goods and food. We then went to a little cafe where Dad would visit for what seemed like hours while I sat on a stool

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drinking grape soda. We visited many people who owned shops and then went to the hotel. Two days later we made our return trip to Salt Lake City.



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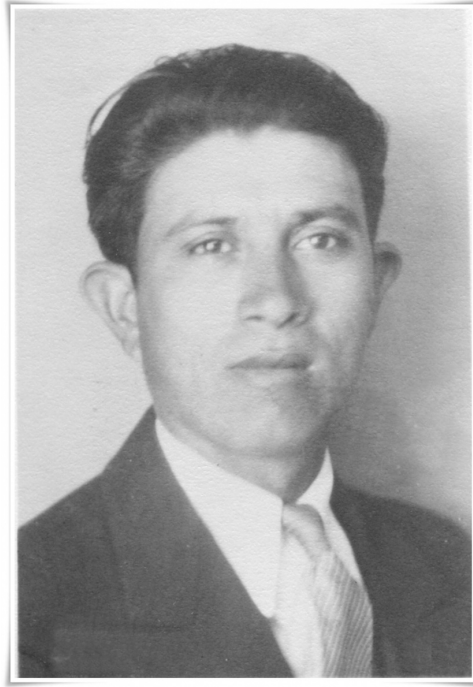
# Are you more like your father or your mother? In what ways?



**T**his is a very hard question because I hope that I have inherited a couple of the best characteristics of either one or both. I think I was more like my mother in my earlier years. My mother would take me shopping with her many times. She would spend hours shopping for bar

gains at two main stores, Auerbachs and The Paris. She had credit at both stores as she had to dress 6 to 8 children on a budget. However, Mom was a great shopper and only bought good clothing and shoes. As each child got a little older and could earn money of their own we were allowed to spend it mainly on school clothes.

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Because our father was out on extra gang jobs, my mother would go to the depot every two weeks to pick up my dad's check. She would then cash the check and pay the bills. My mother's bargain hunting was not reserved to clothing as she bought furniture and household items at damaged goods stores.

Another influence she had on me was her love for her culture. As young children Mother would have us participate in all the Mexican celebrations at Centro Civico, Cinco de Mayo and the 16th of September celebrations. As children we often went with Mother as she performed her Mexican songs accompanying herself on the guitar. I never realized how much that was part of

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me until I went to school in Mexico and saw and felt the music and culture.

I know that my Father had a great influence on me. When I was in high school my Dad got me a job on the railroad. I had worked on many different jobs, but putting in railroad ties was one of the hardest. We worked from 8:00 until 4:30 with only a lunch break. It was hard because I did it in the heat of the summer. I worked for three summers and one winter and learned what hard work is. One summer there was a big project in the north yards in Salt Lake. My father was in charge and needed not only the 40 men in his gang but also the four other section gangs of another 30 men. We had to put in a new spur, or a rail line, for about three miles. We had to put down a road base of slag, place the ties and finally the rails. All this was done without the mechanized equipment that they use now. My dad had to eyeball every part of the procedure. During the two weeks that I worked on the project my dad would come by at least twice a day as I was sweating and covered in slag dust and say to me, "Do you want to do this for the rest of your life ? If not, get an education. " I don't know how many young men he told this to, but I know of at least five who took his advice besides me.

There are many other things which I know both of my parents have left a mark on me, but these are a couple which run long and deep.

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# Which fads did you embrace while growing up?



**T**he 1950s were the years of so many fads: clothes, cars, dancing to Big Bands, eating hamburgers at drive-ins.

Lets begin with cars. there were many car clubs in Utah:the jokers, the Jesters,the Aces, just to name a few. Even if you didn't belong to a car club and you had your own car you would spend hundreds of dollars customizing your car. You would replace the interior with naugahyde leather of many colors but mainly white. The interior was fancy with rolled naugahyde. You would take all the chrome off the car and fill in the holes, some people even removed the handles to the doors. It was important to paint the car a cherry red, deep purple or many other new colors.

Remember this was a time when new cars were shedding the traditional black, grey and brown dull colors. All the work and colors were carefully painted with various coats until it was

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perfect. The cars were generally lowered, they sat closer to the ground, and mufflers were added to make a smooth sound. A spotlight on each side of the windshield also added to the beauty of the car. Ahh, the crowning touch on the outside were the moon hub caps. They were called moon because they covered the entire wheel. The tires had to have white walls. You had to buy special locks for the hubcaps because they were a hot item for thieves.

On the inside the final touch was a necker's knob or suicide knob, on the steering wheel. This was for driving with one hand and when necessary to make a sharp turn by using the knob to spin the steering wheel. You could do this and still keep your arm around your date. It's important to note that not all kids could afford to spend thousands of dollars to have such a car. Because my car was the family car, I was limited to what I could do to my Chevrolet and later to my two tone Oldsmobile. I was able to replace the interior with white and green rolled naugahyde leather on front and back seats. You had to have a cool car to visit the drive-ins, like the Hot Shoppes in Salt Lake City. That's where most of the car clubs hung out in the early 1950's. There were two drive-ins in Bountiful and there were many cool cars that visited R&B's, and Froststop. I can't even imagine how much money those teenagers spent to have a real cool car even though they did most of the work themselves.

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Dancing: I don't know where or when I learned to dance but by the time I was in the 8th grade our school, South Davis Jr. High, had school dances at night. I only went to a couple of dances but danced a few numbers. It was the last days of the Big Band era and we listened to their music on the radio. In 1951 a new High School was built in Bountiful: Bountiful High. The first year we only had two grades freshmen (9th grade) and sophomores. Because we had to take the bus to school for some reason we arrived at 8:30. Some genius administrator played dance music in the gym and soon we began to dance until the bell rang at nine. At noon we danced during lunch period and this continued when we attended Davis High as Juniors and Seniors. In the summer we would dance at Lagoon and Salt Air. All the major bands came and played at Lagoon and Salt Air. Stan Kenton, Tommy Dorsey, Louie Armstrong, Glen Miller, Count Basey, Duke Ellington, Ray Anthony and others.

Dancing was free at Lagoon on Monday nights, and on Friday and Saturday nights one of the above bands or groups played there. The dance hall was always full with kids from all over the valley. No matter how hot it was we really enjoyed dancing. Some times we would go out to Salt Air where we also danced to the big bands. During the winter we would go to dances at LDS wards. Almost every Stake had a Gold and Green Ball, and it seemed that you could find a dance any Friday night.

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By 1955 and 1956 some band nights were replaced with vocal groups like the 4 Lads, the 4 Aces The Ames brothers, and the Kingston trio and by the time that Elvis Presley hit the air waves ballroom dancing and the jitterbug began to decline. Years later in the 1980s, and 1990s places like USU at Logan began to have Glenn Miller nights where we could go with our wives and dance to the music we knew so well.

The third fad was clothing. Levis and white T shirts with the sleeves rolled up soon gave way to new modes of dress: “A white sports coat and a pink carnation” was a song made famous in 1958 which represented how we all wanted to dress in 1953-1958. Charcoal pants with a white or pink belt, white buck shoes with a bag of chalk powder to keep your shoes white. If one could afford a white sports coat, it would be the crowning point to the perfect evening. It was also the time when, if you could afford it, to buy custom shirts from Lory. These shirts were usually pastel colors with custom collars. A pink or purple tie went a long way to set off the combination. We spent a lot of our money which we made with summer jobs, trying to be different as we all seemed to look alike. With graduation in 1955 we didn't seem to be as interested in how we dressed. Those dressing fads seemed to fade as did the wonderful big band era. Even to this day those of us who grew up during this time considered it the Golden Age.



# What was your Mom like when you were a child?



**M**other was basically in charge of everything during the first 12 years of my life, which was the time we lived in Salt Lake. These early years our father was a foreman on an extra gang which required him to be on large projects between Pocatello, Idaho and Las Vegas, Nevada. Mom took care of the house and the children most of the time even though Dad tried to come home on week-ends whenever he could.

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Because we did not have hot water in our home, all water had to be heated on the coal stove in the kitchen. I remember her building a fire in the back yard and heating the water in a tin tub where she would wash our clothes and bedding. She would stir the washing with a wooden stick and after rinsing,

hang the clothes on the line hoping that a smokey train would not come by and spread black cinders all over her white sheets. Tasks like this made my mother more independent. She did receive some relief when dad bought her a Maytag washer in about 1947.

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Mother loved to sing whether she was cooking or cleaning house. She even sang and while she was ironing sheets and pillow cases. Even out in the yard you could hear her whistling while she worked. When she wasn't singing she was listening to Mexican music by Pedro Infante or other mariachis.

In the hot summer she had to prepare meals as usual. It was hot in our little three room home and she would put a bandana on her head because she sweat so much as she prepared dinner. Dinner always included two stables, tortillas and beans. Everything had to be cooked over a hot stove. Seldom did we have things like salads, though we could have quesadillas if the house was too hot.

During the 1940's, it seemed that Mom was pregnant much of the time, every two years. I did not know about the birds and bees until I was 11 or 12.

She was very organized and a prudent shopper. When she planned to go uptown shopping (Main street and third south) she would get all dressed up with her gloves and her hat. No woman would go shopping uptown with out hat or gloves. I have already written before what a smart shopper she was. On the days of the sales she would begin at ZCMI and make her way down to the Paris and Auerbach's. I was not the only one who went shopping with her as Gloria and Maria would often have

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this treat to be alone with her for two or three hours.

We also were expected to get all dressed up for the trip uptown.

As I said, she was strong and independent because Dad was out of town so much. She took care of all the financial transactions for the family. In those days they were few, like the telephone and power bill. She collected

Dad's check at the Union Pacific offices. They all knew her at the payroll office and gave her the check as if it were her check.

There were few indulgences that Mom had but she loved pastries from the Sun bakery, now the Red Iguana. She would send me, usually on payday to by some apple turnovers and raisin squares.

Mom was a very proud lady, just as she made us get dressed to go uptown, she always wanted us to look nice whenever in public. As already mentioned she wanted her children to be clean; this went right down to our shoe laces.

On Saturday nights we had to shine and polish shoes. Those who still wore white shoes had to wash their shoe laces so that they would be nice and white. She did not want people to say that we were "dirty little Mexicans".

As I said Mother loved to sing and many people knew that she was very good. She also accompanied herself on the guitar. Even

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J. Ruben Clark knew of her singing and took her to some LDS Sacrament meetings where she would perform at the farewells of young missionaries going to Mexico. She would always sing in Spanish. She continued entertaining for many years and as young children sometimes we would go with her and sit all in a line, off stage, while she performed. She performed in many Mexican celebrations like the Cinco de Mayo and 16 de Setiembre. She also had an opportunity to sing in the Tabernacle during a cultural celebration. She received a good citizens award from Governor Maw.

She loved everything Mexican and made sure that we also knew that. She made Gloria, Maria and Rose learn to dance

Las chiapanecas and I had to learn to partner with Gloria in the Mexican Hat dance.

Mom seldom got angry but when she did, look out!

On hot summer days she would make sandwiches or tacos and take us all to the park to have lunch or dinner.

We did not have a car and mother did not know how to drive even if we had one. Pioneer Park was six blocks away and sometimes we would walk to Warm Springs Park. She would line us all up, six of us like little ducks and and make the trek,

usually to Pioneer Park.

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Probably the greatest lesson that she taught us happened towards the end of the Great Depression. As many men who were riding the railroad trains looking for work, some would approach our section house which was near the tracks and ask for something to eat. Mom always had a pot of beans, warm tortillas and a pot of coffee on the stove. She never turned any one away. She said what would God do?

# What was your Dad like when you were a child?



**M**y dad spent much time away from home for many years because he was an extra-gang foreman. He was responsible for all major projects between Pocatello, Idaho and Moapa, Nevada. He had a crew of 40 to 50 men to take care of these projects which also included train wrecks. He was always soft spoken around home but very direct and forceful on the job.

From as young as I can remember he would sometimes take me with him on the job. He had his own bunk car with beds and a desk and things. He would leave me in the kitchen car with the cook while out on the job. The very first time I can remember being with him away from home was in Corrine, Utah. It must have been a Saturday or Sunday when he wasn't working when for some reason I told him I wanted some milk. I think there was not a dining car with the job because he took an empty bottle, crossed a barb-wire fence and went to milk a cow in a field next

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to the tracks.

He would always take me with him for a week or two for many summers until I was about 15. In southern Utah I would go rabbit hunting with some of the workers who were Navajos. This was where I learned to fire a rifle. These same workers took me out to harvest pine nuts. On week-end nights when we were out in the desert the Indians would have a ceremony.

They would build a large fire in the middle of a circle and sit around the circle pounding on drums and chant.

There was no doubt that my father favored me as he would also take me on trips to Los Angeles to visit old friends. We would take the City of Los Angeles streamliner to California. On the way the porters would come by and say hello to Dad. He would introduce me to them. They would bring us drinks and food. In Los Angeles we would go to Olvera Street where he would go to a tavern to visit old friends. We would spend what seemed to be hours there as I nursed a grape soda.

He also took each one of the kids to Los Angeles, usually one child a year. He would then come home and take Mother on the same trip, but for a longer time.

At home when Gloria first started to date, Dad insisted I had to be her chaperon. Each of the children knew that when he was



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home, he was the ruler of the home. I must say that it was Mother who really ruled the home because his job kept him away so much. He turned all the money and decisions of the home to Mother. She spent the money and took care of all bills and made financial decisions. There was no machismo when it came to his relationship with our mother. On some evenings when he came home from work Mother would take off his shoes and wash his feet in warm water. She did it because she loved him and he would always tell her thanks. He loved to garden and was able to plant his first real garden the year after we moved to Woods Cross. At our home in Bountiful no matter how tired he was he would always go out and look over his garden and fruit trees. If it was a hot summer day, he would sit down in a chair on the patio and Mother would bring him a cold beer and he would always say "gracias vieja "

He was very firm with all of us but especially the girls of the family. They had to get permission about everything, whereas Vince and I had more freedom. Unfortunately he expected Vince and me to get a higher education but never encouraged any of my sisters to go to college.

I cannot remember if my father ever told me that he loved me but I knew he did.

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# Have you pulled any great pranks?



Unfortunately, the 1950's seemed to be the decade of very serious pranks. Halloween was the time of the greatest pranks: tipping over outhouses, taking apart old farm equipment and reassembling it on the roof of the barn or some other farm building. Stealing watermelons and having water melon busts were very common. Sometimes it got out of hand like when a group stole and carload of watermelons and scattered them all up and down main street in Bountiful. The culprits were caught and had to sweep the entire street from 5th South to 4th North. I was not with that group, but many of my friends were.

I was involved with two, of which one I am not very proud and the other which was a victory because we didn't get caught. Both had to do with a Willey's truck with the words Larsen Investment written on the doors. We were driving up the hills when we spotted a home with a bushel of peaches for sale on the front

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lawn, Gary stopped the truck and I jumped out and took the bushel of peaches,(not proud). The other was on Halloween night when we had two bales of straw in the back of the same truck: we carefully ran a line of straw across Main street, in front of Carmack Spudnut shop and poured gas and lit the straw on fire. When Turner Burningham, one of the two policemen in Bountiful at that time came by and asked who was responsible, we said we didn't know. Many years later when I was visiting with Turner, he told me that they usually knew who was responsible for certain acts and he said," We knew what you kids were doing but as long as you were not causing destruction to property or that you kids were not in danger we just watched over you". I only really include the peach incident because I have related that story to friends, and Mom would never let anyone forget that I did such a deed.

# What do you like most about your siblings?



We grew up in a very crowded and poor situation when you compare us with how most other people lived. Most immigrants who worked for and

near the railroad lived in similar circumstances. For that reason most of us did not know that we were poor.

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There is something about being poor where you learn to share with others regardless of your economic situation. What we were taught very early in life has been ingrained in each of us. I have related before in other times that Mom would never let a stranger who knocked on our door go hungry. Because of where we lived, near the railroad tracks, we had many people who rode on boxcars come to the door asking for some thing to eat. This was especially true during the Great Depression. A tortilla with beans and sometimes with a little chile was all she could offer. Many people living in these homes shared what ever they had. Was this something learned or was it something experienced.

My Dad was one of the most unselfish people I knew. He told the people at the Union Pacific payroll office that it was fine for Mom to go and collect his check on payday. There were months and years that he never saw his paycheck only the pay stub. He completely turned over the spending of his check to Mom. If he ever asked for an accounting of how the money was spent, I never knew.

Also, I am sure Mom would give him a very small allowance if any. I know that there were times when I was older and worked on the railroad that I would give him money to make sure that he had something in his pocket. His only vice, unfortunately was his Camel cigarettes which eventually killed him. We were taught by our parents by example!

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As we got older and had jobs, we always felt that we should share some with the family by giving a bit to Mom. As these same siblings got jobs and cars and anyone needed a car for a date or an errand, it was almost expected that a car not in use would be available.

While I was in the army I left the family car, which I helped pay for, for Maria to use for her work and to take care of family needs.

Unfortunately, she and her boy friend and later husband, were driving up in the hills where they hit a rock and burned up the engine.

By the time I came home she was always willing to loan me her new car, a Triumph sports car.

There were many examples of one of the kids always ready to help someone in need. If someone needed help, everyone was willing to contribute to help them out. This was especially amazing because one of my siblings had been taking advantage of many dollars, yet the victims continued to be always willing to help. This may have happened more times than I can tell about.

Even now, when each of us financially secure, I know that should I or anyone else have a need, one or more of my siblings would be ready to step in.

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# What did you learn from your parents?



Of course we are all products of the influence of our parents. From the time I was about nine years old I would accompany my mother shopping. We would take the bus from 519 north West Temple to where all the major department stores on Main Street were located. We would begin at ZCMI, if they had sales, and make our way down Main Street to Third South, where the Paris and Auerbach's were located.

If it were later in the day mother would stop off at a drug store and buy us an egg salad sandwich and a lemonade. Most of the shopping was done at The Paris and Auerbach's because of the sale items. In additions, mother bought most of her clothing for the children at Auerbach's because she had a charge card there. I learned to shop for sale items because of these shopping excursions with mother.

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My father taught me what hard work was. Even though I worked in the fields and in the orchards before I was 12 years old and later In Woods Cross worked baling hay, I did not know what hard work was until I was 16 and began working on the railroad. This was the hardest work that I ever did. My father knew this and that is why he got me a job on the section gang in Woods Cross. I know my parents were typical of immigrant parents who wanted us to experience the “American Dream”, to do better than they were doing as immigrants. They talked about the importance of an education. They dreamed that we would all have a much better life in this country. In my case, my dad would always ask me when I came home from work on the railroad, tired and my muscles aching, “Do you want to do this for the rest of your life? If not, get an education”. He repeated this over and over again to many young sons of Mexican immigrants over many years.

As children of immigrants, we all became successful beyond our parents’ dreams. My brother Vince and I succeeded because of education and my sisters because they worked in good jobs and married successful men. Perhaps my only sister who had a difficult life was Gloria. This was because she married an uneducated man and they had three sons with muscular dystrophy. Though she worked hard raising her boys and also worked hard as an advocate in the Muscular Dystrophy Association, her boys all died before reaching 20. Gloria died at

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age 62 from kidney failure in 1997.

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# What! me a father?



**A**s many times as I has witnessed a new addition to my father and mother's family (I was the third of nine children),I knew that someday I would be a father. Everything during the last couple of months were surreal: Meg was pregnant and getting larger each month and we knew what was expected. The problem was that we didn't know what was expected of us as new parents. I had seen many movies where the expectant father had planned every detail of what to do when the time arrived. I also had gone over in my mind what I would do at the moment.

Well, the time finally arrived when Meg would deliver our first child. In those days the father was not allowed into the delivery room or even into the recovery room. Meg's contractions got stronger and finally we rushed to the Cottonwood Hospital. I have to admit, as most fathers, that I wanted to have a son to carry on my name. I was happy and glad to see our first born. What! a bald headed little girl! Wasn't she supposed to have lots of black hair. Even though she did not have hair she was still cute

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but not the beauty she was to later become. I was relieved that she was healthy and all the parts were in the proper place and that Meg had survived something at which she soon would be a pro: getting pregnant and having girls. I did not realize what being a father was until the day that I blessed and gave her the name Adrienne. I am still amazed that I am a father of her and the rest of our children. I have been blessed to have a partner who wanted a large family and that we started out with such a wonderful daughter.



# Which people have had the biggest influence on your life? What lessons did you learn?



**T**here is no question that my parents had the greatest influence on me. My high school friends also had much influence on me, however, it was my parents who had the greatest influence. It probably began when I was very young that my mother insisted on cleanliness. Though we grew up near the railroad tracks with all the cinders and smoke spewed out by the old fashion engines, my mother insisted that her children would always be clean. On Saturday nights my mother would bring in the tin tub and fill it with hot water heated on the coal stove. The youngest would go first and the next oldest would get the same water; and so on up the line. With six children at the little house on North Temple the bath water would get a bit used. I do remember that there was a change of water after about the

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fourth child.

After we were all bathed, my mother would sit us down and shine the shoes of the younger children and us older ones would do our own. The girls usually had white shoes and the two boys had brown ones; this in spite of the four block trek on Sunday morning to the Guadalupe mission for Mass. Berta's children always had to be clean and well dressed for church and school.

My mother was also a miracle worker in dressing our family: she had a charge account at Auerbachs dept. store in downtown Salt Lake where she would shop the sales for the best buys. I witnessed her prowess at the sales as I would accompany her to Woolworths, ZCMI and Auerbachs.

She tried to keep our three room house as clean as possible in spite of surroundings: no cement sidewalks for the last block of North Temple under the viaduct. It was difficult to keep a clean house with no indoor plumbing nor hot water, Mother had to wash bedding and clothing in a tin tub over a fire to do the washing. It was not until 1946 when my Dad bought her a Maytag washer.

Every Saturday was clean the house day, walls windows and floors. This continued until she finally had a home with all the necessities and amenities in 1961. She continued to handle the budget and spending



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of the money including buying our own home, at last leaving the section houses of the railroad.

I learned as much from my Father as my Mother: he taught me hard work, loyalty and dedication. He worked as a “gandy dancer” during the entire Depression and in about 1941 became a foremen. In about 1946 he was made an extra-gang foreman.

His gang worked on large and special projects and had about forty workers that worked between Pocatello Idaho and Las Vegas, Nevada. His gang had their own bunk cars, kitchen and dining area, tool car and all the other necessities to run a crew. As early as 1946 I would go and stay with him, sleep in his private bunk car and help in the kitchen. He expected me to help or mainly stay out of trouble during the work day.

I very early on saw how responsible he was as he was given the plans to large projects which he always had completed on time. I also saw how kind he was to his workers who were mainly

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Navajos and Mexicans. He seemed to always have at least one of my cousins working on his gang. Some of these cousins had lost their mom and some had trouble with the law. He wanted to teach them, as he did me, how to work hard.

My Father had many young men work with him over the years and he always gave them the same message. I did not know this advice until I spent three hot dirty weeks working on a major project in the north yards of the Union Pacific yards. He was in charge of a project that required all section gangs from Farmington to Buena Vista to come together, some eighty workers in total. It was dirty hot work putting in a new spur (railroad line). I was one of the workers who shoveled dusty slag in between the wooden ties and new rails. From that first day my Dad would come by and say, "Do you want to do this for the rest of your life? If not, get an education". Each day he spoke the same message. Years later when my family and I returned from seven years in the Mid-west I had chance visits with four old friends from different periods of my life. They all worked with Father at different times. They told me, "Do you know what your father used to tell me when I was sweating and working hard during those summers ? " Yes, he had given us all the same advice.

My parents also taught the importance of family and extended family. On Christmas morning of 1947 we received a phone call that my uncle Jesus had died that morning. My mother got all the

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younger children dressed and we caught the bus and went to Murray to the funeral home. We all sat there for most of the day until late that afternoon when uncle Luis took us home in his car. When we moved to Wood Cross we always had an extra cousin living with us for months.

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# What is one of the most selfless things you have done in life?



**T**his is probably the most difficult question that one could be given. It is much easier to consider what selfless things have others done for me. Nevertheless I will try to address it.

I have given much thought about what it means to be selfless as opposed to being selfish. Much of my life would fall into the selfish category. One small somewhat selfless act was during the years that I worked on the railroad, (about 3 and a half) I would give part of my paycheck to my mother. This continued during my two years in the army. I really did not consider it a selfless act but paying back what my parents went through for us. My graduate work at the University of Missouri required my absence from home for long hours that I spent in the classroom, teaching, or in the library doing in research. As I got nearer to the end, I needed to do research for my dissertation. I was also

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teaching part time at Stephens College. This was the most stressful and time consuming of those years. The next ten years were very gratifying and a bit selfless, but the real selfless act was by Meg who held down the household and raised the children.

I think of my service in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. I spent about 8 years in bishoprics and another 3 years in a branch presidency. The five years as a bishop was probably the most difficult as I still had much to learn about the workings of the Church. During these years it was difficult to find the amount of time needed to fulfill that calling. Many times I had to leave my family for some emergency of some unexpected event. There were so many other times that I was not with my family. I also served on two High Councils, a District Presidency, two times as High Priest Group leader. These callings also needed that I be away from home. Even though these were very rewarding and satisfying years my time away from my family will never be recovered and that I do regret.

# At what times in your life were you the happiest, and why?



I would have to divide the moments into two main areas: my family and my personal development. All of these take place in later life. The events began with telling Mom that I loved her and then our engagement and eventual marriage started it all. It was surprising to me that our relationship took off like it did. At the time before I met Meg, I was ready to return to Europe to refine my German language which I had been studying. I had not really dated anyone much since I had been engaged to Lolita Donahue from South Dakota. In fact I had taken a hiatus from dating for about 6 months. Everyone by now knows the story of how we finally went on our first date so I will forego that. We were blissfully enjoying our first few months of marriage while anticipating a possible assignment with the Peace Corps. Very soon I knew that the Lord had better plans for us as we learned

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that Meg was pregnant. Even though I had been around many births I never understood what it meant to have your own child. It did not become clear to me what a blessing each birth meant until I look at what each of our six children have become. In fact, Meg related how I was concerned as she became pregnant with our growing family. I was happy with two maybe three, but more? How do you explain to one of your children that you wanted to stop at number 2 or number 3. Mothers have a direct line with our Father and Mother in Heaven. Our family continued to grow and surprise of surprises: the birth of our son John; now our family was complete I had my son. About a year later Meg told me that there was one more child up there, she had seen him and his name would be Paul. Is there further evidence that mothers have a direct line with the Lord? As I said, all the grumbling and criticizing that I did about a big family it has become a blessing in my life as have seen it from the Lord's perspective. There are so many things that have made me so proud of each one, but the most important is how they love and support each other.

The other area has to do with my career: When I was first accepted to graduate school in Missouri, when I passed my written and oral exams, when I finished and had my dissertation accepted, when I fortunately got a position at the University of Utah and finally getting tenure. These last happy moments are still important moments of my life, but not like family.



# What is one of your favorite trips that you've taken? What made it great?



**I**t is hard to chose one trip that was a favorite over so many memorable trips. Perhaps the number one was the trip up the Danube from Budapest to Prague in Sept. 2008 The first part of the trip actually began in Warsaw, Poland. It was about a six day land trip after two days in Warsaw. We got to know more about the what a beautiful place much of Eastern Europe is. We visited the old town and had Pirogies for lunch with the VanOrmans and the Baileys. Walked around the old town and Meg and I had goulash for dinner. We learned of the Ghetto and the massacre of so many Jews there. We continued our tour and visited the Black Madonna, a famous saint of Poland and then made our way to Auschwitz. Probably the most depressing part of the trip was to learn about the elimination of the Jews in the many

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concentration camps in Poland. The Nazis rounded up Jews and others they considered enemies or undesirables and shipped them to camps in Poland. Birkenau was one camp where 300,000 Jews were sent and eventually killed. We visited the famous death camp of Auschwitz. We had been to Dachau years before but this place was so much larger where many more were gassed. We also visited Buchenwald where innumerable Jews and enemies of the Reich were eliminated. What a very sad event in history. We made our way to Krakow where we visited a Jewish synagogue. We spent a day in Krakow where we attended a Mozart concert. We had lunch the following day at a ski resort, of course no snow as it was summer.

We stopped at a very big square dedicated to the seven princes of Transylvania. We finally arrived at Budapest and spent a day sight seeing the beautiful city hall of Pest and crossed the Danube River and walked around the town of Buda. The river divides the two towns that make up Budapest. We visited the sights on both sides of the river with most impressive sights on the Pest side.

We finally got on our boat that night and began our trip up the river. We docked in Bratislava where we spent the day at the town square. We saw many sights as we made our way up the river. We seldom had to take a bus to sights because most places were on the river. Of course we had everything on the boat and we ate all our meals and slept on the boat.

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Vienna was one of the most important visits. We visited the Vienna Opera House,(very impressive) Parliament, City Hall, and the Spanish Riding School at Michaelplatz where we watched a demonstration of the Lipizzanner horses prancing around the arena. Meg became very excited about the horses and their performance.

Throughout our many visits to the various places we saw mimes, many in elaborate costumes. We also attended a Mozart concert in Vienna. We passed the town of Kremes, where Richard the Lionhearted was held prisoner when returning from the Crusades in the Holy Land.We visited Durnstein, Weizenkirchen Melk, and a Benedictine Abbey. We also visited Regensberg (where Meg bought a very nice sweater) and then had our last night on the river. We took a bus to Nurenburg and visited a town square where Meg and I bought some things in a Christmas shop. We made our way to the stadium where Hitler reviewed his troops. We also saw the buildings where the Nurenburg trials were held.

We took a train to Prague were we had a wonderful day at the main square, lunch at a typical cafe full of locals. Can't remember what we ate, but it was fun. We visited a synagogue and a Cathedral and a government building which was once a monastery. As we looked over the city we could see how it was built on both sides of the river. you could also see the many steeples in the old part of the city. Our last night in Prague we

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spent in a pub drinking non alcoholic beer, celebrating the wonderful trip that we had. What made it so great was seeing part of the world that we had never seen and being with great friends to share these moments. Amen

# What is one of the bravest things you've ever done, and what was the outcome?



**T**his is really a tough one. One of the bravest and challenging was getting married and have a family. At first it seems very simple and exciting; you are in love with someone you want to spend all your life with. Then come the issues that all couples have. I think people must make many brave decisions as they grow and raise a family. As a Father and breadwinner your responsibility goes on for many years. You are to provide for their every needs as much as possible.

One other defining moments came while in the army one day:we were at a firing range firing live rounds of mortar shell. The 4.2 mortar shell was the largest the army had at that time. There is a three man crew to each mortar. One unpacks the shell and hand

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it to a second man who arms the shell. He then hands it to the third man who drops it down the tube and yells, " fire in the hole:" Well this one particular shell slide down the tube and did not fire. the first two crew disconnect the mortar from the base and slowly raise the tube while the third person, which happened to be me, catch the live shell as it slides down the tube. I had my hands around the mouth of the tube to make sure that the shell did not come out and hit the ground. As it came out I gripped it very carefully until I was holding the entire shell.It probably weighed about 8 pounds but felt like 50. I had to take this live round about thirty yards back to a bunkered area where unspent ordinance or shell were kept until some disarmed each shell.

# What is your idea of perfect happiness?



**I**s there such a thing as perfect happiness? If you believe in the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, then we can all reach a state of perfect happiness. Of course this will be reached when we have passed through this life and have reached the Celestial Kingdoms. Being in the presence of Our Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ and all our ancestors will bring us to a state of Perfect Happiness. What greater joy can we have but being in the presence of all our posterity.

I believe that we can reach a state of happiness in this life while still living in this mortal live. We experience some of these special moments with our children and our posterity. It is these moments that give us a glance in what living in the celestial Kingdom might be like. A place where conflict does not exist, where everyone treats one another with love and compassion. We can only imagine what this place is like. Only a place where

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kindness and love reigns always. We can experience once in a while, but only can it exist in a place called the The Celestial Kingdom. How many of us are ready to live in such place.



# What are your favorite possessions? Why?



A few years ago that may have been easy to say because they were all physical possessions like a house, a car, a bank account. As one ages, material things have less spiritual value and relationships increase in true value. This is especially true if you believe in some type of relationship after death. As members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, we believe that families can be together in the next life. How that relationship will be we don't really understand, but just the idea that the relationships continue which we have with our spouse, children, grand-children and so forth, can be so comforting. It would be so sad to think that after this life we would never see or be with them again. My wife and my posterity are my most precious possessions in this life and the life to come.

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Picture June 2021

# What do you consider one of your greatest achievements in life?



**A**gain, I have to divide my achievements into two categories: educational and family. Even though my initial educational goals did not include advance degrees, it did become important as I finally graduated after my service in the army. I went to study in Mexico and began to get involved with further studies as I became associated with my professors there and at the University of Utah, and my direction began to change.

As a group of advanced students of Spanish, we applied for positions with the FBI. It was in 1962 during the Cuban Crisis.

Three of my friends went with the FBI and I was convinced by two Spanish professors, Benavides and Smith to get into the Master's program. I was working on a thesis when I met Meg Wallis, part of the other category, which further changed the direction of our lives. I found out that I did not have to complete

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my Master's thesis in order to continue on for a Ph.D. Prof. Benavides encouraged me to go for the big one. I applied at five universities and was accepted by three. I was accepted by the University of Missouri and the rest is history.

My second greatest achievement was more by a series of good choices. First I decided to marry Margaret Wallis, which also included joining the Mormon Church, now called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. As has been revealed in other stories this changed my life forever. However, it was our marriage relationship which has given me one of my greatest achievements. All of them are in spite of my reluctance. Meg had always wanted a big family and I was happy with just two children; however we had four little girls before and during the time that we were in graduate school. When Meg became pregnant for the fifth time I did know what to think. However, when our fifth child was a boy, John Mayer, I thought that life was complete. Then a year or so later, Meg told me she was pregnant once more. This came with a revelation. She said that she had seen a little boy and said that his name would be Paul, and so it was. My greatest achievement was not at all what I planned but was because of whom I married and her relationship with her Heavenly Father. It was my accidental achievement, but one that I am forever grateful.

Tell me about one of the  
best days you can  
remember.



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There have been many best days but the one that is at the top of the list is September 21st, 1963. it was the day of our wedding. Only a year before I had been planning to go to Germany with a friend to get a job and study German. I had also taken the FBI test with a consideration to go into the FBI. I was also working on a Masters Degree hoping to complete it during that year. The Fall quarter of 1962 as my plans were starting to jell, a proverbial wrench was thrown into my life.

There was this cute little girl that I had tried to date the spring before. She was not interested at that time so I forgot about it.

I had met Meg Wallis the Fall of 1962 when we had a study group together. I thought she was interested in my friend Earl Porter.

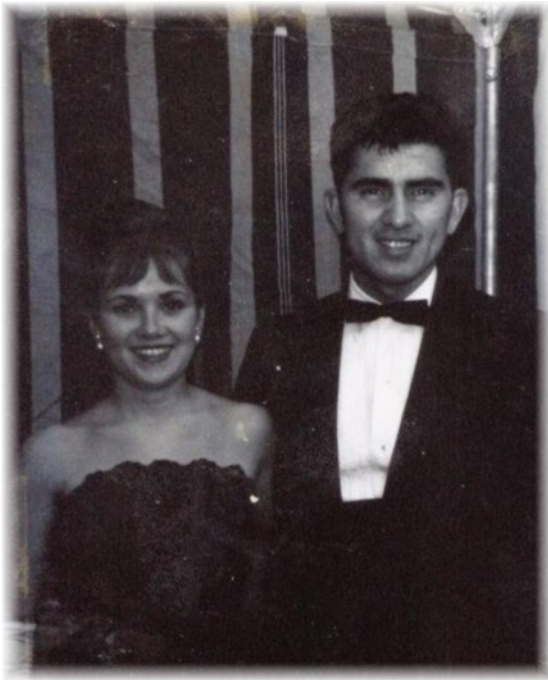
As it turned out she wanted to date me. From Christmas time of 1962 we started dating frequently and by the Spring of 1963 we were pretty involved. I had to make some serious decisions in my life.

Were the above opportunities still important to me? As we continued to date I decided that we were serious enough to consider marriage.

We did run into another issue as our relationship got more serious; Meg said she would only marry me if I joined the Church. Later I will tell all about it, but I did join and we planned our September wedding. We of course could not marry in the Temple for at least one year from this date. Though Meg was disappointed we did have a ceremony at the Skaggs Baptist

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church across from East High School. Meg's bishop and my friend married us. It was a simple but happy event because both of our parents and all of my siblings were able to attend because none would have been able to attend a temple ceremony. Also we had our very good friend perform the ceremony. Meg was beautiful in a wedding dress made from silk that her mother had brought her from the Far East. Can't remember much of the ceremony but I know that all my and Meg's family and all of our friends were present that day.



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# What television programs did you watch as a child?



**T**his is a very interesting question considering that most of my childhood we did not have a TV. I was probably 14 years old before we got one. Most of our entertainment came from the radio, where we listened to Inner Sanctum, Sky King, The Lone Ranger and the Hit Parade, for the latest tunes. When I lived in Salt Lake our entertainment was at the movie theaters where we would go every Saturday morning and spend about three hours watching ten minutes of newsreels and maybe 30 minutes of cartoons and episodes of the Lone Ranger, Zorro, the Green Hornet, the Phantom and other serials. On some Saturdays there was vaudeville at the Lyric Theater. This was basic live performances of magicians, comedy routines, song and dance, etc.

When we did get a TV, it was a screen of about 8 by 12 inches. Most of the morning was a test pattern and shows did not begin

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until the afternoon. These shows were live and directed to young children: Howdy Doody, Uncle Roscoe, Kukla, Fran and Ollie. There wasn't much for teen agers until American Bandstand came on the scene with host Dick Clark. The night programming probably began at about six, like the Sid Caesar Show and the Honeyymooners with Jackie Gleason. Both were slap-stick comedy and live with a live audience. I do remember a show called the Cloverleaf Theater, on Friday or Saturday night where they showed old movies. Their theme music was from Swan Lake Ballet. Probably the longest evening variety show was The Ed Sullivan Show, which featured the latest talent in areas from singing, dancing, comedy routines, acrobats, and magicians. This was vaudeville but on TV. Usually by nine or ten PM the stations stopped transmitting.

Two things that conflicted with TV watching were the dancing craze and car hopping. In the late forties and most of the fifties dancing at Lagoon and Salt Air every Monday night, when they had free dancing, and Fridays or Saturdays when they had big bands in town, was the big entertainment for my age group. Car hopping also became a craze. For the first time teenagers bought cars or borrowed their parents' car. Kids of both sexes would load up a car with the guys and or girls to cruise State Street and eventually make their way to a hamburger and milkshake drive-in.

# Have you ever given or been the recipient of a random act of kindness?



**T**he most memorable, was one evening as I was visiting with a couple in the ninth ward, I was bishop at the time. I was having a hard time speaking as my voice was irritated and horse, Brother Tolman asked me to take off my shoes. He proceeded to massage my feet. He said the problem with my voice.. was probably because of stress and said this would relax me. As I recalled it did. From that time on we had a special relationship. When he was very ill I went to visit him; I went into to his room was going to sit down on the chair by his bed. He told me to come and lie down beside him and told me how much he appreciated me and that he loved me.

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# What qualities do you most value in your friends?



**T**here is no question that the quality I most admire in a friend is loyalty. A quality which most of the family and friends with whom I grew up have. My friends did not care on which side of the tracks one grew up. All of us grew up under different circumstances and economic levels. Those friends have been friends for life.

This quality has always existed in my family, my siblings have demonstrated this throughout our life time. There have been times that one or another has gotten into financial problems because of selfish reasons and have even taken advantage of another brother or sister. In spite of all of this, everyone was there to help. I believe this quality exists in my own children who have always been there to assist one another. I hope that Meg and I have something to do with this. There is also no question

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that belonging to a Church that embraces this as a Christlike quality has much to do with it.

# What are some of your special talents?



**I**t is difficult to try to consider one's talents much less special talents. I decided to go to my patriarchal blessing and see if perhaps it could help me identify one or two.

It told me I had the talent to hold positions of responsibility in the Church. I was also told I had a gift of spirituality. I think these things come automatically with a man who is truly converted to the gospel.

My wife says " I have a talent for handling money matters and budgets.

I am friendly and have the ability of making people feel at ease. I am patient and calm under stressful circumstances.

I also enjoy cooking some of the Mexican food from my heritage and I have a few other specialities that I enjoy making.

I have enjoyed teaching ever since I was in graduate school, and teaching became my profession. I had many good relationships

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with students and other faculty because of my out-going personality.

(Some of this was written by my wife because she felt I hadn't said enough.)



# What advice would you give your great grandchildren?



I don't know what kind of world you will grow up in, but it will be both exciting and terrifying. Exciting, because you will see many wonderful inventions and things that will make life better. Terrifying, because you will never be isolated from the ugly events of the world around you. However there are some things that will never change. Most of my advice can be found in the Bible and The Book of Mormon, just good common sense. Honor your mother and father. You will be with them for only a short time before you will be a mother and father. Hopefully your parents will be examples that you will want to emulate. Treat others how you want to be treated. I would admonish you to read the Book of Mormon, especially King Benjamin's address to his people. Learn to pray regardless of where you are and how you feel. This is especially if you are married and have differences

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between the two of you, and they will surely come. Serve a mission especially if you are a young man. Nothing will prepare you better for the future. Marry in the temple and live a good life. Live a wonderful life grandpa Edward Heriberto Mayer

# What inventions have had the biggest impact on your day-to-day life?



**T**here are many, the automobile, the telephone, and the internet just to name a few. Before I could drive there were few families in the west side of Salt Lake who had a car, they depended on bus service for transportation. When we moved to Woods Cross we found that more families had cars because there was no bus service and also farm families needed transportation for the farm. When I got to high school there were a very few students who had cars and most used the family car for dates and other activities. My senior year in high school, 1955, there were only four cars in the parking lot that belonged to students. The telephone and the technology that has advanced communication has made it that we have become a very impersonal society. First we used to spend time talking on the phone to friends and associates. As we got further advanced in

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the phone and the internet, we lost the gift of “gab” or conversation that brought friends and family together. We have also lost the need to visit friends because we can easily take care of a problem with e-mail, a text or a Marco-Polo. Still, all of the above in our lives make it possible to live without talking face to face. Just think of what you can do with a phone: make calls, send texts, check the news, check e-mail, lock the door of your house from 3,000 miles away. You can also take photos, send photos, know where your children are at any time. Like most, I am a slave to many of these advancements and don't really wish for the “good ole days”

# What are some choices you made about how to raise me?



**B**ecause you were the first child, as with all first born, we experimented on you. However, we wanted for you the same as for each one of our children.

Perhaps, one of the first things was to bless you and give you a name. One special thing was to have your grandfather Vicente Mayer participate in this ordinance. Not only was this special, but very unusual. Your grandfather was not a member of the church, and men not holding the priesthood were not able to participate in this ordinance. However, Bishop Zwick invited him to stand in the circle. We wanted you to be the cutest baby, but that was difficult because you were bald, but that soon changed. We wanted you to be obedient and this continued when you were baptized. You were very obedient and well taught when you learned to put laundry away after it was washed. One day mom

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came into the room to put away the laundry and found that you had already put it all away. You were about three years old.

We hoped that some day you would get an education which you started early when one day you were ready to go to school carrying a make believe brief case like I did each day. This was before kindergarten.

Years later we wanted you to excel in everything, in which we had no choice, but you did excel in high school. We wanted you to dress well but we did not have a big budget to do so because we now had five other children. We wanted you to be the first to attend the university (University of Utah). But we soon learned that we were out of choices and that you had a mind of your own. Or did that come sooner? We did not choose for you to go to Arizona for the rest of your life but we were happy that after you met your one and only, you chose to be married in the Salt Lake Temple and to have your wedding celebration in Utah. There were other choices but I can't think of them now.

# Who is the wisest person you've known? What have you learned from them?



I believe my father was the wisest man I knew. It was not because of education, he only went to the third grade in Mexico. but because of a thirst to learn and innate sense of what to do in different circumstances. He knew how to handle young men, especially young men who had trouble with parents and had even spent time in jail. He did it through hard work. So many young men worked with my father over the years and most remember how they were treated and the sound advice he gave them. His desire to learn, whether it was related to his work as an extra-gang foreman or how to construct a spur ( a railroad line) for the first time. He went to books to learn how to read blue prints.

He also seemed to have a way with people, even people he had never met. He treated people with respect without being

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intimidated by them. He treated my mother with respect and showed how much he trusted her in running the affairs of the house and family. Because much of his work caused him to be away from home, sometimes for weeks at a time, he turned over his check to her every two weeks and never inquired about how or where she spent the money. He trusted her without question. This from a man who was brought up in a “macho” culture. He treated my mother with care and kindness. Though he was gone from home for days, he remained strong and expected each of us to treat our mother with respect. He was successful in all aspects of life, with the exception of his smoking, because of his wisdom.



# Who inspires you?



**T**here have been so many people in my life who have inspired me that it is hard to talk about one. A person who inspires you makes you want to change your life or behavior for the better. However, the question asks about the present time. If that is the case it is not as difficult. President Nelson is the most important inspiration as he continues to speak and counsel us about what we should be doing in our lives. As a medical physician and a 97 year old prophet he has great life experience in addition to direct revelation from the Lord. He continues to guide and direct our church during the pandemic which continues to ravage the country and the world. He inspires us in all aspects of our lives. We know that he will always lead us in the correct way. There are many other of the leaders of the church who inspire us with their talks given at General Conference.

On a more personal level I have been inspired by my own children when I see what good people they are; how they love one another within their families as well as their siblings and

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their children. They enjoy being with one another and the cousins like to be with each other.

My sons inspire me when I see what good husbands and fathers they are. Finally but not last is Meg how she wants to have a clean and orderly home, preparing meals that are healthy and nutritious. Keeping a nice and orderly home inspires one to try to make a better effort to help.

Years ago I was inspired by Professor R. Benavides. I was working on a Masters degree when he told me that I should continue my studies and get a PH.D. I had never thought of such a possibility, but as it turned out it became my life's profession. Others who have inspired me are Don Barton and Orlando Rivera for my profession, Pres. Hinckley for wisdom in dealing with life, and many others. In another entry I have spoken of the influence my parents had over me.

# How has the country changed during your lifetime?



**L**ike anyone who has lived for 85 years, I have seen a great many wonderful and terrible changes. One has been the technology that has taken place in every in every aspect of life, the medical field for example. Today you can replace every part of the body; knees, hips shoulders, hearts, lungs. They have even replaced a face from a terribly burned man. They have machines that can read a person's body, like the MRI, catscan, etc,etc,etc. There have been drugs to treat almost any ailment. With the good comes the bad, for example drugs to treat pain, opioids which have caused a crisis of people overdosing on the pill or becoming drug addicts.

Communication has been advanced because of technology. Forty years ago you had to pay extra for long distance calls; now with cell phones you can call to any place in the world for little cost.

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You can also be in contact with any one at any time by the use of texting or other messaging that I don't understand. Initially E-mail was the way to get information and news, now your cell phone allows you to connect to all kinds of sites and platforms, good or evil, for who knows what. If your cell phone is too cumbersome you can buy a smart watch which counts steps taken, heart beats, and serves as a phone.

You don't have to go to the theater any more; you can get all the entertainment you want on your smart TV. There are many companies which offer thousands of movies: Amazon, Netflix, Disney, Hulu, just to name a very few who offer all kinds of movies, documentaries, etc.

As a country we have always been great consumers of goods. Our homes continue to get

larger and grander. We are not satisfied with two or three bathrooms, but need one for every member of the family. Each member of the family must have their own bedroom which may include a TV, a computer in addition to a personal cell phone. Whereas when I was in high school most families only had one family car, now almost any one of age will have a car. Utah averages three cars per family. This requires high schools to have huge parking lots. We eat better, dress better, entertain ourselves better than we did in 1950. In those days a family vacation was going to family cabin, going fishing, or just going camping. Now, families travel to Europe, the Far East or on a

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cruise every five or six years. Many teen-agers do not work in the summers because there are not enough places to work or they have many activities that are required to participate in sports, clubs, or other school activities. School dress standards have changed or declined as some older folks might say. In all the years up until about the 1970's boys were required to wear jeans or slacks and the girls wore dresses or skirts. Now kids can wear shorts and girls can show part of their midriff. Language that was used behind the barn so to speak, is now used in the hallways and by both boys and girls. There is also little respect for teachers or property. If we got in trouble at school, usually a parent would come and grab the student by the ear and solve the problem at home. More and more parents expect the teacher to be the parent in not only trying to teach the child but also deal with disobedience.

What came first the chicken or the egg? This seems to be the question about the polarization of our country in the 2000's. Are politics a reflection of society where few have respect for one another; people attack one another in social media or even on TV. Or is our behavior caused by undisciplined politics? Whatever is the case we as a nation are in big trouble if the leaders of society and our government don't make a better effort to change things. Perhaps this is also an admonition to each of us to treat everyone kinder and with love, even those with whom we disagree.

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Unfortunately, I have witnessed some of the seeds of how we treat or bully others. A few weeks ago our son asked us to stay with his five children for a week. All the children were able to get ready for school each morning. It was our job to get them to school and be at home later in the afternoon and feed them dinner and get them to bed. Dinner was difficult because not everyone was there at the same time. Getting the kids to bed was a challenge; the girls especially felt that they needed less sleep than we thought they needed. But the great shocker came when the 14 year old was sitting in the living room looking depressed. She had had a falling out with a very close friend who told Greta that she was unfriending her on her phone, whatever that means. She explained what that meant and told me she had invited a former boyfriend of the offended friend to a party. She let me read the text and I was shocked. The language used by that 14 year old girl (member of the LDS Church) was obscene and should not be used by anyone. She told me that it was common language in the hallways of her school, not uncommon for a boy to approach a girl and call her a b—ch, and if she didn't like it f—k off. I could not believe it!!!! If this is the way boys treat young ladies at school, who knows what happens on cell phones? About four years ago a grandson told me he hated school. He told me that a lot of bullying took place at his school, He further added that the bullying continued all day and night because of cell phones His school is far from our

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granddaughter's. Seeing is believing, I saw it first hand. If our society was not in enough trouble, this type of behavior and language and bullying has to have a detrimental affect when these children become adults. It is especially concerning here where most kids are members of the church.

There is more I could write but this last entry wore me out.  
Goodby

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# What was one of the most romantic moments in your life?



**T**here were so many, how can I choose?



I can think of couple: When Meg and I were dating we went out to have pizza one night. It was probably the winter when we officially had a date. Meg said that the pizza place was the building where her father had his first wax factory. I decided that I had to make a decision as to our relationship. It was the first

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time that I told her that I loved her. It must have been shocking to Meg, because here was a 26 year old bachelor asking a young 20 year old if she felt the same way. She did. During that same year we went to the Utah movie theater to see ‘The Days of wine and Roses’. For some reason I felt very emotional over the way the movie ended and felt very close to Meg that evening.

One other time is when we went to Bryce Canyon one summer. Meg said she had never been there before, so we made a trip down to see the canyon. I had been there a couple of times before, but those two or three days were especially romantic. The year after we were married we took a vacation to Mexico and spent two or three days in Acapulco. Even though Meg was about three months pregnant we had a couple of romantic nights on the beach.



# Who have been your closest friends throughout the years?



**T**his is probably the easiest question to discuss. When our family moved to Woods Cross in 1948; one of my first friendships was the Bob Rawlins family. They owned a little farm about ten minutes from my house. I spent some time at their home helping slop the pigs and some work around the farm. Dory and Peg were always so nice to me and almost included me as part of their family. That next summer Bob and I worked at various farms jobs, such as cutting asparagus, cutting onion seed and finally hauling hay. We made good money, enough to buy clothes and entertain ourselves. There was a group of us that continued working on the hay bailers and hauling hay to the Ferguson farm, where people came to buy it. Most of the guys I worked with were great friends but were a little rough living. The year that I turned 15 my dad wanted us to buy a car. I still did not

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have a learner's permit but we decided to buy a 1942 Plymouth sedan. In the Spring of that year that I went with the whole family to take a driver's test. We finally had our first family car; neither Mom nor Dad drove and so I was the chauffeur.

It was that same year that I drifted away from that first group of friends and made friends with Darrell Bailey, Bob Anderson, Gary Larsen, Dick Madsen and Frank McNeil. Because they were a little more religious, I kind of went along with them to many LDS church socials, like Gold and Green Balls. We gravitated to those activities. I didn't know that their influence would have an impact on me. It was that same spring that Darrell taught me to play tennis. It was also my first summer working on the railroad. I was also the designated driver as I had free reign of a new family car, a 1951 Chevrolet. This is the group of us who have been close friends since high school.

The next couple of years at Davis High ( 1954-55) I had other friends who revolved around sports. Many of those friendships lasted for years after, but it was the friends from Bountiful who remained the closest. After graduation, most of my friends had decided to attend college. I had thought about it and enrolled at the U with Darrell and Bob. Gary went to BYU. It was the end of this first year of college that could have ended my close relationship with these friends. All of them were now planning a mission and would be gone for at least two years. I had not done well in my studies at the U and so I decided to put myself up for

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the draft. After two years everyone returned from missions and I returned from the army and we took up where we left off. It was interesting because both Bob Anderson and Darrell got married in the following years. We still kept in touch but a single person among among married couples does not have much in common anymore. For the next couple of years I continued my studies at the U, as did Bob and Darrell, but they were busy supporting a family.

The next couple of years I still had a close relationship with my friends. Dick Madsen was at the Y where he met Tiffany snow. That same year I met this cutest little freshman with a ponytail. She ignored me for about a year and we finally got together at Christmas time of 1962. We married in 1963 and made our way to Missouri. For seven years we had little to do with my friends in Utah but we got together when we came to Utah for a vacations. It seems that it was always Gary Larsen who made sure we were included in activities, usually at Bear Lake, when we were in Utah. When we came back home to live in Utah in 1973 it took a while for us to renew our close friendships, but we did and have continued for the last fifty years.

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# What gives you peace of mind?



**F**or many years the thing that brought me the most comfort was when I felt that I was in control of my own destiny. This was true during the years that I had a young family and was finally in a fairly stable profession and economic future. My success as a professor depended on what I could produce and how hard I worked.

I soon learned that in raising a family I was only a small part of any success that happened. While I was off teaching, going to meetings, and serving on councils, I realized that most of my peace of mind came from knowing that Meg was taking care of our home and our children. This was especially true with the various assignments that I had in the Church. This was true from almost the time that we first had children. It all began while we were in Minnesota and Wisconsin. I was called to serve on the District Council as well as Executive Secretary to Bishop Harris.

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It was then that Meg had to get our girls to church or any meetings that she had. I don't ever remember her being late to meetings, even when she had to hitch a ride to a meeting. This became more important after we moved back to Utah and we added two boys to our brood. I served in more positions that took me away from the family especially on Sundays. This was back in the years when we went to church in the mornings and the afternoons. If I was in a Bishopric, this placed an even bigger responsibility on Meg. However, she was always up to the challenge; she always had our six children well dressed and on time at church. This became a bit easier when we went to the three hour block of meetings in the 1980's. By this time our girls were older and were some help at church. This was also true in many other family activities where Meg took the lead in making sure we had FHE and other activities. As our family grew, all of a sudden we had teen-age daughters and my peace of mind was challenged; we had girls who were spreading their wings and had to depend on their own decisions about life. It is at this time that you realize what you taught or did not teach your children. You hope that they remember what they were taught in church or in the home will bear fruit. As I reflect on my role as a father I know I could have done a much better job in teaching my children. My peace of mind no longer came from what and how I controlled the lives of my children, but on what they were taught and how much of that is part of who they are. Now that our children have



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families of their own, I take comfort and some peace of mind as I see what good people and parents they are. This does not mean they haven't made mistakes and have challenges, like all parents, but I know that they are trying to be the best they can just as their parents did. I hope and pray that the Gospel will someday find a place in each of their lives and hearts: this will bring true Peace of Mind.

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# What things do you think you cannot live without?



No doubt that the first and most important would be family. Just think about how empty life would be without a spouse and family. I can't believe that Meg and I have been married for more than 58 years. I am thankful for the choice I made. I love her dearly. Of course there are many reasons why a family fulfills the happiness of life. This is not to say that there are moments and issues that can be heartbreaking and difficult to overcome: disagreements between husband and wife, offspring that decide to depart from the "chosen" path you have selected, illness and accidents that nobody wants to experience in life. In spite of all the sorrowful things that life brings to individuals, it is compounded with a growing posterity.

I can illustrate this in three experiences: First, When I attended conferences in various places, I really did not like eating alone. Unless there was someone that I knew quite well, I would usually

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eat alone in my hotel room. Two, I knew the husband of a high school friend; the Steels had been married over fifty years when she suddenly died. I met him four or five months later early one morning at the grocery store and asked how things were going. He told me that he hated to stay home because it was so lonely. He would get up every day and leave home and not return until much later. He would just wander from store to store or wherever he could stay away from the memories he had. Three, I have a friend at the university whose only daughter decided she did not want to marry. Joel said to me, “consider yourself lucky that you have many children who can give your grand babies to cuddle and grand kids to spoil”.

I must admit that there were times that I did not appreciate the large family that we had and all the challenges that came with it. Now as I look at each one of our children and see what wonderful individuals each one is and especially the love and care that they have for one another, I know that I have been blessed. I know that all good and difficult things of this life must come to end but what a wonderful promise we have that “families can be forever”, a promise given to those of us that have been sealed in the temple as a family. Having been “born of goodly parents” and of course my own siblings would be hard to disown.

Other things I cannot do without: good life long friends, good health care at a very reasonable cost for seniors, living in the

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greatest nation in the world (in spite of a few crazies), electricity, heating for cold winter nights, fresh fruit and veggies that are available to us all year long, the technology of the internet which allows you to find information at the touch of a button, and television with its great entertainment always available. I value transportation that makes it easy to travel and vacation all over the world and good neighbors and members of our ward and the Church. There are probably many other material things, like a car, though the day may come that it will change for me. There are many other things that I couldn't do without but at this time they don't come to mind.

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# What is one of your go-to stories, one you like telling over and over?



**T**here are so many go-to stories that I have told over the years that I had to go to an outside source to get an impartial opinion. The one that heads the list is one I have told many times about my father who would approach me when I was working on the rail road during a hot summer day as I was sweating and filthy, and he would ask “Do you want to do this for the rest of your life? If not, get an education”.

There is another one that I have told mainly to young men and in other church settings. As teen-agers we always liked to attend dances. In addition to Lagoon and SaltAir dances there were dances held at LDS wards where we met girls. It was a Halloween night that three friends (one of whom was me) were on the prowl to find the best Ward celebration. Somebody, I can't remember who, had a bottle of alcohol which we started to drink

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before we got to the 8th Ward. We were out in the parking lot acting loud and silly, trying to get the attention of the girls inside. It wasn't long before we were successful and out came Bishop Dale Hayes, a big muscular man who was a contractor by trade. Boy! Were we in trouble! Surely he was going to chase us away. He came over and put his arms around us and said: "Guys, why don't you come in and have something to eat." He knew we had been drinking and he wanted us to be in a safe place where we certainly would not get into trouble under his watchful eye. I was not a member of the Church at that time, but years later when I did become a member and had a better understanding of the role of a bishop, I said to myself many times, "I hope that if I ever become a bishop I can be like Dale Hayes."



# What things matter most to you in life?



**T**he things that matter most to me are my wife and my family. As one gets older you begin to realize that you have fewer years left and that your personal relationship with these people is the most important to you. In a movie that I recently saw, a married couple became aware that the wife had little time to live. The husband said to his wife that they should snuggle as much as possible in the time they had left together. We as members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints believe that families are forever. Does this mean that you will be able to snuggle once again with your wife; that you will be able to cuddle a new born, or play around with your kids or grandkids? I don't know. My Health is important to me. As I get older and know that I am not able to do the things I did in my prime and my quality of life starts to decline, I wish that I had done more to keep my mind sharp and my body fit. However many times it is not up to us whether health problems will affect the quality of life. My belief

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in the Church and the teachings as stated above that we will be together again some day are important to me. We don't know if our relationships will be the same as they are here on earth, as much as we wish they might be.

# What simple pleasures of life do you truly enjoy?



**W**hat simple pleasures of life do I truly enjoy? Of course these have changed over the years but at this time of life there are still many. Getting together at the dinners organized by Meg with our kids and grandchildren is tops. It is fun any time that we have the chance to have FHE evenings with any of our kids. I like going on little trips with our kids and taking our grandkids to lunch, although we started but did not get around to all of them; (must repent and do it!)

Traveling has always been on the top of the list. This began very early in our marriage when we went to Mexico the year after we were married. Later, Meg went with me as I attended conferences in New Orleans, Boston, Puerto Rico, Montana,

Washington DC, San Francisco and Jackson Hole. This was when our kids were still very young. All the years that I took students

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to Europe and Mexico were a lot of work but very pleasurable. In later years Meg and I have gone on various cruises with friends and these have been very enjoyable. I feel that I still have a trip or two in me, especially if I go with my kids and their spouses.

I still enjoy family vacations, such as the one we had in St. George in the summer of 2021. Going to the Ranch at Deer

Springs with family is fun, though Meg would like to spend more time there than I do.

Tennis and running were pleasures that I especially enjoyed when I was younger but I still enjoy tennis and some physical exercise. I still enjoy working in the yard though it is becoming more work than pleasure as I grow older.

Having lunch with Paul and John has always been fun although since covid we have not done it for some time. Meg and I

especially like to go with friends to Taggart's Grill. For years our high school group had lunch together most Wednesdays but we have been unable to do it for a few months due to covid.

Some enjoyable things that don't require much effort are going to Dick's and buying an apple fritter or some other pastry, reading books,

(although it becomes harder and harder to stay awake), going to Church where we can see old friends, bringing Meg flowers on

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special occasions, visiting friends that don't mind hearing old stories, or just watching TV with Meg each night. I used to like playing Skipbo but since Meg always wins it is not as much fun.

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# What is the farthest you have ever traveled?



I don't know if this was in one trip or from one place to another. The longest distance from point to point was from Salt Lake to Israel, which was 7,017. We toured Israel for 11 days in December 2007. The second longest is from Salt Lake to Buenos Aires, Argentina, a distance of 6,218 miles. This was in January of 2012, when Meg and I

went to Argentina to serve in the Buenos Aires South Mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

We served there for 18 months.

Probably the longest trip in miles traveled was the cruise on the Danube. This began in a flight from Salt Lake to

Warsaw, Poland. The air trip was only 5,438 miles but the land travel from Warsaw to Budapest, Hungary and the boat cruise

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from Budapest to Prague was long. This trip was most interesting because we saw areas that we had never seen before except in newsreels. This area was all under Communist control until 1991. To begin we flew into Warsaw where we toured the old town and ate pierogies with the Baileys and the VanOrmans, We also visited the famous Jewish ghetto and other sites of the city. We traveled to Krakow and then on to Auschwitz and and Birkenau where millions of

Jews had been exterminated. We ended up in Budapest and took a cruise liner up the Danube River for seven days and finally took a flight home from Nuremberg. I estimate that with the flight home we probably traveled some 16,000 miles round trip.

On Sunday, February 20, 2022, 09:44:24 PM MST,



# How has your life turned out differently than you imagined it would?



**T**here have been many forks in the road I have traveled in my lifetime. The first was when my parents moved our family to Woods Cross in 1948.

My mother was concerned about the gang situation in West Salt Lake. Some of the boys older than I belonged to gangs and there was a certain prestige in belonging to a gang. I probably would not have joined a gang because of the influence of my parents, but there were more influences that came in moving to the country.

Moving to a white-some and delightful town where there were no Mexicans or Catholics made it difficult to assimilate into this new society,

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especially true for my sisters. I made a lot of friends, some of whom were not active LDS. Later I got in with a group that certainly influenced much of my future. My high school friends: Darrell Bailey, Bob Anderson, Gary Larsen and Dick Madsen were good examples of LDS kids. This had a great influence on me that I didn't realize would take me to another cross road in a few years.

My parents always hoped that some day I would get a good education and upon graduation from high school in 1955 all these friends began talking about college. I chose the fork in the road that would eventually lead me to higher education. While all my friends went on missions I went into the army for two years. I returned to the University of Utah after a semester at the Universidad Autonoma de Mexico and got my BA in Spanish and History. In 1961 during the Cuban Missile Crisis, the FBI was hiring Spanish speakers. By this time I had one year of graduate studies behind me and four of us went down to the FBI

offices, applied, took the tests and passed. Fork in the road: take the job with the FBI or continue my studies? Also at that time one of my professors, Ricardo Benavides,

suggested that I might consider going for a Ph.D. While I was deciding which fork to take, my life got even more complicated when I formally met this cute young coed named Meg Wallis. I

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had seen her around campus a year or two before, but she had not been interested when I asked her out on a date.

This time she showed some interest and we began dating in the winter of 1962. Oh! Oh!, a third fork in the road. I had begun to apply at other universities for graduate school. By the Spring of 1963 Meg and I were very involved and we knew that we were meant for each other. Yes, the third path in the road was religion. Meg would marry me on one condition, only one ! If I would join the Church we could get married. Well, you know the rest of the story.

Have I ever regretted the paths taken at each crossroad? No, never. But as I look back at the years since 1955 I have taken the road less traveled and I am grateful for each choice.

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# How is life different today compared to when you were a child?



**T**here have been so many changes that have taken place in the 70 years since I was a child. I have spoken about many of the tech changes in other Storyworth stories. The one that stands out most is the freedom that young children had during and after WWII. Children 10 years and younger were encouraged to play outdoors even until after dark. Our parents did not worry if we went to Pioneer Park to swim or to play. On Saturdays we would walk uptown to the movies, unaccompanied, and watch movies for three hours. Especially in the summer, we would play until dinner and then go out and play games in the dark. One game was called Grey Wolf where one kid was chosen to be the wolf and he would go hide while the other kids tried to find him or her before he captured us or scared us to death jumping out in the dark. Parents did not worry about their children being out in the

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streets playing for all hours of the day and night. I have talked about how many kids as young as nine and ten were taken out to the farms and orchards to pick cherries and in the fields to plant tomatoes, thin and harvest beets. In my own case,

I talked my parents into letting me go shine shoes at the Union Pacific Station. My friend, Richard Delgado,

helped me build a shoe shine box and buy the supplies needed. We then went to the station and set up shop. Usually we would make 4 or 5 dollars in an evening. I am sure that some of the money was given because they felt sorry for two

Mexican kids trying to earn a living. By the way, I was 8 or 9 years old when I first started working like that. I remember that my mother was concerned but my dad felt that it would be a good growing experience. When I was 10 or 11 I began selling newspapers in down town Salt Lake City. I would walk up and down Main and State Street hollering " Get your paper here only 25 cents". We would get 10 cents for every paper sold. You had to sell at least 30 or 40 papers to make the night worth while. I met an older man in the Mint Cafe who would buy ten issues from me on the nights he had dinner there. Did our parents worry? I am sure they did but it was not like today where parents are afraid to let their kids play out in the street after dark; besides, now most kids are watching TV or playing some kind of video game inside.

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It was a more innocent time of life where parents worried but did not fear of all the dangers that exist now.

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# Do you have any particularly vivid memories of your grandparents?



I do not have memories of any grandparents because I never knew any of them. They all died before I was born. However, since I have been doing some family history I found some information about some of my grandparents. Manuel Villanueva and Maria Santos were my father's parents both born in Etzatlan, Mexico. Manuel served as Mayor of Etzatlan for two years. I had the opportunity to visit the family home and meet some relatives. Of course both Manuel and Maria were deceased before my father left Mexico in about 1920. The information which I have is from birth records and their marriage in 1901. I continue to search records of their parents and other ancestors but have little knowledge except what has been recorded in birth and marriage information.

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On my mother's side I have less information: there have been some in the family who insist that my grandmother, Maria Sara Amador, was married to someone else; however we have a marriage certificate which states that she married Marcelino Macias on 16 March 1910. Mother was born on Oct. 3. 1911. Because Maria Sara Amador de Macias died in 1918 my mother was raised by her grandparents Jose Sacramento Amador and Florentina Martinez de Amador. Florentina brought her four sons one daughter and one granddaughter (my mother) to the United States in 1924, when the three older sons were contracted y U and I Sugar to work in the beet fields of Garland, Utah.

# What have you changed your mind about over the years?



Over the years I believe the most important thing in which I have changed is understanding the importance of family and friendships. As I got older and as I understood better The Plan of Salvation, family became much more important than any other relationship.

During the professional period of my life it seemed like my work was the important thing because I was most interested in providing for the "here and now". Consequently success in my profession was the most important thing on my mind. Also, relations at work in professional matters as well as other relations were important to my progress and success. As the main bread winner, relations outside of the home took away from my own family relations and thoughts about the hereafter

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were far off into the future.

This realization of family relations became more important as our children grew up and began to make choices of their own. This makes you realize that your own choices may be eternal choices for you as well as for them. This becomes more poignant as children come and ask for advice and later when your counsel is no longer needed. I still am grateful when a child or grandchild seeks advice from me.

A colleague told me how lucky I was to have such a large family. Joel only had one daughter and she decided she did not want any children. This means he does not have any posterity.

I am so grateful for each of my children, grand children and so on and especially for my wife Meg who took so much responsibility in raising and teaching our children during those years when I was caught up in trying to become successful. I am grateful for the Plan of Salvation which promises that we may be together as a family forever.

# If you could thank anyone, who would you thank and why?



**G**osh, what a question! I can think of many people that I should thank for what they have done for me in my life. First and foremost, it would be my parents. When I think of how hard they worked to provide for our large family for so many years. My Father worked for over fifty years on the railroad, only missing a few days when he was hospitalized for a few days after he was hit by a car while on the job. He took a job as an extra-gang foreman because it paid more than just a section foreman. It meant being away from home for many days, although he tried to come home on weekends whenever possible. When he was a section gang foreman I can remember him getting up every morning getting the fire going, winter or summer, so that my mother could get his breakfast and lunch ready for the day. On cold mornings my mother made sure that he had plenty of hot

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coffee or canela to keep him warm, as he was outside all day. He never spent money on himself. If he needed or wanted some money he would ask my mom for it after all other things were taken care of.

It is just as difficult to list all the things our mom did for us: birthing, I guess, can be the most significant but there is so much more. It all begins in that small three room home with no indoor toilets and only a cold water tap, There was a wood/coal burning stove in the kitchen and a cole furnace in the middle room for winter heat. There were two bunk-beds and a double bed where Mom and Dad and the four kids slept. Vince and I slept on couch in the front room.

This gives you an idea of where Mother had to keep house and take care of the kids. The most memorable visual was watching Mother wash the clothes in a tin tub over a wood fire in our back yard, summer and winter; this was until my father bought her Maytag ringer washer in about 1946. Still she had to heat the water on the wood stove and drain the washer in the tin tub to carry and dump it outside. Bathing us children and cooking meals were all done on the wood burning stove. If any one had to go to the toilet, it was outside about fifteen yards from the house in an enclosed neighborhood facility that had two flush toilets. Of course at night a chamberpot was kept under the bed. We also lived about forty feet from the railroad tracks which carried the

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earlier train engines that spewed ashes and cinders all over the yard and house.

Our second section house, in Woods Cross, was a step up in convenience and a few steps closer to the tracks. It had two bedrooms and hot and cold running water and a private two seater outhouse. Life was a bit easier for our mother but noisier as the trains sped by day and night . Our house there in Woods Cross was about fifteen feet from the train tracks and when the passenger train rumbled by at 60 mph my mother prayed that none of the children were on the tracks.

I thank my Mom and Dad for the love of Mexican food, music, language and culture they passed onto us. While in Salt Lake we would attend all the activities at Centro Civico Mexicano, where my Dad was President for a term. We also had to dress in Mexican clothes to perform Mexican songs and dances at Centro Civico and at the Jamaicas at the Guadalupe church. In some ways we resisted some of this, especially when our parents spoke to us in Spanish and we would respond in English. Not until later in life did we realize what we had lost by not maintaining Spanish.

I also want to thank my "media naranja", better half, for all she has done for me and our family. Yes, she is the reason I joined the Church and later the reason I wanted to be a strong member

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and help raise good kids. In those early years it was Meg that took the lead in having FHE and trying to have scripture study in the morning. Meg was also most responsible in nurturing our children while I was off trying to earn a living. She was also responsible for getting our children ready for church each Sunday as in many of those years as early as 1970 I was either on assignment or in a bishopric or on the High Council. She is an example of what it takes to get the children to church on time and having then sit together for the full two hours. She has been my constant companion for almost 59 years and I am so thankful for her.

I am grateful and proud of my children and the wonderful examples they are to me and to everyone else. So many times I have had people tell me what a wonderful person one of my children is. This is not unique nor is it just on occasion, but frequently. They make me proud and many times people think I am totally responsible for their success.

I am also thankful for my friends, Bob Anderson, Darrell Bailey, Gary Larsen, Dick Madsen and others who have been examples to me of worthy Priesthood holders, although this wasn't always the case.

There are so many others that I am thankful for but my brain is about to explode thinking of the many others that should be



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noted here.

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# Has anyone ever rescued you, figuratively or literally?



**T**his being April, it is an appropriate time to answer. Both literally and figuratively, it would be Jesus Christ. He has rescued us once in the

Garden when He atoned for our sins, again on the cross where He died, and then again on the morning of his resurrection, which we celebrate this Easter Sunday. In the Atonement He not only took upon Himself the sins of the world but also all the pains and problems that we encounter each day of our lives. His death and resurrection promise that all of us will be resurrected and enjoy eternal life one way or another. May we all strive to seek eternal life with Jesus Christ and our Father in Heaven.

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# Did you consider any other careers? How did you choose?



**T**here were two times when I thought of a different career rather than where I ended up. The first came while in the army, After Basic Training, I applied to Officer Training. It was a twenty week course after which I would be a be an officer instead of just regular grunt. Because I had applied to this program, I was the only one of 400 men than was not shipped out to Korea after basic training. I stayed in C Company for the next 7 months. I attended a Non Commissioned Officers school for four weeks and then received a regular assignments. This was in March of 1967. For the next 7 months I had basically a 6AM to 6 PM job. I had most evenings and week-ends free. I spent some week-ends in Carmel, Monterey and Salina.

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I finally decided that the army life was not for me. If I went to OCS and graduated after 20 weeks, then I was obligated to stay in the army for 3 more years. It meant four years in total. I went to personnel and asked that my order be changed. Three weeks later I received orders to go to the 101 airborne unit in Munich, Germany. When I got to Germany my order were changed to Berlin where I spent the next 14 months.

The second time that I considered a different career was in 1962. The Cuban Missile Crises happened in 1961 and as a result the FBI was recruiting college graduates who could speak Spanish. Six of us from the U applied, took the test and passed. We were all excited and ready to sign. It was at this same moment that one of my Spanish professor, Ricardo Benavides encouraged me to apply to other universities to get a Ph.D. I had never even considered this as a career because I thought that only gods were professors. This was in the Fall of 1962 and so I began to apply to six universities throughout the country. I was a graduate student and waiting to hear back from the other universities. I also met Margaret Wallis that same Fall and that is another story. I married Meg in Sept. of 1963 and three years later with our little girl Adrienne headed East to the "show me state" to attend the University of Missouri.

# What advice do you wish you had taken from your parents?



**M**y Father always said that we should save our money. I know that this was difficult to do with his large family and limited resources. He also turned the money over to my mother and let her take care of all the expenses. Maybe because of that, he wanted to teach us the importance of saving money. Well it went on deaf ears.

When we were teen-agers there were opportunities to work helping farmers. There were jobs picking onion seeds, picking peaches or working baling hay. Most of the teen-agers would spend money on clothes to help with family expenses. It was also the time for dancing at Lagoon or Salt Air. It was the first time that young men could buy cars. Some spent a great deal of money making their cars unique. I did have a car to use but it

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was also the family car. I helped with the payments and later took over all car expenses. After I got out of the army I bought my own car.

A car was important so you could be seen at the Drive-In where you could get a hamburger for 25 cents and a malt for 20 cents. As I got older and had jobs that made better wages I still did not have a savings account. Even saving 10% each month would have been good and was very common. Later when I went to the university where tuition was only \$55 dollars a quarter and probably another \$50 in books, I still spent lots of money on clothes and dating. Dating could be expensive because of course you had to spend twice as much wherever you went or whatever you did. When I worked on the railroad I was making about \$1000 every two weeks. I easily could have put \$50 away every month. When I worked as an assistant manager in the Uptown Theater, I was making about \$1200 a month. I also gave my parents money to help with expenses at home. I wonder what I would have had in savings if I had put 10% away each month. Very good advice given but not taken. ¡Qué lástima!



# What have been some of your life's greatest surprises?



**P**robably the first and most significant surprise is that my family has been so successful in reaching the American dream. When I think of how and where we grew up and of some of the obstacles we, especially my sisters, faced it is amazing. Even more amazing is that many of our friends and neighbors in that small Mexican community were able to do the same with hard work, taking advantage of opportunities, and education. Much had to do with the dreams of our parents and the example they set and the hard work they did to provide for their families. As result of these opportunities, our own children have been able to take advantage of the many opportunities available to them. Part of another great surprise and possibly a dream is the wonderful loving children they have become.

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I really don't know many families who are so loving and supportive to one another as ours. I love them for this.

Another surprise was the subtle discrimination I encountered as a teen-ager without knowing it. Most of it had to do with LDS parents not wanting their daughters getting too involved with non-LDS boys. It was always interesting that in many cases I got along so well with the parents while they preferred that I not get too involved with their daughter. This was more a question of religion than race, I guess.

Much of the racial discrimination was tongue in cheek or came as a possible complement such as "you are different than most Mexicans", whatever that implication meant. Other people would call me Chili, the Mexicali Rose or Latin lover, and some girls I dated, especially one, had to show her friends that I was a different Mexican than what they saw in movies or what they had heard. I think it has been difficult for Meg sometimes to be overwhelmed with how my culture is still so ingrained in me.

My own siblings have always been very supportive of each other. Even when there have been some very hard feelings, with good cause, if someone needed a hand or financial support, all were there in a minute with the support of their spouses.

Another surprise is the lasting relationship of my high school friends. These great friends have been almost like family since

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1953. In spite of the fact that we were not of the same faith, they never overtly tried to influence me or treat me differently. They were always supportive and invited me to all their activities, even ward and church activities. None of them considered an attempt to influence me. Meg and I and our growing family were in the midwest for seven years, and when we came back to Utah we were part of the group again. Here we are, almost seventy years later meeting most Wednesdays for lunch to talk, see how each other's health is, tell stories again and again and laugh until the restaurant shakes.

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# What is your favorite joke?



**T**he only real joke I can remember at this time, and it is not my favorite: Why did the chicken cross the road?

to get to the other side. Or if a rooster lays an egg at the pitch, top of the roof, which way would the egg roll?

Roosters don't lay eggs. How do you talk to a giant? USE BIG WORDS. I am sure that there are many jokes that are much better than these, but I don't recall them at this time. How about his one: Three old friends were walking along the beach, One said to the second one, Its windy today, he replied no, its Thursday, to which the third friend replied, So am I! Let's have a beer. Which brings to mind ROMEO: real old men eating out.

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# If you could choose any talents to have, what would they be?



**L**et me see, where can I start? I wish that I had taken the time to try my hand at playing the piano. I don't believe that it takes any special talent to play the piano but it takes time, dedication and effort to play at the level I would have liked.

I could have taken the time and put in some effort but I was not willing to put in the type of dedication required.

I wish I would have done drawing or painting of some type. I do have a bit of talent for this but I have not been willing to take the time and effort required. I know that with a little effort I could produce the type of drawing or painting that would bring personal satisfaction but maybe not the quality that I would be willing to show. In fact, I think that I will try to practice and see if I really can produce something that would bring me

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satisfaction. I guess I better hurry as time might be running out.

A third talent I'd have liked to have is that of remembering names of people. One of the most important things that people value is their name.

If you can remember someone's name after many years or if you don't know someone well at all, it means a great deal to them if you remember their name or something personal about them. This is another talent that I could and will work on beginning today. I will make an effort to know everyone in our ward by the first and last name. I know this is possible because back in the early 1990's I knew all of the people in the ward by name.



# What are your favorite memories of each of your children growing up?



**T**here are so many memories of my children growing up that I hope I don't overlook any special ones.

Adrienne: When we lived on Bass Ave. in Colombia, Missouri where I was studying for my Ph,D,

my family would see me leave each day with my briefcase in hand to my office, class or the library. One day, when Adrienne was about four, I saw her walking down the street with my briefcase. I asked her where she was going she said to school. Later, when she was in kindergarten

Meg and I went to visit her class. She was one of the few white kids in the class. The teacher had them dance to show what they could do. The little black kids were full of rhythm in their

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dancing and

Adrienne was right along with them. She had picked up their movements.

Many years later she and her friend decided they were going to Arizona to school. They packed their belonging in a little used car I had bought her. Our little girl was all grown up and drove away. Mom and I cried as we saw our first child leave home and become totally independent. She met Michael Ellsworth when she enrolled at ASU. In 1987 she came home to finish her final year at the University of Utah.

We had met Michael earlier that year and it appeared there would soon be a wedding. We had the ceremony in the Salt Lake Temple and the reception at the Peruvian Lodge at Alta. Michael's family decided to have a reception in Michael's home town of Safford, Arizona.

We packed up our five children in our pumpkin colored van and went to Safford where we had the reception at the Ellsworth home. The next day we left Adrienne standing on the sidewalk crying as we drove away.

There was not a dry eye among the family in van. It was as if a part of my body had been torn away.

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Elizabeth: was always a character. It seems that she always had her mouth open laughing. I remember her in the bath tub splashing around with her mouth wide open and laughing. It seems that she always had more food on her face than in her stomach. She also had a problem keeping her food down. One Sunday I was carrying Liz from the parking area into our ward building in Colombia. I was wearing my brand new blue blazer when all of a sudden Liz threw up all down my back. When she threw up it was like an explosion as whatever was coming up projected out a couple of feet. I remember that she followed Adrienne all over the place. As they grew older they seemed to go opposite ways. They did not get along well. When Liz was 20 years old I kept hearing of this missionary, Elder Nicholls, who spent a lot of time teaching Elizabeth's friend, Angie. At this time Liz and Angie were renting an apartment in Centerville.

Eventually Liz moved back home, but she was always talking on the phone to some friend. Everyone in the family, except me, knew that Liz and Elder Nicholls were having feelings for one another.

The truth came out when Jeff Nicholls was released but decided to not return home to his family. He moved in with us for a while. A few months later Liz and Jeff were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple. After Jeff tried various jobs he decided to move to Arizona where he went to work for Fulton Homes. It was

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especially ironic that Liz and

Adrienne were now in Arizona together and came to depend so much on one another, even though they are each two sides of a coin. It is gratifying to see that in spite of many differences, they love and depend on each other. They also spend most special holidays together.

Jennifer: She was the most cuddlesome of all the babies. Everyone liked to hold her because she was so easy to cuddle. Later on she did things like ride her bike with her eyes shut, resulting in a broken arm. She was also a stoic the day an 18 pound weight dropped onto her foot at a friend's house. I remember one day at the park in Colombia there were some monkey bars. I think Jenny was only about one year old at the time. I let her hang by her hands on one of the bars to see how long she could do it.

She hung on for what must have been a minute before I helped her get off. I should have known at that moment of her strong will and determination. It seemed that because she didn't serve a mission that she had to prove that she was able to do hard things.

This was true after she graduated from the University. With her determination she continued to study and work in the education system and earned a Master's Degree. She eventually achieved

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positions where she could help the minority and immigrant community. She worked very hard in learning Spanish so she could communicate with the parents of Latino students. Of all our children she is the one that most clearly relates to the culture of her Mexican grandparents. Her education and relation to the minority community has eventually

Given her the opportunity to represent the University of Utah in its effort to include, educate and help all disenfranchised people of color.

"Katherine the last" was always a busy little girl who seemed to always have danger and adventure right around the corner. In Minnesota we had a finished basement where Liz had her bedroom and where we had the

TV. There was very little furniture in the basement and the stairs going down were not carpeted. Katie was in her walker and decided to see what was downstairs. She found out as she and the walker tumbled to the bottom.

Fortunately she was not hurt. In our home there, Meg had put her baby grand piano in the dining area. Katie loved to run around the hallway into the living room through the dining room and into the kitchen where she would continue her circuitous path. One day while racing around her well known route, she ran into the piano and knocked herself out. Katie tried

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to be the best dressed teen in junior high by raiding my closet and wearing some of my clothing to school.

When I was bishop Katie told me she wanted to serve a mission. I thought she was not really serious but she continued to pester me about giving her the missionary papers to fill out. I finally relented, still thinking that she would not really do it. Well, it was not long before she received her call to Viña del Mar, Chile where she fulfilled an honorable mission. We didn't know that much of her mission she had been writing to Bryce Carlile. When she came home from her mission she and Bryce were together constantly. Soon we were to have another wedding.

John: what a great surprise! In 1973 ultrasound, to determine the sex of a baby, was unknown. When it came time for Meg to deliver our fourth child I was able to be present in the birth for the first time. As the baby was delivered the doctor said

"you have a healthy red-headed boy". You could have knocked me over with a feather. What, a baby boy with red hair???

He became the prince of our home as none of his older sisters would leave him alone. A few years later Meg was looking for him one summer day. She looked and looked, called, and searched the neighborhood. She finally found him hiding in the pear orchard just up the street. As young boys I taught John and Paul how to fish and I took them up to Midway near a stream

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where they loved to fish.

John received his mission call to Colombia. At that time Colombia was the hotbed of drug production and trafficking. He was safe during his mission though he had some close calls. After he had served about a year,

we got a call from the Missionary Dept. telling us that John was in the hospital with a ruptured appendix but that everything he was okay. I was able to talk with the doctor and John's companion on the phone. The story was a bit more serious than what we were told. John had been having stomach problems for a couple of days and his companions decided that they better get him to a clinic. They were in a jungle area where there were no hospitals, also they did not have the money that the clinics wanted. They called the Mission President in Bogota and he sent missionaries with the money immediately.

Still, it would not arrive for sometime. The Elders continued to look for a clinic that would accept John. By this time his appendix had ruptured and he was in serious trouble. At the third clinic as they waited to see if they would accept him before they had the money, a doctor walked out and saw how sick John was. He took him into surgery immediately. They found that his appendix had burst and he had peritonitis. The doctor who operated on John just happened to practice one day a week at the

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most advanced hospital in Bogota. The Lord was watching over his missionaries as John could have died in one of the other clinics.

Paul: I was sure that our family was complete with the birth of John. About one year later Meg came to me and said, "there is one more up there, I have seen him and his name will be Paul." Well Paul was born and our family was complete as the Lord would have it. Paul, like his older brother, was a fisherman. They were constant companions in those early years. They spent many years fishing in the streams and rivers of Wyoming, Idaho, Utah and Montana. When Paul saw "A River Runs Through it", he decided that he was going to fish every river in Montana. One summer Paul, John, and Katie were driving down to

Arizona when they got a flat tire. The boys worked as hard as they could to loosen the bolts on the tire without success. Paul finally found a private moment and asked the Lord in prayer to help them loosen the bolts. Then he made another attempt and succeeded.

He has always been spiritual which is why he was called to be a bishop when he was about 40 years old.

After John got married Paul had to make new friends. Paul and his friends soon became serious rock climbers and decided to climb the east slope of the Grand Teton. They started out early in



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the morning and made it to the top. On the trip down the mountain a storm came with wind and lightning that stopped their descent. The storm was such that they feared they would not get down. Finally,

Paul said, "lets kneel and have a prayer". Soon the clouds parted and they were able make it down before the storm again closed in. Later Shauna ,who had been on that expedition, said that when Paul prayed and the storm abated, she knew she wanted to marry Paul. Which she did.

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# What do you think is the meaning of life?



**T**he meaning of life takes on a whole new belief system if you believe that there is a life after death. Most people hope that there some type of life after death. Most religious individuals, whether they belong to an organized church synagogue or Mosque, believe in some kind of life after death The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has the clearest belief of the meaning of life and what you must do to have life after death. First, everyone on this earth chose to come to this earth. We chose to come to this earth to work out our salvation: More easily said than done. Many believe that If you are a good person and keep the Ten Commandments you will find yourself some place in Heaven.

What we believe is a bit more complicated than that: there is more than one Heaven. As members of the LDS Church we believe that there are multiple heavens and you may inherit any

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of them by doing certain things. For example: if you are not married in one of the temples you can not inherit the highest heaven or degree of heaven. In order to receive any of the heavens there are things you must do. This is called "working out your Salvation". We cannot just be good people and try to do good, but must follow a prescribed life, beginning with belief in Jesus Christ and God the Father. As you continue along this path, there are certain ordinances that you take upon yourself. As you continue along this process one must follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and try to emulate His life: taking care of the poor and needy, being charitable in all thoughts and actions.

We chose to come to this earth to be tried and tested in order to be able to inherit where and how we will live for eternity. Even though we may not fully understand what each of the highest kingdoms are really like (D&C 132 & 137), we are taught that we can be with our families for eternity, that is if we are all in the same kingdom. There are many questions as to what happens to those who died before the Church of Jesus Christ was organized. but we are taught that by doing ordinances for the dead we need not worry more beyond that.

# What is your best advice when it comes to raising children?



I believe the most important thing is that both of the parents must be in total agreement on the rules of the family. If discipline is based on the responsibility and reward system, both parents must agree on how and when to administer each. First, each child is part of the family and as such must have certain responsibilities. They may be relatively simple such as keeping their rooms clean or taking out the trash.

There are many responsibilities or chores that should be given to children as a member of the family. In general,

these are non monetary responsibilities. In other words, you don't get paid for these chores; you do them because you belong to the family. The reward is that someone else is fixing the meals, doing the laundry and keeping all of the rest of the house

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clean and in order: usually the mother. Dad brings home the fatted calf.

Both the mom and dad should have rules that are implemented when chores or responsibilities are not completed. Most of the time this falls upon the shoulder of the mom again, but dad must always be on the same page when mom is handing out "punishment".The "punishment" need not be cruel, like the guillotine, but one that hopefully will encourage a change in behavior.

There should also be a time and a way to listen to children, especially when they are teens and older. Maybe a child has a legitimate concern or a better way of doing something. They may also have a personal reason to want a private talk.

Always be available for those situations.and always show love.

Well, you asked for the best advice I could give, not necessarily what I did as a father in raising my own kids. I did some of this because I depended on my wife to execute a lot of the above.

# What is one of your favorite children's stories?



Not growing up in an English speaking home, we did not hear the favorite tales such as Cinderella, Snow White or any of the Brothers Grimm tales. I think that the first one I ever heard was Hansel and Gretel. However, the one that I can recall was not a fairly tale but a warning of which I later learned the full story. When we where young and wanted to play outside in the dark, my mother and other mothers in the Mexican community would frequently tell us that La Llorena was out at night looking for her lost children that had been taken away from her. She would be out at night in the dark crying and If you listened carefully you could hear her, and it would be best if you hurried home in case she mistook you for her children. This was especially true if you lived near a river. Though we lived far from the Jordan River we did have City Creek nearby.

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It was not until I was in college that I actually learned the legend of La Llorona. Many of the Mexican songs my mother sang told stories so we learned about our heritage that way.



# What was the neighborhood you grew up in like?



**O**ur Home and Neighborhood in Salt Lake City and Later In Woods Cross.

Until I was 12 years old I lived in the same house where I was born. It was a three room house located at 519 West North Temple. It was a section house along the Union Pacific railroad tracks. We only had one bedroom with two bunkbeds where the girls slept a double bed where mom and dad and the youngest child slept. Vince and I slept on the sofa in the living room.

There were five section houses and a bunk house along the tracks, three on the east side of the tracks and two on the west side. The Cabrerias and Marrufos lived on the east side with their families and the Mayers and Ortizes on the west side. The bunk house next to the Cabrerias was used for temporary housing. Our

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homes were located nearly under the North Temple viaduct that went over the railroad tracks. It was called a viaduct because City Creek ran under it.

Across the viaduct were two house and a two story apartment house. In the small house to the west lived the Manzano family, and in the apartment house lived a single man and the Gonzales family. My aunt Margaret Gonzales was one of the seven children who lived in the upstairs two room apartment, where the only toilet was on the bottom floor. Margaret eventually married my uncle Louis Amador. All the families

were Mexican, the parents had all immigrated to the United States. Behind our home was a large field with three or four big trees and a kind of junk yard for large items like an old trolley car, large cement mixer and an old boiler from a hotel. After the war there many huge containers there that had been used to haul ammunition and other things to the Pacific and the war in Europe. Of course we kids in this little neighborhood would play among all this junk.

On the west side of the Ortizes was a big field and then three homes. We only knew the Sartories, who lived in the first house, because they had kids about the same ages as the kids the section houses.

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About forty yards down the tracks were two other small railroad homes where the Salcido and the

Nash Solorio families lived. They were part of our neighborhood because they were also Mexican immigrants.

They were so close to our family that the Salcidos were my God parents and the Solorios were my sister Gloria's God parents. Most of the land around our little home was dirt and cinders. This was the way it was around most of the section houses. We did have a small garden to the east with an apricot tree and some lawn, a section about twenty by twenty feet. We kids would play in the old beaten-up trolley car and the other containers. We would play until dark in the summer because it was so hot inside our home. If there was a big storm in City Creek canyon, we would dam up the creek that ran under the viaduct. The creek ran down a c

hannel that was about 8 feet wide and about five feet deep. The bottom and walls had been cemented with rock and the bottom was slippery.

In many ways it was our idyllic little world.

In 1948 Dad had an opportunity to be a foreman of a section in Woods Cross. My mother was pleased because she wanted to leave the problems of the West Side and go to a safer and more tranquil place to raise her family. In addition, the house was

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much larger and was in the country. In August the move began ; Uncle Louie got a truck and moved all our belongings and the family to the section house in Woods Cross.

The house was bigger but closer to the railroad tracks; it was about fifteen feet from the tracks. When a passenger train (Spirit of Las Angeles) or a long freight train came by it would make the whole house shake. This was in addition to the horn that they had to blow before reaching a crossing.

The house had two bedrooms, a large kitchen and a living room. A small unheated enclosed porch with a tin shower also had a space for a clothes washer. The outhouse was north of the coal shed and was about twenty feet from the house. The railroad finally gave us an indoor toilet and bath tub when I was about sixteen.

The Woods family farm was east with four feet from our house with a fence indicating the property border of the farm.. To the north was a bunk house where the Medal family lived in a two room house, the two the parents and five children. Across the tracks to the west was the Phillips oil refinery.

There was a house to the south about twenty yards away, where the Station master, Mr. Erickson and his wife lived. About thirty yards to the south was the Depot and station. All four buildings were located in a row along the railroad tracks. Between the

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Station Master's house and the station was space where cars could be parked, if you had one. We did not get a car until I was 16 because my parents did not know how to drive.

But we all had a place to sleep: Gloria, Maria, Rose, Carmen and Yolanda all slept in one bedroom, and my father and mother and the youngest child slept in the other bedroom. Vince Jr. slept on the sofa in the living room, and I slept on a roll away bed in the kitchen. "Sleeping in" was unheard of in the kitchen. We had to wash up and brush our teeth in the only sink in the house which was the kitchen sink. But we did have hot and cold running water. On the south of the house we had a porch with two very big trees and some lawn and a small garden where Dad loved to grow tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers and other things..

In order to get to school we had to walk about two blocks to the Depot and catch the bus on Fifth South. During the winter we had to walk in spite of the rain or snow. We had to be careful not to walk along the tracks when a train was coming by.

Except for the Medal family in the bunk house and the station master and his wife, we had no neighbors. Any friends we made were made at school, as it was difficult to go back to Salt Lake to see our old friends. This was to be our neighborhood until I went into the army in January of 1957.

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# What are your favorite books?



Of course everyone would expect me to say the "Book of Mormon", however there are others which are number one on my list. "Pedro Paramo" in Spanish, by Juan Rulfo and the "Book Thief" by Markus Zusak are both at the top of my list. The first time I read Pedro Paramo was in my Mexican novel class taught by John Brushwood at the University of Missouri in 1968. It was one of the first books I ever read that did not have a chronological structure. Some books use flashbacks to create a type of story where the reader has to remember who and when as the storyline develops. In Pedro Paramo, Rulfo introduces two main characters, Pedro Paramo and Juan Preciado, in their youth. After the first 12 pages it flashes forward to where

Pedro Paramo is an adult. From this moment Rulfo does not identify his characters. We must identify each one by their experiences in life as each one speaks to us from the grave.

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Slowly we begin to know each character as he or she tells us the story of their life and their relationship with Pedro.

It is like a jigsaw puzzle where the reader gets a small bit of the full story without knowing what the full picture of the puzzle is. The reader places pieces that seem to go together and eventually sees the full picture to understand the story. It is toward the end at the death of Pedro that all is revealed to us.

"The Book Thief" Is the story of a young girl, Leisel who grows up during the Nazi occupation and terror as she and her family try to hide a Jewish boy.

One of the interesting things is that the narrator is Death and introduces himself as the one waiting to take each of us at our time. The main theme is very touching as Leisel's life is revealed.



