

The Life and Times of a 3rd. Generation Immigrant

By: William C. (Bill) Mondillo

Born: June 13, 1943

Introduction



During my entire lifetime, I have always placed the highest value on the word **“RESPONSIVE”**. My simple definition of the word is, “Give back what you expect from others”. That is my *Golden Rule*, based on my everlasting faith in hopeful reality.

I wish my grandparents, parents, family, friends and loving spouse(s) would have had the foresight to immortalize their lives by doing what I am trying to do with this document. They/we have all led eventful lives and have great stories to share.

My kids and grandchildren will now have something to help them remember their DAD and POPPY. I love you all so much and this is just one small way for me to express that to you.

I am not what you would call a religious person, but, I do believe in *coincidence* being part of a Divine Plan for each one of us. It is amazing for me to reflect back, over my entire life, and appreciate NOW, just how much my life was part of a Divine Plan.

Let me now tell you all about it

Enjoy!

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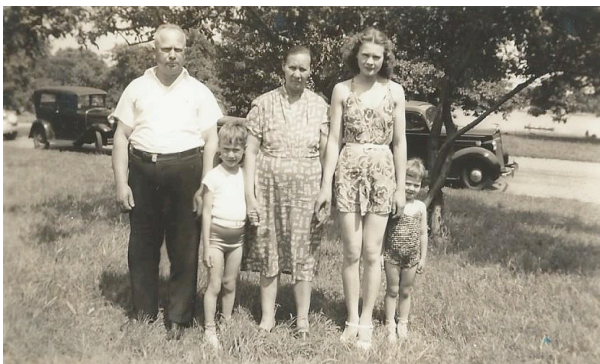
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Chapter One

The Childhood of Poppy



In the early 1900's, families from Naples, Italy and Palermo, Sicily arrived at Ellis Island, New York. Among those immigrants were Victor and Margaret (Martino) Mondillo. Victor had three brothers, Ernie and a set of twins (names unknown). Victor, Ernie and one twin migrated to Philadelphia with the last name of Mondillo. The other twin stayed in New York and took the last name of Mondello (reason unknown). My other grandparents, Jon and Sophie Wroblewski, were born in Warsaw, Poland.



I was raised Catholic in ethnic neighborhoods with the elevated trains, located at Front Street and Girard Avenue, Philadelphia, Pa., separating the Polish from the Italians. I am not sure who crossed the tracks first, to initiate the process of becoming my parents. My Mom and Dad

followed the tradition of keeping the formation of any families “in the neighborhood”.

My Dad, Victor W. Mondillo was a blue collar laborer who held down multiple jobs simultaneously, to provide for his family. He did not graduate from High School. I remember him as a Tanner in a Leather Factory, a Welder at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, a Machinist in a neighborhood factory, a Quality Control Bottle Checker at the local Schmidt's Brewery, a Corrugation Box Cutter in a neighborhood Envelope Factory and as a

Restaurant Owner. We lived in a 15' wide, three story brick Row House and my loving mother, Helen M. (Wroblewska) Mondillo was never really happy with her position in life.

My mother was a strict disciplinarian who demanded perfection in everything I did. For example, when I needed to write an essay for homework and it took both sides of a sheet of lined paper, if I made the slightest mistake, I was made to re-write the entire paper. I once used an eraser, very carefully, to correct a pencil mistake on the last line of the second page of a Book Report. I was sure that you could not see the erasure. She did, and I had to re-write both pages. I then made another, extremely small error and very carefully erased it and wrote over it. She noticed it and made me re-write both pages a second time. I honestly hated my Mom, when she did things like that to me. It took many years before I appreciated what she did and why. **I did however, experience sweet revenge one day.**

It was a hot evening and we were sitting outside our house. My mother was in her Beach Chair on the concrete pavement, beside the front door, and I was sitting on the step leading into our house. She gave me \$.15 to go around the corner to Mrs. Paul's Candy Store. She wanted a Double Decker Ice Cream Cone (\$.10) and I could have a Single Scoop Cone (\$.05). I resented the fact that she would not spend the extra nickel for me to get a second scoop of ice cream too. Upon my return, I gave her the cone and she took one lick and then it happened. A pigeon flying over, let loose and the bird shit landed right on top of her Double Decker Ice Cream Cone. She was furious and I had to keep from laughing out loud for fear of getting punished. I have to say, that my "Single Dip" cone was the best ice cream cone I ever had. Every lick, in front of her, was sheer joy. My mother was livid but would not spend another penny to replace her ice cream cone. I could tell by her attitude that she was not enjoying watching me eat my cone.

Oh well, "Shit Happens"!

She always controlled the finances in our family and gave my Dad an allowance each payday. If I satisfactorily did everything I was supposed to do, i.e. chores, homework, curfew, etc., I would get a quarter (\$.25) for an allowance, every Saturday morning. I always looked forward to getting my quarter. I would pack a lunch in a paper bag and go to the movies (Jumbo Theater), at Front Street and Girard Avenue. I would arrive about one hour before the theater doors opened. The lines of kids would wrap around the corner and go up Front Street, under the elevated trains. By the time I got close to buying my movie ticket, for a dime (\$.10), I would stop and buy five huge soft pretzels for a nickel (a penny-a-piece). There was a Pretzels' vendor always positioned just outside the movies.

When I got inside the movies, I would purchase my large soda and my large box of hot popcorn (each for a nickel). With my allowance spent, I would enjoy 10 cartoons, a movie, a Serial Episode, a News Reel, another 10 cartoons and then a second (different) movie. Those were the days.....establishing the basis for my formative years.

When I was a kid...

My Polish grandparents' house did not have indoor plumbing. There was always a bucket in the hallway, just outside the upstairs bedrooms, with a board laying on top of it. It was there in case you had to PEE during the night and didn't want to have to go outside in the yard to use the outside toilet. If you needed to take a crap, you had to bundle up and go outside, regardless of the weather. That specific memory makes me remember, and I don't know why, the "6 P's" Quote, "Proper Planning Prevents Piss Poor Performance". Somehow, that old saying seems kind of appropriate.

They heated their house with a coal burning furnace in the basement and cooked meals on a big black, pot bellied stove in the kitchen. My grandmother would be the first one to get up each morning so she could put coals in the furnace to begin to heat the house, and wood in the stove to cook breakfast. There were no carpets on the floors, just throw rugs. Sleeping in the winter required the use of a huge feather (Down) comforter and a hot water bottle at the foot of the beds, to keep your feet warm while you slept.

As a child, I slept with my beloved Aunt Mary whenever I visited my grandparents' house. When it was time to retire, she would always take a bowl of fresh fruit up to bed and we would eat the fruit while listening to our favorite shows on the radio, such as 'The Shadow' and 'Amos & Andy'. I can still see the single light bulb, hanging from the ceiling and swinging at the foot of the bed. Aunt Mary would have to get out of bed to shut off it when we agreed that it was time to go to sleep. (That is a special memory.)



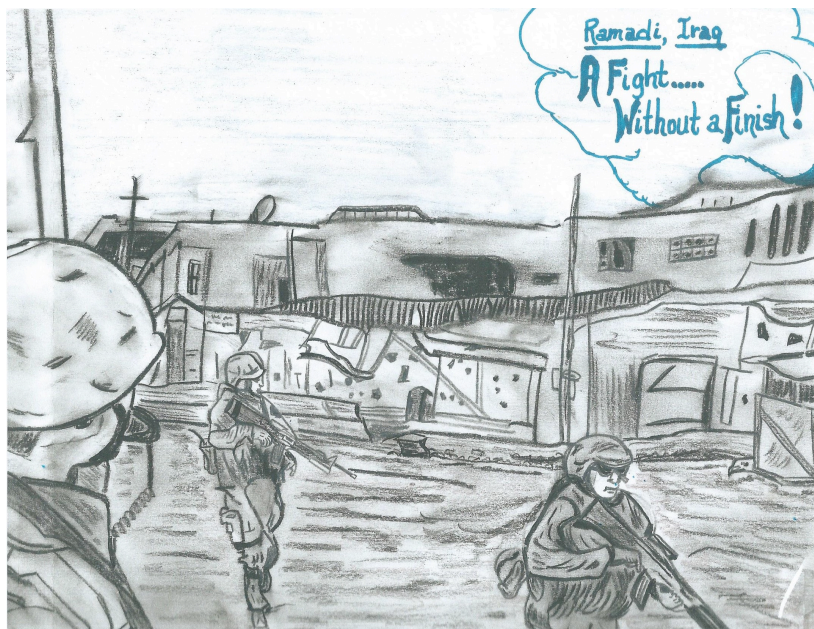
My grandparents had an old Ice Box in the kitchen that required blocks of ice to be purchased from the Ice Man to keep the food fresh. On a daily basis, you had to remember to physically empty the melted water, that accumulated in the pan, from under the Ice Box. There was a shed attached to the kitchen. The "Shonda" (Shed) was where the sink provided the water necessary to wash clothes in an agitating washing machine with a hand cranked wringer to remove excess water from

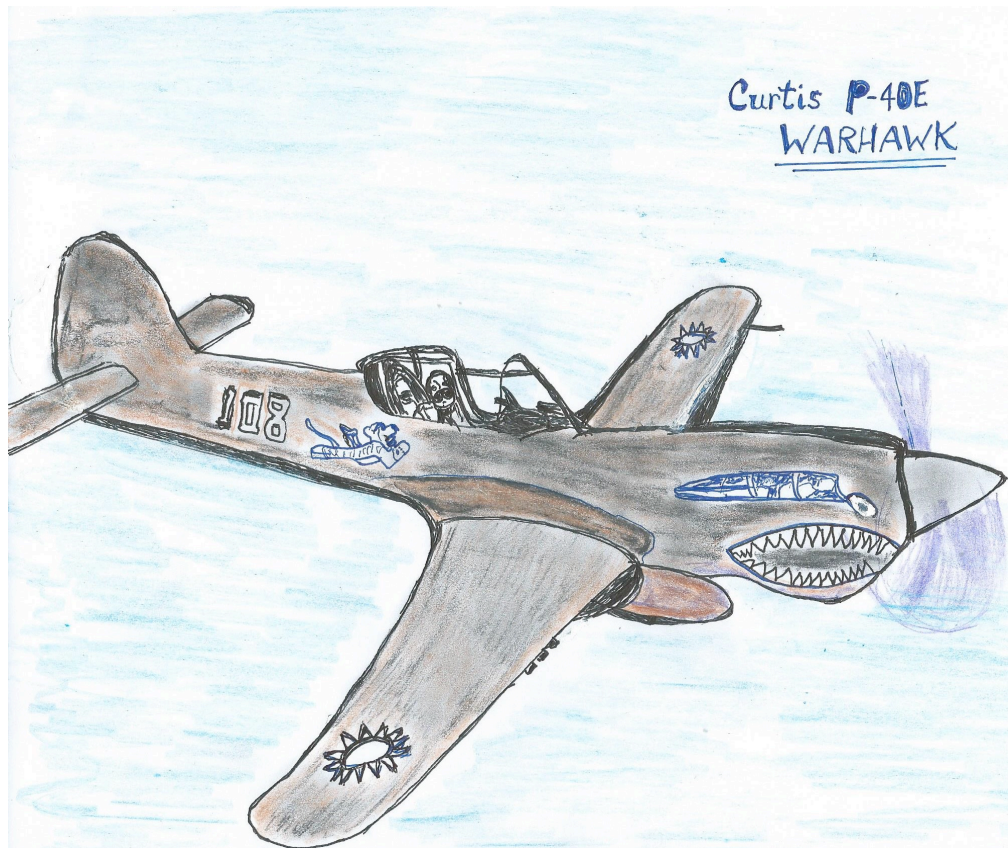
the clothes. The damp clothes were then hung on clothes lines draped wall to wall. They were hung outside in the yard when weather permitted. If you wanted to bathe, you used a large, galvanized steel tub on the floor and filled it with water from the sink that was then heated from water heated on the stove in the kitchen.

You could then immerse yourself in the tub, with a towel on the floor beside you. There was only a curtain hanging in the doorway separating the kitchen from the Shonda, so, when bathing, you had to first let everyone know you needed your privacy to take your bath.

My Toys

On another note, even though I was an only child, I was not spoiled with lots of toys to play with. In fact, I compensated by being very creative. If I had the chance to get something to play with, I would always ask for things like Tooth Picks, Clay, Play Dough, Popsicle Sticks, Wood Tongue Depressors, Balls of String, Marbles, Glue, White Plain Paper, Color Pencils, Crayons w/Coloring Books, Wood Clothes Pins, and Comic Books with Action Pictures (Jungle/War/Sci-Fi, etc.). My all time favorite was Balsa Wood from a Hobby Shop, as I loved to build other playthings with it, e.g. airplanes, forts, boats, weapons for my toy soldiers (swords, spears), etc. I would literally create my own toys and games. For example, I would make rafts out of glued tongue depressors and popsicle sticks, fill the kitchen sink with warm water, pull a kitchen chair over to the sink to kneel on, and use my mother's wood clothes pins as people to ride the rafts and dive into the water to swim around. Clothes pins also made good ships and torpedoes. I would sit for hours, drawing action pictures from my comic books when I was in Grade School.





While my mother was on her sewing machine, many other hours were spent on the dining room floor using my colored marbles as armies in conflict, or imaginary Cowboys fighting the Indians. I developed an unlimited imagination and was rarely bored.

I possess(ed) a creative capability for self-entertainment.

Food for Thought

Periodically, Aunt Mary would take me to visit her lifelong lady friend, Helen Long. Helen had a dog named Timmy, a Fox Terrier. I was very afraid of dogs due to being bit by one when I was younger, so, Aunt Mary tried to help me to get over that fear by arranging for me to get to know and play with Timmy.

One day, I was busy with toys borrowed from Helen's nephew, John, and I smelled something delicious coming from the kitchen. I was told earlier that I could expect something special for dinner that evening so I proceeded out to the kitchen. On the open window sill, over the sink, was a dish of steaming food, cooling off by the outside breezes. I naturally believed that it was my "special" dinner so I helped myself. It tasted as good as it looked.

When I finished, I washed my dishes and went back into the dining room to play. A few minutes passed and Helen came into the dining room from the kitchen and asked if I saw the dish of food that was on the window sill. I told her I did and that it was absolutely delicious. Helen took a fit of laughing which caught my Aunt Mary's attention. Aunt Mary wanted to know what was so funny. Helen finally got control of herself and told us that she had added some gravy to a large can of Dog Food, heated it and placed it on the window sill to cool off, before giving it to Timmy. I ate the dog's dinner; the whole thing. I never suffered any ill effects, but,

**I don't like cats and occasionally
feel an urge to sniff fire hydrants.**

Other Memories

When we finally got our first TV, it was a Philco Console, with a 10" Black and White Screen. I vividly remember using 8 ½" X 11" transparent colored plastic sheets; Blue, Green, Yellow and Red, to make the Black and White Screen appear to be a "Color TV". The problem was, you could only use one different color at a time. I loved my TV shows that evolved from Howdy Doody & Mickey Mouse, to Ed Sullivan & American Band Stand.

Our first family car was a yellow, 1953 Mercury with a black top. It drove like and felt like an Army Tank, with no Power Steering. It was my Dad's first car as he didn't have a Driver's License until he was in his late 20's. It was great to no longer rely on Public Transportation to get around the city of Philadelphia, as a family. My favorite outing was driving down to Pat's Steak House for a Philly Cheese Steak w/ Fried Onions (Made with American Cheese NOT Melted Velveta Cheese) and a Vanilla Milk Shake. With my belly full, I would sleep in the back seat, all the way home.

My formative years, economically speaking, could be best described as lower middle class. I attended St. Michael's Elementary School, as did my father. I vividly remember the Nuns would bloody my knuckles, more than once, trying to get me to write RIGHT HANDED. I did not give in and developed a mastery of the Palmer Method of Penmanship that was finally deemed more than just satisfactory and acceptable. I was not ambidextrous. I would use my Left Hand for writing and eating but I would use my Right



Hand for throwing, hitting, bowling, etc. I would also use either foot for kicking. I was bull-headed and stubborn early in life. I never changed!

While in Grade School, I was a Choir Boy for five years. In 7th and 8th Grade, I sang Solo at the 11 o'clock High Mass on Sundays and on all Holy Days, throughout the year.

I guess I sounded pretty good as my Uncle Charlie would always come to church when he knew I was going to sing solo. In 7th and 8th Grade, I also earned the rank of Lieutenant on the school Safety Patrol and I was very proud of that. Anyway, when I graduated from the 8th Grade, I did so with **First Honors** and the only "B" I ever got on my Report Card was for Self Control.

Go figure?

The Family Business

While completing Elementary School, my grandparents turned over the family owned Bella Casa Italian Restaurant to my parents. From that point forward, I believed that I was getting first hand experience with the definition of "Child Slave Labor".

When attending High School, and not involved with homework or sports, I worked in that restaurant. I could prepare any item that was on the menu, to serve to our customers. I handled the cash register, scrubbed and waxed the floors, washed windows, prepped food, shopped for produce and I could fabricate a pizza box in seven seconds. I quickly became an expert in how to stretch the \$5.00 per week my mother paid me for the results she demanded. I can vividly remember one week in particular, when my Dad slipped me an extra \$2.00 for a date. Somehow, my mother found out about it and the next week she gave me \$3.00 instead of my usual \$5.00 pay. She told me that if I thought I earned \$5.00, I should get the other \$2.00 from my father



I also had a very hard time understanding or forgiving her for charging Aunt Mary for ironing some of Aunt Mary's clothes once in awhile. My mother would charge her on a per piece basis, even after all of the good things Aunt Mary did for her and gave to her over the years. My mother was miserly with any money and always stayed that way.

Customer Service

The Bella Casa Italian Restaurant was physically located right next door to Ducky's Tavern, which was on the corner of Howard Street & Girard Avenue. It was convenient for the benefit of having beer available for selective purposes. Once or sometimes twice monthly, three or four Nuns from a local Parrish Convent would stop at the restaurant to enjoy a large Pizza.

Whenever they came in, we would go next door and pick up a quart of cold beer. We would serve the Nuns "coffee cups filled with beer", so no one else in the restaurant would know what they were drinking with their hot Pizza. It was our little secret and the waitress got a bigger tip too!

We also had periodic visits from the cops walking the beat in our neighborhood. If they got the high sign from my Dad, they would go around to the back of our restaurant and come up the alley to our back door. On cold nights, my father would let them in the room where we made the Pizzas and provide them with a mug of warmed, homemade "Dago Red Wine". If they were hungry, he would make them a GIZMO (A toasted Italian roll with pizza sauce, crushed meatballs and melted mozzarella cheese on top). He took care of them and they took care of us. It was good business!

There was a crowd of young Gay guys who liked to eat at our place. Whenever they came in, they were treated with respect and we found them to be most entertaining. I once took some pictures of them in DRAG and when I showed them off to members of my High School football team, some of the players wanted me to fix them up with dates. I'm telling you, when a couple of them wore makeup, they were absolutely beautiful. I never told my athlete friends who they really were. That was only good business too!



All during High School, I never had a Friday night off, as that was the busiest, highest income day of the week for the family's business. You can imagine how it felt to wait on your friends and serving them, after they came in from the dances, movies and dates they enjoyed so much. The customers made the mess and I cleaned it up. I learned responsibility, but I just didn't realize it at the time.

Some Menu Items

Large Cheese Pizza - \$1.50 / Box = \$.05 Extra

Small Cheese Pizza - \$1.00 / Box = \$.05 Extra

***NOTE: The Small Pizza back then was equal
to the Large Pizza you order today!***

Toppings were \$.25 Extra

Large Hoagie on a full size loaf of Italian bread - \$1.00

Regular Hoagie on half a loaf of Italian bread - \$.55

Philadelphia Cheese Steak w/Fried Onions - \$.60

Meatball Sandwich - \$.35

Italian Hot Sausage Sandwich - \$.45

Spaghetti or Rigatoni w/Meatballs - \$.85

Spaghetti or Rigatoni s/ Sausage - \$.90

Chapter Two

Teenage Years

Get the Point

During High School, I did frequent Holy Name dances on Saturday evenings with my crowd of guys. Those dances required wearing a coat and tie and were so crowded that even if you did not know how to dance, nobody knew it because you couldn't move on the dance floor anyway.



Well, I decided to be creative, so, I would stick three *Thumb Tacks* in my sport coat's lapel with the points sticking out towards my selected dance partner. When other dancers would bump into me, I would bump into my dance partner. If her Boobs were real, she would flinch and/or let out a scream. If she did not react and/or holler, I knew she had stuffed her Bra with tissues and she was "Boobless". The girls with the real thing(s) got asked to dance by everyone in my crowd of guys. My friends really appreciated me checking out the girls each week. I guess I was a bad boy!

High School

As a Freshman, I attended a Christmas Party at the home of my High School friend, Dave Herbert. It was at that party that I met the person that I would eventually fall in love with. Admittedly, when I was introduced to *Mary Agnes Theresa Connor*, I could not stand her. I thought she was a

wallflower and very antisocial. Boy, did I get that wrong! I vividly remember some kind of Kissing Game at the party, where you were required



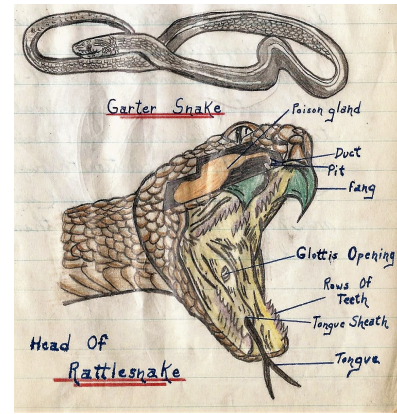
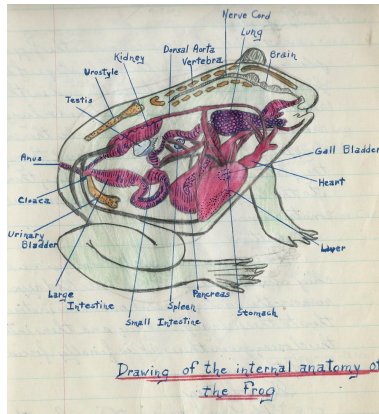
to pair up with a girl in a dark hallway and “Kiss each other”. It was a popular way, in those days, of breaking the ice and getting the boys and girls to get to know each other a little better. Well, I got wind of the fact that the girls were putting on extra lipstick to embarrass the boys coming out of the dark hallway. To compensate, I rubbed my lips with red hot pepper juice. Needless to say, my first kiss with Mary was memorable but certainly not enjoyable. We wound up mad at each other and barely spoke to one another for the rest of the evening. It took quite some time for both of us to get over it and finally begin to “like” each other well enough to start dating. Our respective crowds used to get together at Holy Child dances every Saturday evening. Mary and I won a number of “Slow Dance” competitions and that helped us to develop our compatibility with one another. My buddies from K&A (Kensington and Alleghany Avenues) mingled well with the crowd from the Germantown area of Philly.

This all occurred during the late 50’s into the early 60’s, when music was really appreciated by all Teenyboppers.

That music is programmed in my car, TODAY!

My developing artistry got me a score of “100” in my Biology Notebook when I was a Sophomore in High School. I am not what you would call a Freehand Artist but show me a detailed picture of almost anything and I have always had the ability to duplicate what I was seeing.

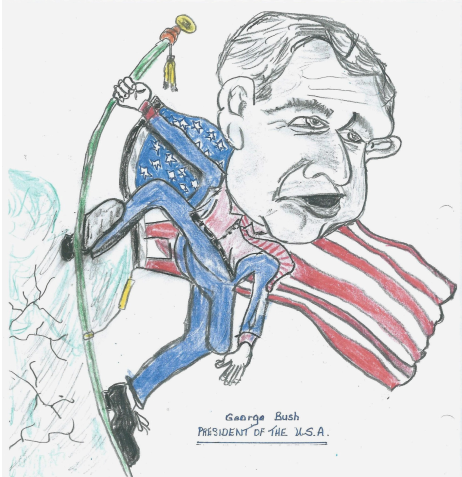
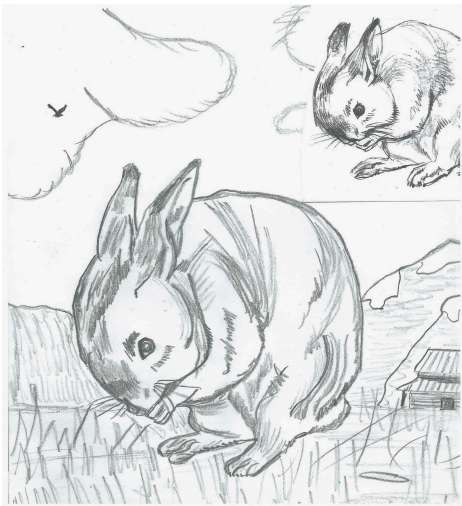
Others viewing examples of my drawings have commented on how “detailed” my Works of Art appeared to be. *(I developed a leather bound portfolio of my drawings for posterity purposes.)*



Embarrassed

The one subject in High School that I hated the most was Sophomore Year Geometry. We had Father Dunn as our Geometry teacher and to get a good grade in his class, you only had to raise your hand each time he asked, “Do you understand?”

He rarely gave tests and expected us to read chapters from our Geometry textbook for homework each evening (Yeah, that happened!) Well, one day, he asked the class his usual questions and we raised our hands, as usual. He



then called upon me, a 240 lb. Left Guard on the Football Team, to answer a question about some kind of Postulate or Theorem or something. I stood up and I did not know how to begin to give him an answer. I then proceeded to do something I would soon wish that I didn't do. I attempted to give Father Dunn a *Bullshit* answer!

He called me up to the front of the class and while seated, slid his chair back away from his desk. I was surprised when he grabbed my arm and pulled me across his lap. He started to SPANK ME, yes, I said SPANK ME! He did it and it hurt! While doing so, he exclaimed loudly, so everyone in the class could hear him, "Mondillo, you would have to be TWINS, to be that STUPID!" Needless to say, I was embarrassed. Here I was, a "tough" football player, getting his ass whipped by a priest, in public. Anyway, I guess he still liked me afterwards, I got a "95" in Geometry on my Report Card and Heaven only, knows WHY!

Dating

I was a Sophomore, when I asked *Mary Agnes Theresa Connor* out on our first date. We went to my Soph Hop at my High School Gym. (She was a Junior, a year ahead of me in school – 6 months older). We then enjoyed both our Junior and Senior Proms as a couple. We dated for two and a half years before getting engaged.

Before I got my driver's license, I had to do my traveling by using public transportation.

I would go from Philadelphia's Fishtown area of the city, to the Germantown area of the city, just to see my girlfriend, Mary Agnes.

To reach my "dating" destination, I always had to catch the Trolley at 2nd Street and Girard Avenue and ride it to Broad Street where I would catch the Subway from Girard Avenue to Broad and Olney. Once there, I needed to wait for the "K" Bus to take me to within eight blocks of Mary's house. Reverse that process to get home and you can see where I spent approximately three hours in travel time on every date. That left minimal, quality date time to have fun with Mary and/or her crowd of friends from her neighborhood. I never had much money to spend on dates but I recall saving up for one special date on New Year's Eve, 1960. Five couples went downtown by subway and we went to the York Steakhouse for dinner, followed by a movie at the Fox Theater at 15th and Market. We saw *The Ten Commandments* and



afterwards, watched the Fireworks. To complete the evening, we all went to the Center City Lanes Bowling Alley. It was the latest, most expensive, date out we ever had.

An Unforgettable Proposition

Mary and I, along with her parents, were visiting with her Uncle Vern, Aunt Bill and cousins, Vern, Nash and Peaches, one Sunday afternoon. While dinner was being prepared, Mary and I took a walk down to a local park where there was a beautiful waterfall. Sitting on a big rock, beside the waterfall, I took the box, containing the Engagement Ring out of my pocket, opened it, and while making my verbal proposal of marriage, I dropped the ring, out of the box, into the high grass beside the rock we were sitting on. Mary laughed out loud at my clumsiness and we spent at least five minutes, on our knees, searching for the ring until she finally found it. Whew! Needless to say, she said YES and we kissed and returned to the house to share the good news; even though we were both 18 years old at the time, we still needed parental approval to get married. We were engaged for another 18 months; which meant that we took almost four years to get to know each other well enough to tie the knot, **with our parents' approval.**

Before I forget, I **Lettered in Football** (Fullback on JV and Left Guard on Varsity) and in **Track and Field**, (Shot Put and Discus). In 1961, I graduated **6th out of a class of 619 boys.** My diploma shows ***Maxima Cum Laude*** (With Greatest Distinction). After graduating from High School, I was expected, by my mother, to carry on in the family business.

My mother told me that due to the cost, College was not an option, unless I got a full ride scholarship. I did get Alternate Status for two scholarships. The guys took the scholarships and then later on, I found out that they both dropped out of college.

I hated the thought of staying where I was, so I tried to find employment elsewhere. No luck, due to the fact that I was JAIL BAIT for the military draft. No company or organization wanted to invest in me until I first took care of my military obligation.

Close Call

For awhile after graduation, in addition to working in the restaurant, I moonlighted at my Aunt's (Sis) place of employment. As I had my Driver's License, I picked up and delivered cars that needed or already had new upholstery installed in them. One day, after picking up a vehicle, I was driving on Delaware Avenue, along the Delaware River. There was a pier with a train coming out from the covered wharf and heading in my direction.

It was raining and the train tracks, embedded in cobble stone, were very slippery. The tires on the car I was driving locked into the train tracks and I could not free myself. I was sliding towards the oncoming, moving train's engine and we were both on a collision course with one another.

I thought I was done for. At the last split second, my attempts to turn the steering wheel had some success. I was literally thrown into a 360 degree spin and when I came to a halt, I was shaking like a leaf. Things happened so fast, I didn't have time to even get scared. I will never forget how fast my heart was beating. On that day,

God was my backseat driver.

The Table

On one of my more memorable Winter time dates with Mary, her parents left the house to go over to the Rising Sun VFW Post for a meeting. To save money, Mary and I decided to just stay home instead of going out to a movie, like her parents expected us to do. We watched TV and talked and I tried to make my amorous moves on Mary. She was receptive, at first, but then tried to play a little hard to get. She got up and ran into the dining room. I was as playful as she was, so I got up and began to chase her around the dining room table. When I caught her, I hugged her and tried to kiss her. She playfully resisted and the next thing we knew, we fell back on the table. Our combined weight and, I guess the angle of our impact, caused the heavy wooden table to collapse under us. That was an unexpected surprise. Our fun turned to fear in a heartbeat. We picked ourselves up, off the floor, and tried to figure out how we were going to explain our dilemma to her parents. I got under the table and propped the broken wood back into place and then we placed our overcoats carefully on top of the table. About an hour later, her parents returned from their meeting.

As fate would have it, when they removed their overcoats, her father tossed them on top of the Dining Room table, on top of our coats. The table collapsed. What could have caused that to happen, you might ask? I immediately tried to suggest that due to the age of the table, combined with the weight of **all** the coats, the table just couldn't handle the load. I cannot begin to explain the looks on her parents' faces while they listened to that flimsy excuse for what they knew probably occurred in their absence. They must have surmised that the two of us somehow wound up on top of the table and our weight caused the table to collapse. God bless them for not pushing the matter. Her dad said that he could fix the table. I went home, "Thanking God" for getting me through the evening so I would hopefully be welcome to come back again.

Plans

I could have just accepted my traditional role of taking over the family owned business of my parents and grandparents, getting married, having a family of my own, and never leaving the neighborhood where I was born and raised. After all, that's what 3rd Generation Immigrants did. My pre-ordained mission in life was to have children to follow in my footsteps.



NOTE: Due to accepted forms of discipline, inflicted by others and self discipline, which was/is self inflicted, I firmly believe(d) young people were much more mature back then, at an earlier age, than those in society today. We did not require “immediate gratification” and we learned to prioritize our NEEDS over our WANTS, based on what we could afford without creating unnecessary debt. We learned how to be both anxious and patient at the same time. That is tough to do, even now!

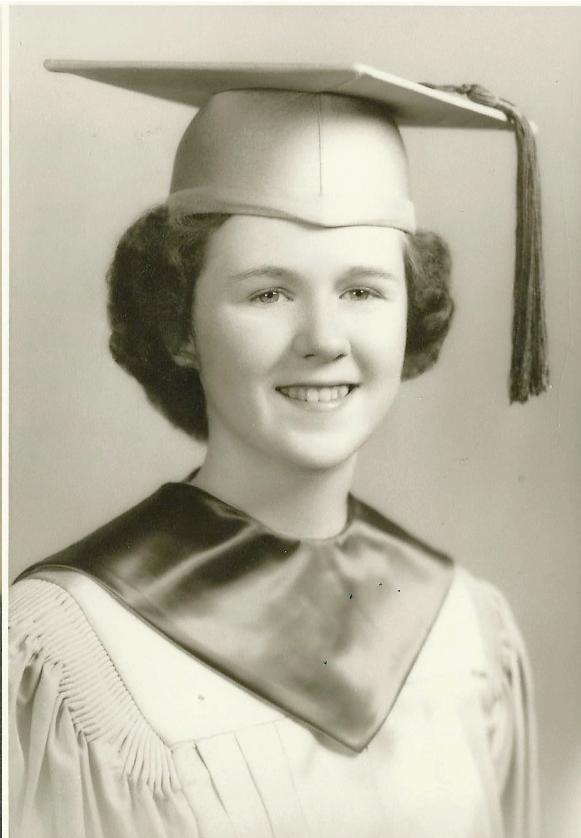
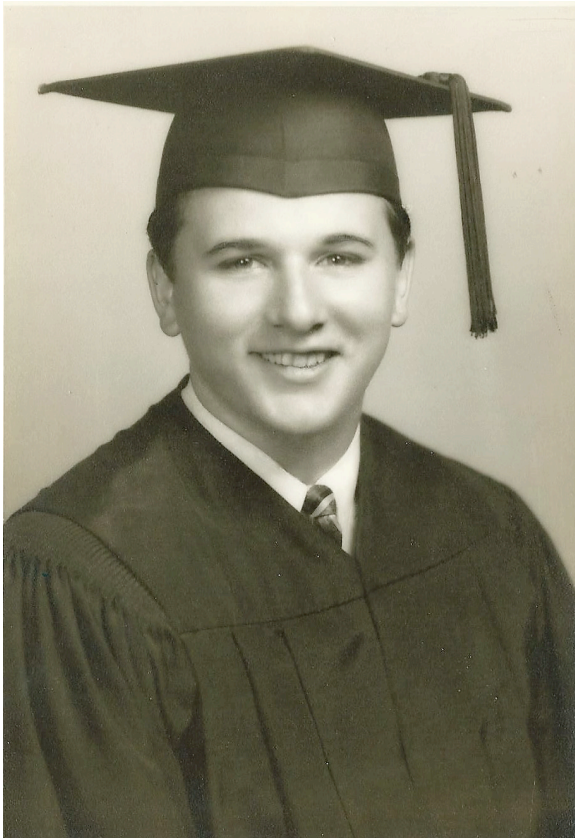


Even though I did not have the formal education that I would have liked, I was still very ambitious and had big dreams. Someday, I was going to own a beautiful house in the suburbs, surrounded by great neighbors, have a very good paying job, and provide the best life possible for my loving wife and our large family. I was already mature (to a degree), pretty independent and knew the value of a buck.

I knew that I found the girl of my dreams.

I thought I was pretty mature.

Now, I just needed to prove it!



Chapter Three

United States Coast Guard

VFW Clambake

Just prior to taking my oath of Service, my favorite outing with the Connor (Mary's) family was attending the Annual VFW Sponsored Clambake, out in the woods of Pennsylvania. It cost us \$5.00 per person but it was well worth it. You had all the beer and/or soda (Coca Cola) you could drink and a "Bake" which was your choice of either half a chicken or a whole lobster. You also got two ears of buttered corn, whole carrots, steamed clams and a baked potato, all wrapped up in a red onion bag. Everything was buried in the ground, over hot coals, for a few hours. During the "Bake" time, there were raw clams on the half shell, clam chowder, clam fritters and steamed clams to enjoy with your unlimited kegs of beer and coolers of cold soda and water. Games were played to fit the different age groups in attendance.

I went down to the creek with a couple of Mary's younger cousins to hunt for tadpoles (baby frogs). We were having quite a bit of success when I slipped on the mud and fell into the creek. My sneaks and legs, almost up to my knees, and my shorts, were soaked and covered with creek mud. It was a cool, damp day in the woods and I was extremely uncomfortable for the rest of the Clambake. We won the competition for the most tadpoles caught and by the time I dried out, the "Bakes" were done, distributed and delicious.

(That was a date to remember while I was in Boot Camp.)

Fulfilling my Military Obligation

I investigated the United States Air Force and the U. S. Coast Guard for what I thought was the best two options for me, and what I wanted to achieve from my time in active service. In March, 1962, I joined the United States Coast Guard. Boot Camp, at Cape May, New Jersey, lasted 12 weeks. It took me 10 weeks to lose 35lbs. and finally climb that 30 ft. rope in the Blimp Hanger down by the ocean.



I vividly remember my Drill Instructor (DI) screaming at me, ***“Mondillo, ring that bell, at the top of that damn rope, or I will personally shove my Swagger Stick so far up your ass, you could pick your teeth with it!”*** I finally did it and passed the PE (Physical Exercise) test.

NOTE: If I did not climb that rope, I would not be able to graduate with my company. I would be held back until I finally climbed that rope, regardless of how long it would have taken.

It also took me eight weeks to pass the Swimming test. However, *prior to passing*, I was afforded the opportunity of agreeing to or declining to jump off a 30 ft. tower into 15 ft. of water in the pool. I agreed to jump, not once, but twice. The first time I was naked, with just a life jacket on, and, the second time I was naked with nothing else on. As I was wearing (or not) what everyone else in my company was wearing, I did not feel out of place, just a little scared of drowning. The instructor had a very long pole handy to pull me over to the side of the pool, if necessary. My other friends (Recruits), cheered me on and I sensed their respect for what I did

NOTE: I need to recognize a fellow recruit and still a close friend even after all these years. His name is **Tommy Ortolani**. We joined up at the beginning of Boot Camp, had each other's back, and definitely helped each other to get through the challenges of Recruit Training. We still remain good friends, for well over 50 years. He married his girlfriend, Carol, who visited on weekends with Mary. **(Tom and I both experienced the eventual loss of the girls we married and loved so very much.)**



After two weeks Leave, I reported in to the Third United States Coast Guard District Headquarters in the Customs House, New York City, N. Y., where I was surprised to find out that there were NO shore duty assignments available to me. My choices were two: The USCGC OWASCO, a 255' Gun Boat out of New London, Connecticut, or, the USCGC HALF MOON (WAVP-378), a 311' Weather Cutter, based out of Coast Guard Base St. George, Staten Island, New York. I never realized that the Coast Guard had a fleet of such large ships. The crew of 119 Enlisted Men and 19 Officers were my new family for the next 28 months of Sea Duty. Even though I loved the ocean, I was still very apprehensive about LIVING on a ship that spent 30 to 45 days at a time, at

sea, while on Atlantic Ocean deployments. We were required to stay within a designated 10 mile square so as to be on “Search and Rescue Standby” in the event of an emergency situation from either airplanes or other ships. We also carried professional Meteorologists to monitor weather conditions. We never left our assigned ocean station area, no matter how severe the weather got or how rough the seas became.



The choice was a NO BRAINER!
(The Half Moon was bigger and closer to home.)
My period of developing maturity was about to begin.

Memorable Events:

1. After determining the location of both my Stand Up and Foot Lockers, I unpacked my Sea Bag. We slept in groups of “three racks high” and my rack was located in the middle. Once my hanging chain “sleeper” rack was assigned, I was issued my bedding; mattress, pillow, pillow case and “Fart Sack” which is what they called the large pillow case that you slid your mattress into. *That’s when I started to feel like I belonged there.*

I then decided to walk around the ship to familiarize myself with its layout. Just beyond the crew's Mess Deck was the crew's Recreational Deck. I found the popcorn machine. Someone recently made a fresh batch so I helped myself to a bag full. I then climbed the ladder and went topside to look around. Not knowing anyone on board, I was anxious to make some friends.

As I walked up the side of the ship (called the Air Castle), I saw two crewmen standing in the hatchway of the Ship's Laundry. One looked like he operated the laundry and the other looked like he was just visiting. The visitor was about 6'4" tall and had red hair. I was to find out later that his nickname was, in fact, RED.

Both seamen were obviously "SALTS" (A term used to describe anyone having completed an Ocean Station deployment). I, on the other hand, would be called "Whale Shit" (A term used to describe anyone NOT having completed an Ocean Station deployment).



Anyway, to be friendly, I approached the two and offered them some of my popcorn. Red looked right at me and asked, "Is it good?" I was somewhat taken aback by his unfriendly tone of voice. I responded, "Well, it's still warm, so I know it's fresh, so, I guess I would say that it is good," Still staring directly at me, Red then said, "Well, shove it up your ass, cause good things don't hurt!" The Laundry operator bust out laughing and after I got over the initial shock, he introduced himself as LEPPING and then introduced me to Red, who was then smiling at me. They both shook my hand and welcomed me on board. They also let me know that as a new Recruit Seaman Apprentice, I would need to accept quite a bit of ribbing by the SALTS, at least until I survived HUMP DAY on my first Ocean Station Patrol. Talk about mixed emotions. I wondered, what the Hell did I get myself into?

Typically, any Seaman Apprentice, arriving on board ship right out of Boot Camp, would find themselves either on the Deck Crew or assigned as

Crew's Mess Cooks. I became a Mess Cook, along with a shipmate by the name of **Wil Toole**. After only a few days in port, we were approached by one of the Chief Petty Officers. We were both advised that it was necessary for one of us to relocate to the Chief's Quarters as their Mess Cook. As Boots, the thought of working in the Chief's Quarters was frightening. Neither one of us wanted the job, so, we decided to flip a coin. I lost (I thought) and became the Chief's Mess Cook for the next three months and then got extended for another three months because **they liked me**.

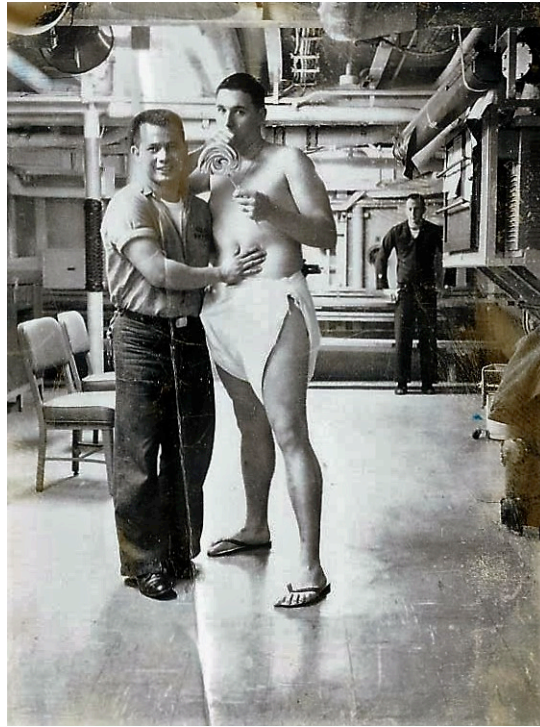
During my tenure as the Chief's Mess Cook, I had full reign over their living areas, and I had access to their reefer (refrigerator), keeping it stocked for them. I also got to use their Mess area to work on my Correspondence Course for my advancement to Seaman and, on Paydays, I always had a bowl left on their Mess Deck table, into which all the Chiefs would contribute TIPS for my continued excellent services. I had it made. When I completed my tour of duty as the Chief's Mess Cook, I went right into the Ship's Office, where I started my career as a Yeoman Striker.

NOTE: A "Striker" is a person who earns his chosen military Rating by practical experience; working for it at his Duty Station and NOT having the opportunity to earn it by going to school for it.

2. While eating Spaghetti and Meatballs, in rough seas, in the North Atlantic, the announcement came over the Public Address System that President John F. Kennedy had been assassinated. We were placed on ZERO Standby Alert immediately, awaiting our orders for any deployment to wherever it was necessary, for national security purposes.

We transitioned from a unit under the auspices of the U. S. Department of the Treasury to a Warship under the command of the U. S. Department of Defense.

The entire crew felt the fear of the unknown.



3. Neptune's Baby

4. While attempting to lay an Ocean Buoy in very rough, stormy seas, my close friend, Boatswains Mate Third Class (BM3) Williams, was struck in the head by the ship's anchor. This occurred when our motorized 26' Surf Boat rode an ocean swell, up and under the bow of the ship; sending all of my shipmates into the freezing waters of the North Atlantic. Valiant efforts of the ship's crew resulted in the recovery all my shipmates, including the body of the boat's Coxswain. When preparing to transfer the remains of our shipmate to another Coast Guard Cutter, I had the dual responsibility of collecting money from the entire crew to send home to BM3 Williams' family, and, at the same time, I was expected to insert some extra copies of routine military bulletins in the mail bag, for the convenience of the other ship's captain to read. In the excitement of the moment, I forgot to insert the bulletins into the mail pouch. For that omission, I was placed on Report, for the first time in my military career. I did not understand that happening to me. I normally took minutes for Captain's Masts and this time, I was on the receiving end of a Captain's Mast. I pleaded my case and as a result, all charges were dismissed and no record of the Captain's Mast was ever entered into my Personnel File. When we completed our assignment on Ocean Station Bravo, the Captain, Cmdr. Jay P. Dayton, decided to take our

ship to **Dublin, Ireland for R&R**. This action was to help relieve tension of the ship's crew, due to the ominous circumstances surrounding the events which had just occurred.

5. BM3 (Boatswains' Mate Third Class) Bob Thibault and I went on Liberty together in downtown Dublin, Ireland. Our mission was to find something made out of authentic Irish Linen. We walked around town until we finally located a promising Millinery Store. The salesgirl wanted to know if she could help us find anything in particular and Bob asked if she had any Irish Linen "Lingerie". The salesgirl smiled and asked Bob if he could give her an idea as to his wife's size and approximate measurements. "Well", she is kind of petite, but what exactly do you mean by her measurements?" The salesgirl replied, "Is she endowed?" Bob responded, "OK, about the size of Eggs." The salesgirl said, "Hard Boiled!" Without hesitation, Bob responded,

"No, more like Sunny Side Up!"

6. After arriving in Base St. George, Staten Island, New York, from another Ocean Station deployment, my Leave to go home to be married was cancelled due to the "**Missiles of October/Cuban Blockade**" actively underway. My appeal for Leave to get married was reconsidered and finally approved with the stipulation that I would spend my Honeymoon close-by, in Manhattan, New York, in case I needed to get back to the ship if orders were received to join the blockade of Cuba. I was able to get back to Philadelphia in time to make it to my Rehearsal Dinner on Friday evening.

On Saturday morning, November 3, 1962, I married the most gorgeous bride in the world, **Mary Agnes Teresa (Connor) Mondillo** in the beautiful Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church which was located a few blocks from Mary's parents' home, in the Germantown section of Philadelphia, Pa.



The Wedding Party



(Left to Right) Charlie LeFevre, Kenny Mondillo, Judy Hawthorne (Mary's Maid of Honor), Mary, Bill, Tony Bowen (My Best Man) and Bill Lang
(Front Row) Renee Cox, Shirley DiToro, was "Little" Agnes Andrews (Mary's Flower Girl) and Margaret Mary Walker

NOTE: On the way to the church, my Dad's Station Wagon; the vehicle that Mary and I planned to use to go on our honeymoon, was rear-ended by Mary's Uncle Joe. The back "lift" door was dented so badly that it could not be opened. Inside the trunk was all the liquor for the Reception and it became unavailable.

Our wedding reception was at the Rising Sun VFW Post, as Mary's father was the Post Commander and her mother was President of the VFW Post's Women's Auxiliary.



Our Honeymoon in New York City was memorable and unique, to say the least.



NOTE: On the road, after the Wedding Reception, we had a flat tire and when we attempted to change the tire, the repair man, at a gas station, forced the dented door open. He had to move all the Booze to get to the spare tire. He advised us that we would be in a world of trouble if we got stopped by police, carrying Booze across state lines. We took his advice to heart and when we finally stopped at a Motel for the night, we emptied most of the liquor down the drain and broke the seals on the bottles that we decided to take for personal consumption while in New York City. Remember, it was legal to drink in New York state, if you were 18 years of age.



7. We had three (3) Search and Rescue assignments in Bermuda and each lasted three (3) weeks in duration. On one of those trips, I had the Duty and was asked if I wanted to do some fishing for the crew on the ship having the Duty with me. I accepted the challenge gladly and went ashore at Kindley Air Force Base to fish off the dock there. I was with three other shipmates.

When I caught a 5 lb. Grouper and attempted to carry it over the dock to a five gallon bucket we brought with us, for any fish we caught, the slimy fish, wriggling in my hands, caused my Gold Wedding Band to work its way off my left hand. As I tossed the Grouper into the bucket, my ring went flying off my hand and rolled over the wooden boards of the dock. I immediately tried to catch it before it slowed down from rolling and fell in

between the boards and into the harbor. **BLOOP** was the sound I will never forget. OMG, 30 ft. of beautiful blue, Bermuda, Gulf Stream water separated me from my symbol of marriage. What the hell do I do now? When I arrived back on the Half Moon, I wrote my wife, Mary, the most sincere letter of explanation I could and had all three of my shipmates sign that letter, to prove that I was being absolutely honest. Believe me, I was scared shitless!

(She forgave me and I purchased another ring ASAP.)

8. On another night, a shipmate and I missed the last (Midnight) Liberty Boat leaving from the dock in St. George, Bermuda, back to the Half Moon, moored out in the harbor. We knew the next opportunity to return to our ship would not be until 6 a.m. We tried to get some sleep by lying up against a building on the dock. A few hours later, my friend woke up screaming. I jumped up to my feet, scared to death, and fearing the worst. He told me to look down the dock. I saw a shadow of what seemed to be a large cat running. He told me that was no cat. Apparently, while he was sound asleep, a huge rat climbed up on his chest and was looking at him when he opened his eyes. He felt the weight and said it was heavy. Needless to say, neither of us got any more sleep and watched the sun come up and the ship's 26' Surf Boat arrive to take us back to our home away from home.

That was a night NOT to want to remember.

9. In December, 1963, I had the Standing Duty over Christmas Day. I exchanged my Duty with one of my shipmates so I would be on board for New Year's Day instead of Christmas. When I got home, Mary and I rushed to the hospital and at 25 minutes before midnight, Christmas Night, after 21 hours of Labor, our son, **William Lawrence Mondillo (Billy) was born.** I was not in the Delivery Room when he was born, but I saw him, for the first time, a few minutes, after his birth. I have to tell you, he scared the hell out of me. Billy was BLUE, with a deformed head, and I really thought he looked anything but normal to me.

I was told that he was perfect and to be patient for a little while. The next time I saw him, he was cleaned up and in his mother's arms. He was PINK and his head was round. He was the most handsome little guy I could hope for. I will never forget the emotions of holding him for the first time. I was proud and scared at the same time. I was a Dad, and responsible for another life. I was now a real family man, and loved it. Mary looked so

happy, and, at that moment, she was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen.

NOTE: After 28 months Sea Duty, I finally found our first apartment on Westervelt Avenue, on Staten Island, New York and brought my wife and son from Philadelphia to live with me. It was the first time, in our married life, that we were **not** dependent on Mary's parents.

10. Three times, while on board the Half Moon, I participated in a two week Reserve Training Cruise, which usually traveled to Nassau in the Bahamas. On one of the trips, I was in the ship's office. There was a ladder immediately outside the ship's office, leading up to the main deck. Just outside the hatch, on the main deck, was a well educated Reservist who was being reprimanded by one of our Boatswain's Mates for apparently not chipping paint in a proper manner. I could hear them arguing. The Reservist, I found out later, was from the State of Georgia. Well, the Boatswain's Mate apparently left the area and after he walked far enough away, I overheard the following statement in a heavy southern accent, from the "Georgia Genius" Reservist.

"You can kiss my ass until the rosy red turns to a piss poor brown and the crabs gotta walk on stilts to keep from stepping in shit,"
(No one else heard that statement and I never forgot it.)

11. On the way to Ocean Station ECHO, southeast of Florida and just north of Cuba, we had the assignment of dropping off two mechanics who were Lighthouse Repair Experts. Our destination was an uninhabited island called NAVASA. They needed to repair the inoperable Lighthouse as it was a very important navigational aid to mariners. Upon arrival, our ship's crew was offered an unusual opportunity to go ashore while the repairs were being made. I volunteered to go on the "adventure". There were no docks or easy ways to land on the island. There were ropes hanging down from cliffs and you had to time the ocean swells and jump from the boat, on to a rope, and climb up a steep cliff to get on the island where the Lighthouse was located.

The only life on the island were wild goats and birds that looked a lot like prehistoric pterodactyls. They had leather looking skin and few feathers. After about three hours, the repairs were completed and we needed to depart. Some of us gathered some souvenirs. I had about six of the unusual fruit that looked like cantaloupe. Others took some sun bleached bones of dead goats that were strewn all over the place. The boat crews

were not happy with us as our souvenirs got in the way when we jumped from the ropes, into the Surf Boats. One member of the crew got impaled by a horn on a goat skull. When we finally got everyone back on board, we had one of the Mess Cooks make us a batch of homemade *Bug Juice* (slang term) from the fruit we found, mixed with lots of sugar and water. It was the bitterest vetch ever tasted. We successfully completed our assigned mission and created yet another memory.

12. On November 27, 1965, at the United States Public Health Service Hospital, in Staten Island, New York, my loving wife, Mary, presented me with my first daughter, **Barbara Mary Mondillo**. I remember how apprehensive Mary was about going to the USPHS Hospital to give birth. She soon changed her mind. You see, any Serviceman's wife was treated like a Queen by the hospital staff. Back at our second floor apartment, we were now a family of four. I also remember my shipmates, volunteering to babysit Billy and Barbara, so Mary and I could go shopping or go to a movie. (They loved a home cooked meal as payment.) We really started to get used to Shore Duty and loved it for as long as it lasted.

13. On the first floor of our two story Staten Island Duplex was another Coast Guard couple, Bill and Murtha O'Boyle. They had a little girl about the same age as Billy. They were expecting their second child and believed it was going to be a BOY, because they did the "Needle Test" before Murtha delivered. The Needle Test requires that a Sewing Needle be hung from Sewing Thread, over the belly of the Expecting Mother. If the needle swings back and forth, you're going to have a GIRL. If the needle swings in a circular motion, then you are going to have a BOY. Round and Round it went!

Well, one morning, when I came downstairs to get Bill so we could travel together to our mutual duty station in the Customs House, New York City, he didn't answer the door when I knocked. I happened to see a note taped to the inside of the glass in the door. I read the words very slowly, and will never forget what it said,

"Piss on the Needle, It's a GIRL!"

14. While assigned to the USCG Officer-In-Charge Marine Inspection (OCMI) , in the Customs House, New York City, New York, I did report directly to E-9 Master Chief Kahl and indirectly to Captain William F. Rey,

III. Under his command, I was nominated for Coast Guardsman of the Year.

Officer in Charge
Marine Inspection
720 Custom House
New York, N. Y., 10004

1710
14 June 1965

From: Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection, New York
To: Commander, Third Coast Guard District (p)
Subj: Coast Guardsman of the Year, 1965; nomination for
Ref: (a) CCGDTHREE NOTICE 1710 of 3 May 1965

1. Pursuant to reference (a), this command's nominee for subject Award is MONDILLO, William Charles (346-183) YN2, USCG and the following information is forwarded:

- a. Duty Station: Marine Inspection Office, New York
- b. Principal Duty: Personnel Yeoman
- c. Permanent Home Address: 6102 Charles Street
Philadelphia 35, Pa.
- d. Date and Place of Birth: 13 June 1943 - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- e. Marital Status: Married to Mary T. (CONNOR) MONDILLO of 6102 Charles St.
Phila., Penna.
Children: Son, William L. MONDILLO, Age 18 months.
Another child is due on or about 21 Nov. 1965.
- f. Name and Address of Parents: Victor W. and Helen M. MONDILLO
1213 N. Hancock Street
Philadelphia 22, Penna.
- g. Education: Graduated, "With Greatest Distinction" from
Northeast Catholic High School
Erie & Torresdale Avenues
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Graduated in 1961.

h. Service History: MONDILLO enlisted and was accepted for active duty on 6 March 1962 at the USCG Recruiting Station in Philadelphia. He completed Recruit Training at USCG Receiving Center, Cape May, New Jersey in June 1962. He reported aboard USCGC HALF MOON (WAVI-378), Staten Island, New York on 21 June 1962 where he served 28 months. During this period of sea duty, he advanced himself from SA to YN2 and on 2 November 1964, he was transferred to his present assignment. MONDILLO received a Letter of Appreciation from the Commanding Officer of HALF MOON for his performance of duty during Refresher Training at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

2. MONDILLO reported to this command on 2 November 1964. He was assigned to the Military Personnel Office where, on his own initiative, he completely reorganized the files and instituted a Master Index for all publications and directives. As a direct result of this action, he measurably increased the productivity of the office. He is completely reliable, and fully qualified in all the professional aspects of his rate. Additionally, he has, again on his own initiative, undertaken to carry out stenographic duties for both the Commanding and Executive Officers. This duty, which is outside the scope of his rate, has also been accomplished in a most satisfactory manner. MONDILLO is possessed of a pleasing personality and is very effective in his daily contacts with the military and civilian personnel of this unit. Furthermore, he is well groomed and militarily smart at all times. His private life is exemplary and he has proven himself to be a devoted family man.

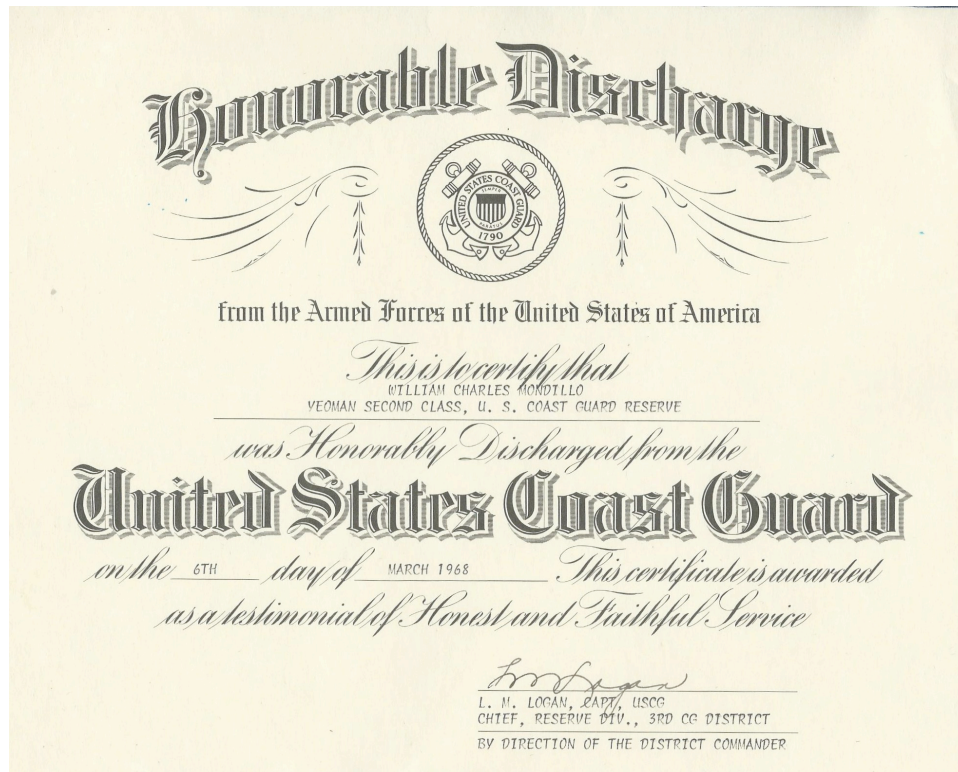
3. After full consideration of the foregoing facts, it is concluded that MONDILLO is an outstanding young Coastguardsman and Petty Officer and fully deserving of being considered as the Coastguardsman of the Year.

W. F. REA, III

I was also on the **Promotions List for First Class Petty Officer (YN1)** when Capt. Rey offered to be my sponsor for **Officer's Candidate School (OCS)**. He said he wanted me to re-enlist and earn my Commission. He then told me that I would be assigned to his command. He said that due to my 28 months of Sea Duty, already served, he would have no difficulty having me assigned to his command, once I graduated from OCS. Though it was a very tempting offer, I did not have what you would call a Military Serviceman's wife and, at Mary's prompting, I left the military. I have always been proud to be a Veteran of the United States Coast Guard and I always felt that I made the right choice of Military Service to fulfill my military obligations. I truly believe all young men should serve a minimum of two years in the military, after completing school at any level, and before they begin their lifelong civilian working careers.

It is the best "Growing Up/Maturing Process" there is!

NOTE: I received my **Honorable Discharge** from the U. S. Coast Guard on a Friday, in March, 1966.



(I qualified for 8 Medals & 9 Ribbons)



Chapter Four

Civilian Life

Poquessing Corporation (Realtors)

On the following Monday, I began my civilian life in Philadelphia, as an Asst. Manager, Poquessing Corporation, Realtors, in their Property Management Department. We rented an apartment for one year. Our apartment was on Fillmore Street. It actually was the first floor of an old house. Fran and Bill Smedley lived on the Second Floor. They were expecting their first child at the same time we were expecting our third. We knew we were having a boy.

As this was their first baby, they did not want to know what they were going to have. The four of us (Parents to be) became very close friends. Fran was an Anesthesiologist at the hospital where our babies were to be born. Our baby boy was to be induced, so, we picked the day in advance; a day when Fran was scheduled to be on duty. I will always remember, Fran running out of the Delivery Room, looking like she was ready to give Birth herself, and throwing her arms around me, screaming at me, "Congratulations, Daddy, your son is perfect and Mary is fine and so happy". **Brian Mondillo** was born on November 4, 1969 which was a *Tuesday, Election Day*. We were then a blessed family of five. Shortly thereafter, I obtained my **Pennsylvania State Real Estate Salesman's License** and negotiated contracts and leases on Residential, Commercial and Industrial Properties. I collected Rents and conducted inspections of properties for the purpose of releasing tenants' Securities Deposits. I did not feel this career path was for me so I looked for other employment that I believed would give me the opportunities I wanted, to provide for my growing family. I left the Real Estate profession on a Friday and,

B. F. Goodrich Tire Company

On the following Monday morning, I began my 15 years of tenure with B.F. Goodrich at the BFG Philadelphia Regional Accounting Center, as their **Chief Accounting Clerk**. I should mention the fact that under normal circumstances a person would be required to have a degree in Accounting, as well as five years of practical working experience on the job, before being eligible for promotion to Manger. My boss turned out to be an Alcoholic and because of this, I was promoted to **Manager** in only 22 months. My staff of 55 women and one male were extremely supportive.

While working full time, I attended career related, evening classes offered at the Philadelphia College of Textiles and Sciences. **I got an “A” in Psychology, an “A” in Financial Accounting and a “B” in Business Law. My GPA was 3.64.** I finally had to cease Night School due to my other business and personal responsibilities..

Fool with a stool...

We eventually moved to a brand new Industrial Center facility in Bensalem, Pa., at the northeast point of Interstate 95 & Street Road. As soon as we settled in, we had an Open House celebration with a lot of refreshments available to employee’s families, corporate company visitors and the public. There was quite a bit of extra food left over so I instructed my staff to put it in the refrigerators in our lunch room for the enjoyment of all employees the next day.

NOTE: It is important to mention that there was an Assistant Manger, Distribution, by the name of Gene Adamski. He was about 280 lbs. and 6’3” tall. (He had a reputation for being able to consume large volumes of beer, without ever having to take a Pee. That made him somewhat of a phenomenon.)

Anyway, the day after our Open House found me in the lunchroom and when I went to deposit my lunch in the refrigerator, I immediately noticed that most of the food that was placed there yesterday was gone. I was told that “Adamski was hungry” and he ate the food last evening, after the visitors left the building. I was upset with that information and intended to speak to him about it.

Later that morning, I needed to use the bathroom. When I went into the Men’s Room, Adamski was exiting my favorite stall. I mentioned to him that we needed to talk about something that was on my mind. We agreed to meet later on in the day. Without hesitation, I went into my stall, dropped my pants, started to sit down, and noticed something dark in the toilet.

I looked down between my legs and there was a Footlong Log looking up at me. Now I was really pissed off because Adamski had not taken the time to insure that his “Load” went down with the flush. I then proceeded to make the biggest mistake of my life. I sat down and flushed the toilet. After a few seconds elapsed, I felt the cold water beginning to slap against my bare ass. I spread my legs, looked down, and watched it.

Adamski's Log was being washed over the edge of the toilet and due to its size and weight, it only goes about half way and breaks off. "Bombs Away", right into my Tightly Whities. I jumped up, losing all sense of having to take a crap myself, and was able to avoid the second half of the missal from joining up with the first half. I was able to get the second half to flush. What do I do now? I've got wet underwear and slacks and a six inch piece of shit in my shorts.

I very, very carefully removed my shoes so I could slip my feet out of my pants while attempting to corral the load inside my underpants so it does not wind up in my slacks. I angrily flushed the Log and rolled up my underpants to throw them into the trash receptacle. I got dressed and left my stall. I reported the incident to Adamski's boss and had to go back to work, "Commando".

Out of the darkness...

On another occasion, while still in the same facility, we had a power failure. No one could work, so, I decided to go to the bathroom and take a leak. As soon as the Men's Room door closed behind me, I was in a pitch black environment. I could not see my hand in front of my face. I did know where the Urinals were located so I felt my way along and around the walls to where the four Urinals were mounted on the wall. To save some time, I pulled my zipper down and was in the process of whipping it out, when, out of the darkness came the voice of Joe Biondo, Manager of our Footwear Division. He screamed, "Whoa, Whoa, Move Over One, God Damn It"! Joe was apparently there, with his forehead on his left forearm, taking a Pee (quietly) and I walked up behind him (quietly), in the dark, lined up with the same Urinal he was using, which was the first one in the line of four. Talk about life's most embarrassing moments!

That story went throughout the facility, in a matter of minutes.

The Marsden Street Nightmare

The forgettable episode took place when our good neighbors, Kathy and Jack Kilpatrick were planning to move from Marsden Street to their new home in New Jersey. Jack wanted to go out to the local bar with me to enjoy each other's company one last time, for quite some time to come. Jack was a drinker but I was NOT.

While I was away for the evening, Mary decided to rearrange the furniture in our bedroom. It is important to understand that I am a creature of habit and I was used to setting two alarm clocks when I went to bed each evening. The one alarm was on the table beside the bed and I could easily reach it to shut it off. The second alarm clock was physically located across the bedroom, on top of my bureau. If necessary, I could sleep an extra 10 minutes and then have to get out of bed and cross the room to reach and shut off the second alarm. This procedure kept me from never being late for work in the mornings.

I came home drunk and was pissed that Mary moved everything around in the bedroom. It was late, so I set my alarm clocks and decided to let Mary know how upset I was with her, in the morning.

Around 4 a.m., the stupid alarm clock, across the room, went off. It startled me and I jumped out of bed to shut it off. Completely forgetting about the re-arrangement of the bedroom furniture, I ran right into the bedroom wall, head first. I bounced off the wall and fell over the table with the lamp on it and then hit the base of the bed frame with my tailbone. I was writhing on the floor, in pain, with the lamp between my legs, and blood coming out of my tailbone and flowing all over my pajamas and the bedroom carpet. Mary woke up and kneeling up on the bed, asked me, "Are you alright?" The fact that she was laughing when she asked the question, really pissed me off. She said that I just looked funny with the lamp sticking out, from between my legs, while laying on the floor. She thought I just learned a lesson because it would not have happened to me if I had not been drunk. I was so mad at her that I slept on the sofa for three nights until she finally put the bedroom furniture back where it belonged; where it used to be. I never went out drinking with any of my friends again. I taught her (?)

From the mouths of Babes

I will never forget the day, Mary and I took Billy (Age 4) and Barbara (Age 2) down to the Bella Casa Family Restaurant to visit with their grandparents and to get a free meal. My Aunt Fran was there to see our kids. She offered to take Billy over to Fanelli's Candy Store, down the street, for an ice cream cone. As she took Billy's hand and walked towards the exit door of the restaurant, a customer had his leg out in the aisle.

Aunt Fran hesitated and said to Billy, "What do you say to the nice man?" Expecting Billy to say, "Excuse Me", Billy looked sternly at the man and said, "Summa Ma Bitz!"



He obviously learned that bad language from his grandfather.

On another rainy day, while living at 8742 Marsden Street in the Academy Gardens section of Philadelphia, we had our front door open with the screen door in place. Brian (Age 4) was bored out of his skull because he couldn't go outside to play.

He went over to the screen door to check on how bad the weather was. As he looked up at the sky, he said, very loudly and distinctly, "God Damn Rain".

He obviously learned that bad language from his big brother.

Brian had some issues with other kids on Marsden Street. They liked to bully him and physically pick on him. Many a day, he would come home crying, with a bloody nose and/or bruises. I decided to try an experiment. I bought Brian a pair of Baseball Batting Gloves. I told him they were "Killer Gloves" and if anyone was ever mean to him, he should put on his gloves and fight back.

One day, one of the mean kids was riding his bike and spit on Brian while riding by. Brian came home to put on his gloves. He went down the street to the kid's house and proceeded to beat the piss out of him. The kid's older brother came outside and went after Brian. Brian then beat the piss out of him too.

The father of the two boys came over to our house to complain about what Brian had done. I listened and asked Brian what he had to say. Brian said, "The Killer Gloves Worked, Dad". I reminded the father about all the times his sons beat up on Brian in the past, and I never said a word about it.

I then suggested that the father go home before I beat the living shit out of him. He did.

I obviously learned that bad language from Brian!

B. F. Goodrich Tire Company (Cont'd.)

I successfully managed my own Accounting Center for nine years before consolidating it with the Area Accounting Center on Indianola Avenue in Columbus, Ohio, on August 15, 1976.

Relocation to Ohio

Mary and I went through 26 houses in three days before making our final choice to purchase our dream home at **558 Allview Court**, located in **Westerville, OH 43081**.

We settled on LOCATION and the fact that it was advertised as having "Great Neighbors". (That turned out to be the truth.)

NOTE: At first, Mary hated our move to Ohio. She was pregnant and we experienced the worst weather conditions, for the longest period of time. She was very homesick for Philadelphia. On a memorable snowy day, Mary told me that she was ready to go to the hospital. We got hung up in traffic and I was afraid she was going to give birth to our baby girl in the car. We made it to the hospital and Mary was checked for how close she was for delivery. After being checked the Nurse left the room and Mary said to me, "I don't care about what she says or thinks, something is going on down there, RIGHT NOW"! I immediately ran to get the Nurse back.

NOTE: I never was in the Delivery Room when Billy, Barbara or Brian was born. This time, I really wanted to be there to see the actual birth of our fourth baby, a GIRL.

There was a Shift Change occurring and I got the Head Nurse to come in to check on Mary. She threw the curtain shut and after a couple of long minutes elapsed, she told me to go out into the hallway and stay out of the way. The Head Nurse called for assistance and the next thing I knew, Mary's bed came flying out of the room and down the hall. At that moment, Mary hollered at me, "Her name is Bethanne, spelled, B-E-T-H-A-N-N- E, one word".

NOTE: We had never settled on a name for our little girl. We only knew we wanted it to start with the letter “B”.

NOTE: We also never knew that the Washburn’s, our next door neighbors on Allview Court, who were expecting a baby girl also, planned to name their girl BETHANNE. When they found out the name we had chosen, they switched their choice of names to BETHANY.

On November 4, 1976, Tuesday, *Election Day*, our beautiful baby girl, **Bethanne Mondillo**, was born and Mary’s attitude about moving to Ohio began to change for the better.

NOTE: Our doctor never made it to the Delivery Room in time and Bethanne was delivered by the Resident Doctor on Call. Naturally, I never had a chance to put on a gown, let alone see the birth! By the way, Bethany, a mother of four, and Bethanne, a mother of three, grew up together as next door neighbors and are still the BEST OF FRIENDS.

All four of our children graduated from Saint Paul’s Catholic School and Westerville South High School. Brian made the Hall of Fame for Leadership and Character and his picture is hanging in the school, with the other top 10 Seniors of his graduating class. All of our children also worked at Yogi’s Hoagies while in High School.

Mary and I should have qualified for Poster Board Parents for *Planned Parenthood* because in:

1963 - Billy was born on **Christmas Day**

1965 - Barbara was born on **Thanksgiving Day**

1969 – Brian was born on Tuesday, November 4th, **Election Day**

1976 – Bethanne was born on Tuesday, November 4th, **Election Day**



In 1981, BFGoodrich decided to eliminate my position after almost 15 years of me feeling that I was “almost indispensable”. Again, I left my Accounting profession at BFG on a Friday, and

OPEC Gas & Oil Exploration & Development Corporation

On the next Monday morning, I started my brief career with OPEC, as their **Director of Operations**, reporting directly to the President. He offered

me the position at a starting salary which was \$10,000. more than what I was being paid by BFG. I was given a new office (with all new furniture that I personally selected), a company car and a Corporate Credit Card. I was experiencing what living in the fast lane, as a high roller, was all about.

Over the next year and a half, we had a 94% Success Ratio, drilling Oil and Gas/ Combination Berea and Clinton Wells in Ohio. I guess we could not stand our prosperity, as we began to speculate in drilling wells in Tennessee, looking for the Big Lime (our Pot-of-Gold). After nine consecutive Dry Holes, OPEC went Bankrupt. For the first time in my working career, I faced Unemployment!

My period of 29 weeks of growing Humility

During my period of unemployment, I collected \$215.00 per week and had to physically appear at the Unemployment Office, on a weekly basis, to prove my activity in attempting to find a job. I started out going in dressed in a suit with a shirt and tie. Then I went in with a coat and no tie. It wasn't long before I showed up in slacks and shirt with no coat or tie. I finally appeared in jeans and sneakers.

While continuing to look for work, we had to use most of my BFG Severance Package money to live on. Unemployment Compensation was not enough to line on, by itself. To help supplement my potential future income, I studied hard and obtained my **Ohio State Insurance Agent's License**, which qualified me to sell Life, Health and Casualty Insurance. I also began studying for my **Securities and Exchange Commission License** for qualification as a professional Financial Planner. Halfway through that process, I was offered a Temporary Freelance Position, creating manual flowcharts of various financial processes, for the Accounting Department of Merrill Publishing Company in Westerville, Ohio.

That successful venture led to a job offer for a newly created position of **Manager, Project Planning and Control**. Soon after accepting that position, I hired Lea Owen as my Administrative Coordinator.

NOTE: Lea was only 18 years old, in 1976, when BFG moved me to Ohio from Philadelphia. I was her first Boss out of High School.

Merrill Publishing Company

Approximately one year later, after establishing the Micro Computer Information Area, which introduced **APPLE Computers** as the future replacement for the mainframe computer used by the company, I found myself in Skokie, Illinois, with the President of Merrill Publishing, Gary

Eisenberger. Gary asked me to make the presentation to the **Board of Directors of Bell & Howell Corporation**, our parent (owner) company.

Merrill needed a **\$10 million dollar Capital Investment Budget** to design and construct a 250,000 sq. ft., State-of-the-Art Distribution Center which would position us many years ahead of our closest competition. Gary and I were elated to receive the approval and budget.



I was named **Manager, Project Administration**, directly responsible for the physical construction of the building, all related purchasing, a new operating system, new software development and overall coordination to bring it all together. I had one year to make it all happen.

One year later, the **“Inventory Management Distribution System” (IMDS)**, was born and in full operation. We were on schedule and on budget.

At our Open House, my wife, Mary, was presented with two dozen roses and I received a **plaque from the Gahanna City Improvement Corporation**. I also received a handshake and a slap on the back from Jack Frey, Chairman of the Board, Bell & Howell. He said to me,



“Damn it, Bill, you said you were going to do it, and you did. Congratulations.”

The success of the project led to a promotion to **Director, Quality Improvement**, for two years. I became a qualified instructor for two, three (3) day seminars on: **Quality Leadership** followed by **Quality Action, Problem-Solving, Decision-Making**. I also attended and graduated from the Institute of Organizational Dynamics in Boston, Mass.

My accomplishments rewarded me with recognition as

“Employee of the Year”



“Children, Do You Know Where Your Parents Are Tonight?”

Dan Robins was not only my Boss, he was a good friend. Mary and his wife, Donna, became known by our crowd as “The Runners”. They would jump at every opportunity to follow up on information obtained from listening to a Police Band Radio. They would listen for what, “was going down”, and off they would go, to actually see the Police in action. They

sometimes got to see actual Fires being handled by the Police and Fire Departments. The two of them considered this a very exciting pastime that they shared together on many occasions. Due to that relationship, the four of us became very close and that was the basis upon which we decided to plan and implement the best *Halloween Party* ever.

Towards the end of September, while playing cards one evening, Donna came up with an idea. What started out to be just a neat concept turned out to be an **extravaganza**. We developed our individual and team roles very carefully. It was decided that Mary and I would decorate our dark brown Oldsmobile Vista Cruiser Station Wagon. We would make it look like an actual Funeral Hearse that would be parked in the driveway of the Robins' residence on the night of our party. Donna and Mary would purchase materials for the four of us to fabricate Tomb Stones for the front lawn and I would do all of the inscriptions. Donna and Mary would also make Ghosts from sheets to hang from the tree on the front lawn and find "Eerie" Halloween music to play outdoors to create the proper Halloween environment. Dan and Donna would install flood lights on their front lawn to emphasize the scary cemetery effect from the street and for easy recognition by cars driving by.

Dan and I would visit Moreland's Funeral Home and negotiate with one of the owners for the loan of a number of Funeral related items. I would locate and decorate a large enough corrugated box for me to occupy, the night of the party. I would purchase BLANKS for the two Starter Pistols that I owned. We needed to find a way to procure Dead Flowers, Artificial Cob Webs, Dry Ice, a large Rubber Bat and a long pole, for creating the ominous atmosphere and proper effects we wanted. We also needed to find out where we could purchase a case of the widest Gauze possible, for our needs.

Donna was so excited about our plan that she thought our local TV Station - Channel 4, might find it interesting enough to want to film it and put it on the 11 o'clock News, the night of our party. She made the call and low and behold, they expressed a sincere interest in covering our event. They said they would call us back if they were coming. It was decided,

"Let's Go For It"!

Dan and I visited our neighborhood Funeral Parlor. Moreland's found our idea to be unique and something they wanted to support. When the time was right, it took us multiple trips to pick up a full length Pine Box Coffin, two Funeral Parlor standing pole Globe Lamps, a heavy metal Kneeler for in front of the coffin, a heavy metal Registry Stand for our guests to sign in upon arrival at our party, two magnetic flags that had the word *Funeral* on

them, and 25 folding chairs. Moreland's also recommended that we should go to a couple of our local cemeteries and ask them to hold on to an accumulation of left over funeral flower arrangements that are typically left on gravesites after everyone had exited the area(s). Normally they would be disposed of or donated to nearby Nursing Homes. Those items could be checked off our list.

I finally located a large enough corrugated box, that once contained a Washing Machine, and placed it in my garage. I painted the whole thing Black and cut a hole in the center of the bottom of the box, big enough for me to stick my head through it.

I borrowed a swivel chair from a friend and purchased a red rubber, "Horned Devil's Head" mask from a Halloween Costume Store. I owned a small Axe, so, I took it and mounted it on the box, so It appeared to be sticking out of the neck of the Devil's Head. I then painted the edge of the Axe in bright red paint, along with running red paint over and down the side of the box, simulating the effect of real blood. By the time the paint dried, I was extremely satisfied with how realistic it appeared.

What's a funeral without Funeral Directors? My son, Bill, was asked to obtain the assistance of one of his friends, David Insul.

David was the son of Mary Jane and Dave Insul, who were part of our crowd of close friends, and who were also invited to our party. We needed Bill and David to be "Prop Actors" for our project. David was happy and anxious to participate.

All preparations were in place, invitations were extended and, by the way, TV's Channel 4 accepted our invitation.

At 8:30 P.M., our guests began to arrive. They were very surprised with the exterior appearance of the house. They were impressed by the Hearse in the driveway with the Funeral Flags on the hood, the Tombstones all over the lawn, and the Sounds of Horror, emanating from the house. The stage was certainly set for what was yet to come.

Wearing three piece dark suits with white shirts and dark ties, David greeted our guests at the front door while Billy directed them to sign the Registry. The Air Conditioner in the house was set to make the place feel as cold as may be possible and the doorways, ceiling fans and lamps were strewn with large grey Spider Webs. Donna greeted our crowd members, dressed as a witch. What made her costume so gross was the full rubber mask she had over her head, with long straggly grey hair hanging down and a tall, pointed black hat on her head. She had the typical witch's face but the very realistic SNOT running out of her nose certainly got your attention.

The Living Room was converted to a Funeral Parlor Viewing Room. The folding chairs were set up across the room, directly in front of the elevated Casket. Donna made sure that the women in our crowd sat in the front row and the men sat behind them. Behind the Casket were arrays of Dead Flowers and the smell filled the room. On both ends of the Casket were the Funeral Parlor Pole Lamps with the big yellowish globes on the top. The Kneeler was strategically placed on the floor, in the center of the Casket. Off to the side of the room was the big black box with ME inside. I was sitting on a swivel chair, wearing the red, horned, and very grotesque Red Devil's Mask. To our crowd, I looked like a severed head, with a bloody axe sticking out of my neck and fresh blood was running out of my neck, across the top of the box and down the front. I looked GOOOOD!

At approximately 9 P.M., the female TV Interviewer and the black Camera Man showed up from Channel 4. To be as inconspicuous as possible, the Camera Man made the mistake of standing off to the side of the room, "beside the black box". The Interviewer stood back in the far corner of the Living Room to witness the entertainment, about to begin. Mary was in charge of the sound effects and overall creation of the proper atmosphere. The sound of really Eerie Music could be discerned. It started out LOW and then slowly got louder. All of a sudden, the lights went out.

NOTE: In the darkness, Billy and David uncovered the DRY ICE that was located on the floor, around the Casket. The MIST rose, adding dampness to the already existing Chill that filled the air.

The sound of a Witch's "Cackle" pierced the ears of our friends. That was the cue for Billy and David to face each other and fire their Starter Pistols at one another. Out of the darkness, you could see the FLASH of the guns firing and the sound, in the room, literally scared the SHIT out of everyone. The aroma of the spent gunpowder, added to the smell of the Dead Flowers, created the perception of burning Brimstone from Hell. And then, there was complete, total silence. It lasted, what seemed like, forever.

NOTE: Remember, it was so dark, you could not see your hand in front of your face. The effect was BETTER than anticipated. Out of the darkness, you began to hear, ever so slightly, the sound of the flapping of wings.

NOTE: That was the cue for Mary to enter the room, with the long pole in her hands. At the end of the pole was the big, rubber BAT with its flimsy wings hanging down.

Out of the darkness, the sound of distant BATS became louder. Mary then walked, very slowly, behind the rows of occupied chairs, moving the pole up and down, up and down, and being very careful to allow the wings to only slightly touch the heads of our guests. It wasn't just the women who started to let out some screams. "WHAT THE HELL!" "HOLY SHIT!" "DAMN!" were some of the reactive comments that could be heard throughout the room. Believe me, it took all that I could muster, to keep from laughing out loud and giving away my, yet to be appreciated, position in the black box. Silence again...Then the sound of, extremely loud EGYPTIAN music filled the room. As the music reached its crescendo, Billy turned on a STROBE LIGHT.

You could then make out the heavy MIST that was surrounding the Coffin. Slowly, the Casket Lid began to move and a "Gauze Wrapped Hand and Arm" began to appear.

Damn, it looked Cool!

Dan began to Sit Up in the Casket, completely wrapped from head to toe in ancient looking, tattered gauze. He then turned, with both arms extended, and made a LUNGE towards the women, sitting in the front row.

The visual effect of the Strobe Light added to the fright factor of his actions. Every female screamed. Some of the guys did too! One of the women was heard to say, "I think I have to go to the bathroom!" Another woman responded, "I think I just did!" Our whole production was caught on film and the introduction to our Halloween Party reached its conclusion. The lights came on and everyone was commenting on what they just experienced. Everyone sorta, kinda, forgot about ME!

The Camera Man moved from beside me to in front of me, with his back towards me. It was MY TURN! I let out the loudest, most evil sounding scream that I could. The camera man spun around. His eyes looked like two big black marbles swimming in pools of white marshmallows. I startled him and he did all he could to get control of his camera while he was in the act of dropping it on the floor. When I slowly started to ROTATE my head, 360 degrees, the camera man literally RAN away, obviously scared to death. Everyone got the biggest kick out of my unexpected, additional climax to our Halloween Party's festivities.

Our group's memorable time together continued, and, sure enough, at 11 P.M., we all milled around the TV. There we were, on TV. Donna kept her mask on during the entire post extravaganza, filmed interview. You could not avoid fixing your eyes on the SNOT running out of her nose when

she was talking. The evening certainly was CLASSIC and the Interviewer ended her comments by saying to the viewing, Channel 4 audience,

“Children, do you know where YOUR parents are tonight?”

My Unique Mystique

In 1985, I was invited to participate in a Management Retreat on Nantucket Island, Mass. After landing at Logan International Airport, the fog rolled in and my trip from Boston A/P to the island, on a six passenger propeller airplane, was cancelled. I spent the night in an airport hotel and the next morning I continued on with my memorable escapades.

The management team was unaware of the hidden agenda that existed.

We unknowingly performed what was described to us, in detail, as a “Self Style Synthesis”. The completion of this process would result in us expressing either an “A Type Personality” or a “B Type Personality”.

We did not know that the seminar was being conducted by three (3) professional Behavioral Psychologists.

Their mandate was to grade each of us, on a scale of 1 to 10, with the results showing a strong leaning towards the “A” personality indicating an analytical person, with a strong drive towards bottom-line results, or the “B” personality indicating a person with a strong drive towards daily mechanics of the operations and personnel development. To their amazement, I graded out as “5X5” which was defined as an *Autocratic Missionary*. They never knew anyone who achieved that result.

NOTE: At approximately 5:30 A.M., the second morning of the Retreat, the Fire Alarms went off in the building where we were staying. Due to the fact that I possessed an obsession for organization and planning, I woke up and felt the door to my room (which was on the first floor), for any heat.

Sensing no immediate threat, I dressed and left the building. When I came outside, all of my fellow managers and instructors were standing in the rain, looking at me in total disbelief. They were wrapped in blankets and bath towels and in their pajamas or underwear, and with bare feet or flip-flops. When I left the building, I appeared in my business suit, tie, shined shoes, raincoat and umbrella. I received the brunt of various, not so favorable, comments for the rest

of my time there. At the end of the Retreat, the team of instructors said to me, “Bill, you have been the behavioral experience of our working careers.” I took that as a compliment.

In **1995**, I was invited to attend another “Management Retreat” at the Ritz Carlton Resort Hotel, Naples, Florida. Though I did sense some slight similarities, I was not conscious of the fact that I was undergoing a second “Self Style Synthesis”. 10 years after the first one. To the amazement of the three (3) Behavioral Psychologists who were conducting these sessions, I graded out AGAIN as “5x5” which was then defined as a ***Compassionate Dictator***. They only knew of one person who ever achieved that result before.

That person was ME!

Chapter Five ***Allview Court Memories***

Mary's BFFs

One memorable day, Mary was flying home to Philadelphia to help her father care for her mother. While sitting in the Passenger Boarding Area of the airport, she started to converse with another woman who was seated near her. Another *coincidence* was about to be born. MaryAnn Dowd turned out to be originally from the Kensington & Allegheny Avenues' area of Philly. Mary knew that Bill Lang and Renee Cox came from that same area and MaryAnn knew of them. Upon further comparison of notes, Mary found out that MaryAnn's husband, Bill, graduated from Northeast Catholic High School for Boys, a year ahead of me. From that day forward, Mary added another *Best Friend* to her growing list. MaryAnn was soon right up there with Betty McLaughlin, a very close Best Friend from our High School days in Philly. We had our own:

"Three Amigos"



Andy's Warning

Barbara took Andy to the grocery store when he was just a toddler and had him riding in a grocery cart. Finished with their shopping, it was time to check out. They were in line, which was formed behind a very big black woman. Now, it is important to note that Andy's favorite TV shows, at that time, had to do with "Construction Vehicles". He loved to watch the Bull Dozers and Heavy Duty Trucks work on construction sites, both on TV and in real life.

Pagers were very popular at the time, and as fate would have it, the very big black woman's Pager went off. BEEP, BEEP – BEEP, BEEP – could be heard very clearly around the area of the cash registers where a number of people were waiting to check out. Hearing that familiar sound, Andy hollered out, "Watch out Mommy, she's backing up." Needless to say, Barbara needed to offer her apologies to the woman, but, could not keep from smiling when she did so. She was embarrassed but entertained by her *creative and imaginative little boy*.

Barber of Westerville

Andy was getting ready to start Kindergarten at Saint Paul's Elementary School. While visiting Mary and me, the question came up as to whether or not he needed a haircut. I owned a complete Barber's Kit so I suggested that I could give him a haircut and save his parents the expense of going to a professional Barber. With some consternation, Barbara agreed to let me do it. Boy, was that a mistake! I sorta kinda messed up the haircut.

When I was through, Andy felt his head and rushed down to the bathroom to see himself in the mirror. The next thing we heard was a loud scream and he came crying back to the family. As soon as Kristen saw her brother and heard his screaming, she joined the action and started to cry and scream too. When Mary and Barbara saw what I did to Andy, they did not cry. They did not scream. They were too pissed to react that way. I wanted to try to "make it better" but no one trusted me to be able to do so, especially Andy. Barbara took Andy to a Barber, as soon as possible, to straighten out my mess as best he could and Andy went to school, wearing a hat. Apparently Andy wasn't buying that..

"Bald Kids Are Cute!"

When Billy was a Jock

While in Westerville South High School, Billy participated in Swimming and Cross Country Track. He loved both sports but he really liked to run. His problem was, he usually was the last one to complete his races. Nevertheless, he would always finish, regardless of weather conditions. On cold, wintery days, the Cross Country Team would finish their practice runs, arrive back at the school, take their showers and then have to wait for Billy to show up. The rule was that no one could go home until all runners completed the sessions and were safely accounted for.

At the end of the Cross Country season they had their Sports Banquet. Awards were dispensed to exceptional athletes who earned special recognition. Billy was surprised to hear his name called out and when he accepted his reward, he was asked to open the package in front of everyone in attendance. Low and Behold, the team presented him with a HUGE, red velvet Jock Strap. He was told that anyone who spent as much time out in the cold, day after day, and persevered like he did, deserved to keep somethings of value as warm as possible. He accepted his recognition award with heartfelt gratitude.

Torpedo Away...

I should mention that for 10 years, Mary's father (Guy) lived with us in Westerville. He was legally blind but did possess minimal peripheral vision in both eyes.

NOTE: He was also known to possess a very impatient nature and always had to do things very quickly.

One day, we experienced a clog in the kitchen sink. I put the stopper in the side of the sink where the Garbage Disposal was located and filled the sink with hot water. I asked Guy to stand by the sink while I went into the crawlspace to attempt to unclog the PVC pipe that ran from the kitchen sink, through the crawlspace, to the sewer line. The idea was for Guy to pull the stopper and turn on the Garbage Disposal, at the same time, when I told him to do so.

NOTE: The idea was, the force of the water, being pushed down the disposal, would clean out the pipe and remove the clog.

Once in the crawlspace, I cut the 2" PVC pipe and ran a hand snake up the pipe towards the kitchen sink. I worked the snake back and forth, back and forth and finally felt the clog work loose. I had an empty five gallon bucket with me, to catch the clogged material when it was washed through the pipe, so it would not spray all over the crawlspace gravel and be a real mess to clean up.

I guess Guy heard me snaking the pipe so he decided to arbitrarily pull the stopper and turn on the disposal BEFORE I was ready for him to do it. There I was, on my knees, holding the PVC pipe with both hands when I heard the sound of the disposal and felt the cut pipe starting to shake very hard in my hands.

“Oh my God”, I screamed as a foot long missile of chopped up spaghetti, eggs shells, and miscellaneous other food fragments came firing through the PVC pipe and hit me square in the chest. I never had a chance to grab the bucket that was an arm’s length away from where I was kneeling.

The projected “Torpedo” had sufficient enough force to push me back on my butt and knock the wind out of me. I was livid with anger and swore that I would NEVER allow my loving father-in-law to help me again.

NOTE: There were five other occasions when Guy did things that were deemed hazardous. He placed us and himself in jeopardy and we were beginning to feel like prisoners in our own home. We could no longer trust him to be home alone. His actions finally brought us to the conclusion that we had to place him in a nearby “Assisted Living” facility called Outlook Manor.

At first, he was a little apprehensive as he truly believed in his heart that we needed him to take care of us. After a short period of time, he began to love his new home and we visited him often and took him on trips and home for dinner on many occasions. Everyone was happy during that period of time, prior to his passing at age 91.

Memorable Parties

Father Bill Faustner was being assigned to St. Paul’s as one of our new parish priests. A welcoming party was planned at the home of Jim and Nancy Grote, the **Founders of Donatos Pizza**. Their residence was located in a beautiful area of Hoover Reservoir known as The Lake of the Woods.

On the day of the party. John Ciaciura, the big brother I never had, was entertaining his sister Martha who was visiting him from Chicago. John apparently had a few Martinis with Martha, so Pat, his wife, called Mary with a request that I act as the designated driver to and from the Grote’s Party. Mary and I drove over to the Ciaciura’s and Pat gave me the keys to their Van. John felt that he could drive but I convinced him that it was in his best interest to let me chauffeur him, his wife and his sister, Martha.

Upon arrival at the Grote’s, it was evident that there was going to be a large crowd of invited guests. We were also advised, in advance, to bring our bathing suits as the Grote’s had a large indoor pool to enjoy as a party activity. The home really exceeded our expectations. It was huge and very well designed and furnished. Their kitchen had a “Dumb Waiter” set-up that connected to the Indoor Pool on the lower level of the property.

They could keep the pool area well stocked with food and drinks all evening, by sending down what was needed, directly from the kitchen. The party was well underway when the accumulation of Martinis finally caught up with John Ciaciura. John was in his bathing suit and thoroughly took advantage of the swimming that was available to everyone wanting to get wet. However, about half the couples in attendance did not plan on swimming in the pool that evening. That did not matter to John. When he emerged from the pool, he walked over to the bar and unexpectedly began pushing people, who were fully dressed, into the pool. When he saw that some of the people were NOT amused, he was quick to apologize and help them out of the pool. When they were out of the pool and thinking they were over their initial shock, John attempted to throw them back into the pool. He actually chased people around the pool in his endeavors. Our friends may have really gotten pissed if it were anyone other than JOHN who committed those bold acts of obvious humor. The party was a success, even though a few participants wound up a little soggier than expected.

On another occasion, my dear friend, Jack Ruscilli, the owner of **Ruscilli Construction and Reality, Inc.**, invited Mary and I to attend the OPEN HOUSE Party for the newly built COSI (Center of Science and Industry) in downtown Columbus, Ohio. His company did the construction of the site. The party occurred the night before the center was actually opened to the public. All the center's activities were manned and made available to the party guests. We had a chance to experience the many various, very interesting, unique and thrilling events that would astound the public for many years to come. When we were met by Jack Ruscilli, he presented us each with a bottle of his own brand name "Ruscilli Wine" and a copy of the book that he wrote himself on the "Ruscilli Family Traditions". The food was top shelf and the fun was unlimited. Even though Mary and I were among hundreds of other guests, we were made to feel special on that festive evening.

NOTE: I/we attended many such parties, hosted by Jack Ruscilli which included participation in such things as riding in a Hot Air Balloon and playing rounds of golf at the Muirfield Country Club when Jack sponsored annual SCRAMBLES for SYNTAX Charitable Golf Outings.

We liked each other very much!

Planked...

Our crowd had a wonderful habit of celebrating any occasion that meant we could get together to enjoy each other's company. One such time had us all together at Plank's Restaurant in downtown Columbus, Ohio. I think we were celebrating somebody's Birthday. I don't remember for sure. Anyway, as fate would have it, there was an Ohio State Barbershop Quartet Competition going on earlier that day and a number of the competitors decided to have dinner at Plank's at the same time we were there. One after another, they got up and entertained the customers having dinner and they sounded great, with their harmonizing voices.

At a table next to us, there were two of four of a QUARTET eating their dinner and we overheard them saying that there were sorry that they were missing two singers as the two who were there wanted to entertain the crowd just like all the other Quartets in attendance.

Now, it is important to mention that Jack Will and Mary Mondillo were the two members of our group that couldn't carry a note, even if they each had their own wheelbarrow. Having had a few alcoholic beverages and being in their usual, playful moods, Jack and Mary volunteered to fill out the foursome needed to compete again, in the restaurant, as a Quartet. The two **actual** Quarter singers had no idea what they were in for, but agreed to give it a try.

I don't know what was funnier; the faces on the actual Quartet singers when they heard the voices of Jack and Mary, or, the actual sound of Jack and Mary who were so loudly out of tune and they made your blood run cold. There was no stopping them and what made it all the more humorous was the fact that Jack and Mary really thought they sounded good. The good sports agreed to one encore performance and then politely exited the stage area, laughing all the way back to their tables. It was a night to remember by: Bill and Mary Mondillo – Jack and Kathy Will – John and Pat Ciaciura – Bernie and Diane Austing – Glen and Joyce Daugherty and Dave and Mary Jane Insul.

Pranked...

I had a daily ritual of taking a bath, usually after dinner. (I loved to soak in a tub of the hottest water that I could stand, as I found it very relaxing.) Earlier in the day, Mary was intending to scrub the tub with a white Clorox Cleanser.

She sprinkled the cleanser all over the tub and the phone rang. Naturally, she went to answer the phone and then totally forgot to go back to finish scrubbing the tub.

I came home from work, had my bottle of Genesee Crème Ale, ate my dinner, and then went upstairs to run my bath. I thought I would try a little Bubble Bath that evening, so I dropped some into the hot running water to create the effect I wanted. (I never noticed the cleanser in the tub.)

I got into the tub and slid down into the water to soak, the bubbles were up to my chin. I started to use the soap and sensed a feeling of “gritty” on my skin. I called down to Mary and asked if she knew what was going on.

She came up to the bathroom and then started to laugh out loud when she realized I was bathing in a tub filled with cleanser. When she told me what had happened, I was pissed.

I drained the tub, turned on the shower, rinsed off with clean water, got out of the tub and demanded that she wash the cleanser out of my hair. I knelt down on the floor mat beside the tub and she proceeded to use her fingernails to scrub the hell out of my head.

I told her that she needed to take it easy and she said, “I am only trying to get the WHITE out of your hair (I thought, from the cleanser.) She then apologized and said, “Oh, that’s your Grey Hair” (Not the cleanser), and she thought THAT was hilarious.

The next day, I went to work and as I was walking through the office, one of my employees asked me, “What’s that white line running across the back of your head?” I felt the back of my head, sensed nothing, and then went to the Men’s Room to see what I could see.

NOTE: Let me tell you, there’s no way you can see the back of your head while looking in the mirrors. I know, I tried! Zack Hess, Maintenance, came into the Restroom and I immediately asked him to tell me how serious the white line was, going across the back of my head. He said, “Bill, you must be Nuts. There’s no line there.”

Now I was confused and decided to challenge my employee. When I walked back into the general bullpen area where my entire staff was “supposedly” working, there came a loud familiar voice from the telephone speaker.

It was my loving wife, Mary. She said, “GOTCHA!” Apparently, she had called ahead, while I was on my way to work, and set up the whole thing with my people. Needless to say, I had to laugh at myself for falling for that prank. I did wonder how Mary got so many people involved.

Could it be that I was a victim of my own Sense of Humor?

McGraw-Hill Education

Changes in company ownership, caused creation of my new position as **Senior Manager, Administrative Services/Inventory Management**. In my new role, I was responsible for **Financial Accounting, which included Operating and Capital Budgets, Purchasing, Facilities, Safety, and Maintenance and Inventory Management of over 70,000,000 various types of educational materials. (We were 99.8% inventory accurate in Bulk Storage and 94% inventory accurate in Loose Pick.)**

NOTE: We never had to shut down the operations for purposes of taking inventory. We always satisfied the requirements of both internal and external auditors.

I was the **Y2K Officer** for total Distribution and responsible for a **360,000 sq. ft. Expansion Project in DeSoto, Texas** as well as local expansion from **250,000 sq. ft. with 50 employees, to 630,000 sq. ft. with 500 plus employees. I designed and wrote the Operations Manuals for five (5) Distribution Centers, making up the total Distribution Network for McGraw-Hill Education.**

I also played an instrumental role in traveling to evaluate future acquisitions for the corporation. I truly had a very diversified, challenging and rewarding career.

Surprise, Surprise!!!

On the day of my Retirement, April 21, 2003, Mary and I received a call to immediately come to the hospital. We found out, for the first time, that our daughter Bethanne was having a baby. We honestly never knew she was pregnant. Beth was very careful in hiding her condition, by always wearing loose fitting SCRUBS whenever she was around us.

We held our beautiful granddaughter, Kayla, for the first time, and, I have to admit, I was a little surprised when Beth took Kayla and started to breastfeed her in front of us. She made it seem so natural. Beth was so happy and content with her first born, in front of her parents. My beautiful little girl was holding her beautiful little girl. I was truly surprised, again!

Little did I/we know what was coming in the near future

Retirement

In September, 2003, we found out about Mary's Bone Cancer. I had no idea how timely my decision was to begin my Retirement in April, 2003. We had two and a half years of quality time together, before her health began to slip.

The second two and a half years we had left, I tried my very best to love, care and comfort the love of my life. No one knew that I was also in mourning at the same time. I/we knew what was inevitable.

On the sixth trip to the Ohio State James Cancer Hospital for needed pain management, I was especially fearful. I sat beside Mary all night, wide awake, watching and praying for her (us); harder than I ever prayed before. She appeared to be sleeping comfortably and I was so thankful for that.

Mary was aware of the serious injury to my back and the fact that I would have great difficulty in continuing to care for her at home. She knew she would be going to a Hospice Care Center directly from the hospital.

At approximately 8 a.m., the morning of March 1, 2008, I got up from my chair to moisten her lips and give her a kiss. She looked peaceful and more beautiful than ever. I returned to the bedside chair and dozed off.

At 8:10 a.m., I woke up, angry at myself for falling asleep. When I gazed at my Mary, I knew she was gone. I immediately called for the Nurse, who, in turn, called for the doctor on duty. At 8:15 a.m., the telephone rang. It was my daughter, Barbara.

She said to me, "How is Mom?" I replied, "Your Mother is gone." Without hesitation, my daughter asked me, "Dad, did you fall asleep?" Surprised at the question, I responded, "I might have dozed off for a minute or two. Why do you ask me such a question?" Barbara then said, "Mom always said that she waited for you to fall asleep. When you SNORED, she knew it was OK for her to go to sleep. Dad, you SNORED!" I will never forget that moment of truth.

I was heartbroken, for losing my loving wife, and, at the same time, relieved that her suffering was over. So peaceful, so beautiful....I found some degree of comfort in knowing she was in a happy, better place.

NOTE: At Mary's viewing, mourning was replaced with her family and friends celebrating her life, with Wine and Cheese, because, that is what I knew she would want. Mary is currently beside her Dad (Lawrence T. (Guy) Connor) at Resurrection Cemetery. She is still supporting all the significant events of the rest of my life and I truly believe that Mary is still with me/us TODAY.

NOTE: The one time that Donna and I got into an argument over something stupid, in the office at our Condo, the Treadmill, beside the desk started to run, on its own. We had done nothing to turn it on. As soon as I said, “Mary does not want us to argue”, the Treadmill shut itself off.

THAT, MY FAMILY, IS A TRUE STORY!

Coincidence? I sorta, kinda, don't think so.

Mary knew that I had undergone 51 **kneecap injections of SYNVISC** in each kneecap, to delay replacement of both knees, while I was caring for her. She also made me promise that, when she was gone, I would start to take serious care of *myself*. Mary was also aware of the fact that I would probably require back surgery to relieve the pain in my spine from lifting her whenever necessary. She also knew that I would have to find someone to love, like I loved her, as that was/is my nature. I gave that idea a lot of thought and for awhile, dismissed it as a possibility.

During each week, I kept myself as busy as possible. In the evenings, and on the weekends, I really felt the loneliness and wanted some sort of companionship. I just wanted to go to a movie, go out to dinner, attend a social event, with a female companion. Mostly, I guess that I just did not want to be pitied by anyone for being a widower. I had no concept of what life had in store for me, but I did know that I was not to be alone.

Buckeye Coasties

I learned of an organization called the “Buckeye Coasties”. They were men who served in the United States Coast Guard and lived within the boundaries of the State of Ohio. I joined this elite club of veterans and thoroughly enjoyed our Luncheons and Weekend Retreats together.

I became somewhat of an activist in that most of my shipmates lived in northern Ohio. I wanted to start a “Central Ohio Chapter” of the Buckeye Coasties. I had an opportunity to do so when I attended a Veterans’ Day function at my granddaughter Kayla’s Elementary School. All branches of the Armed Forces were represented. At one point, they began to recognize the Veterans in attendance by playing their individual Service Anthems. After honoring the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines, they acted as though they were done. The school overlooked the Coast Guard and one of my “Navy” Veteran shipmates raised his hand and asked to hear the Navy Anthem again, in honor of his Coast Guard shipmate in the audience. I

really felt neglected, in behalf of my branch of the Armed Forces. The school was not aware that Semper Paratus, the Coast Guard Anthem even existed. I spoke with the school's Principal, after the ceremonies, and she promised me that the oversight would NEVER happen again.

Subsequently, I was interviewed by the Columbus Dispatch and they put an article in their newspaper. They emphasized the dilemma of the United States Coast Guard in NOT having its Service Anthem played whenever other branches of the Armed Forces were being recognized and honored.

The article became known to the Commandant of the United States Coast Guard and I received a telephone call from Washington, D. C., expressing sincere gratitude for my concerns. They wanted to follow up with me on the matter but could not do so, due to my failing health issues.

I am very proud of what I did and feel that every time Semper Paratus is now played, I just may have had something to do about that.

Veterans of Coast Guard want their due

By Jeb Phillips
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Bill Mondillo sums up the plight of a Coast Guard veteran in central Ohio with a little story about himself.

Last year, he was at a Veterans' Day event at his granddaughter's elementary school. The school played *Anchors Aweigh* to celebrate the Navy people there. The song that begins "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli ..." celebrated the Marines.

The Army and the Air Force got their songs, too. But no song was played for the Coast Guard.

Hold on, you might say after decades of hearing only those four service anthems: Is there a Coast Guard song?

"Of course there is!" an exasperated Mondillo told the ill-informed reporter who had asked.

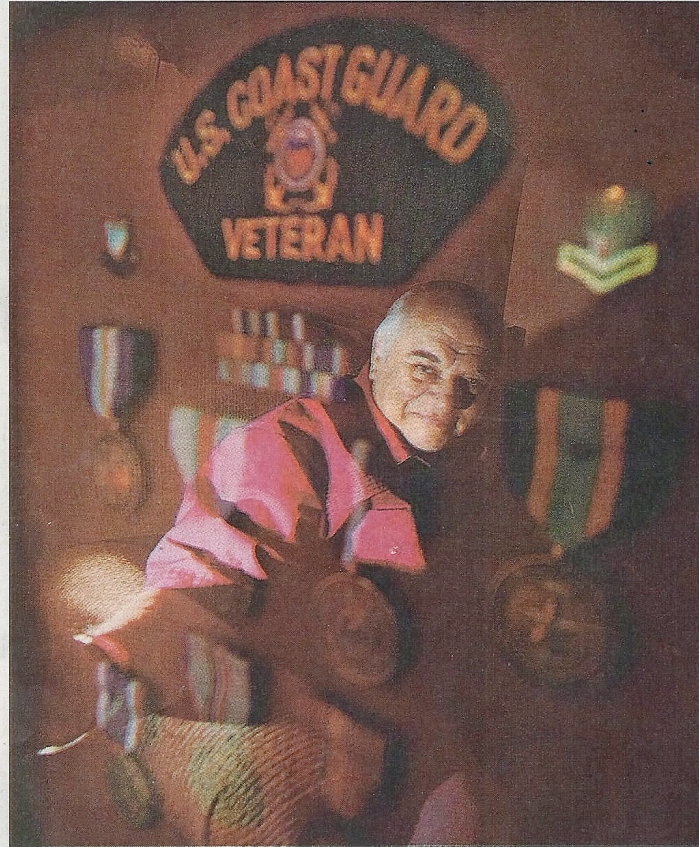
There's not a whole lot of coast to guard around Columbus. Army, Air Force, Marine and even a few Navy reserve members make news here when they deploy overseas. Not the Coast Guard.

Mondillo, 69, of Westerville, was in the Coast Guard from 1962 to 1966. He joined because he was "drafted" (the military still inducted people, even though it was between wars), and he was having trouble finding a job.

He said he would like to see his anthem played and his service represented in veterans parades. He wants to find other Coast Guard veterans in central Ohio. So he's starting a group here called the Buckeye Coasties.

There's already a group with the same name that lives mostly on the Internet and in an annual retreat. An Akron offshoot has breakfast meetings once a month.

"Most of the (Buckeye Coasties) members are in the northern part of the state," said John Estep, 75, who served in the Coast



U.S. Coast Guard veteran Bill Mondillo hopes to find others from his service in central Ohio to bring awareness of that branch of the armed services.

NEAL C. LAURON | DISPATCH

Guard from 1955 to 1959 and is the organizer of the online group. He lives in Norwood, in southwestern Ohio.

One of the Coast Guard's nine districts is based in Cleveland. It covers the Great Lakes area from Duluth, Minn., to upstate New York, said Petty Officer Levi Read, a Coast Guard spokesman in Cleveland.

There are more than 700 active-duty and reserve Coast Guard members in Ohio. Except for a safety detachment on the Ohio

River in Cincinnati — actually part of the district based in New Orleans — almost all are in northern Ohio. There is a recruiting office in Columbus.

Coast Guard members serve everywhere and settle everywhere, however. Mondillo is from Philadelphia, served in New York and came to central Ohio as a civilian after a company consolidation. Estep, from Kentucky, served in Alabama and the Virgin Islands.

Ed Hutchinson, 70 and

one of the Akron-area coasties, served in Japan and Hawaii. The Coast Guard is best known for its domestic work, but it's "all over the world," he said.

A Port Clinton group returned earlier this month from an Arabian Sea deployment, where it provided security for a naval base.

The most-common refrain from coasties who find one another on the Internet, or who find their way to the Akron breakfasts, is "I didn't know there were other Coast

U.S. Coast Guard facts

► Traces its history to 1790, when the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service was founded to enforce maritime law

► A part of the Department of Homeland Security (it's the only armed force that doesn't fall under the Department of Defense)

► The lead federal maritime agency for law enforcement, incident response, homeland security and disaster management

► 41,598 active-duty members

► 7,997 reservists

► 31,419 volunteer auxiliary members

IN OHIO

► 430 active duty

► 278 reservists

► 790 auxiliary members

► Units and stations in Cleveland, Toledo, Ashtabula, Fairport Harbor, Lorain, Marblehead, Port Clinton and Cincinnati

Source: U.S. Coast Guard

Guard members here," Hutchinson said.

Mondillo wants to spread the word. And maybe the larger Internet community of Buckeye Coasties will become known to some younger veterans.

"It would be great if we could get some young blood in there," he said.

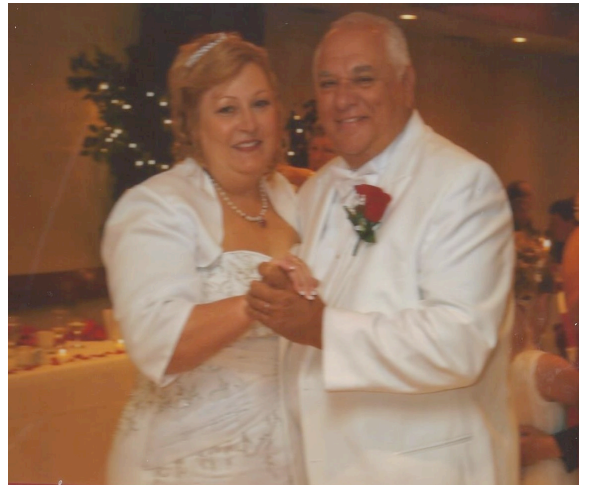
He's already making a lot of progress in making his service better known. He has been invited to his granddaughter's school for a Veterans Day program.

He has been promised that *Semper Paratus*, the Coast Guard anthem, will be played.

To contact Bill Mondillo, email him at wmondill@yahoo.com.
Jeb.phillips@dispatch.com

Chapter Six

Starting Over Together



SINGLESNET.COM was brought to my attention. I got on the Internet and entered my Profile Information. At first, I got little to no response. I was asked to submit photos of myself to satisfy the curiosity of a couple of possibly interested women. I chose one photo of me in a business suit and two photos of me standing beside Showgirls; once in Las Vegas and once while on a Carnival Cruise. I was shooting for the “Fun Loving Guy” perspective.

In a couple of days, I had 91 “interested” women responding with Flirts and Comments. WOW! I hit a bonanza.





I guess you could say that I culled the herd down to three. (Coincidence? I sorta, kinda think so.) They were all Blonde, Blue Eyed, Nurses.

One of them turned out to be just an on-line CHAT friend, who enjoyed asking my advice about dating other men she might choose to get to know. We had fun, just conversing over the internet. The second date I went on turned out to be a waste of time and the third date was with Donna.

NOTE: I put a travel limitation of 50 miles in my Profile. One of the Nurses, Donna, happened to live in Lancaster, Ohio which is 48 miles from Westerville. Donna was a single mother of four, grandmother of eight and She had over 20 years of working experience in Nursing Home Care as a Nurse's Aide and then as a Licensed Practical Nurse.

After weeks of on-line dialogue, we found we had an unbelievable number of similar areas of interest that seemed to make us very compatible. We then shared home telephone numbers so we could get to know each other better, on a more personal basis, off-line. After a few more months of telephone contact, we finally decided to meet on our first date.

We met in the parking lot just outside of the Anthony Thomas Store in Westerville. I was very nervous. When she parked beside my car, we both got out of our vehicles to finally meet, face-to-face. I could not believe how attractive she was. As she walked towards me, she put her arms around my neck and kissed me. I was shocked and said, "I was not expecting that!" She responded, "Well, I knew we would both be wondering what our first kiss would be like, so, I just thought we would get it out of the way." Needless to say, our first date was truly memorable. It turned out to be the beginning of our courtship. We just didn't know it at the time



(310 lbs.)

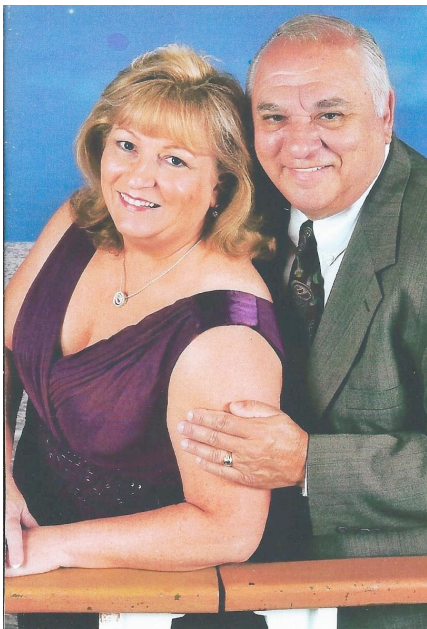
(Long Hair)

2008 - I scheduled my first back surgery (Laminectomy) a few months later and when I went to the Westerville Rehab Center after the surgery, I had my heart attack. It was touch and go for awhile.

I needed to recover from the Back Surgery before they would attempt the Heart Surgery. During that period of recovery from the Back Surgery and Heart Attack, I asked Donna to move in with me. After lengthy discussions, she said she would, as soon as she quit her job, so she could devote all of her time taking care of me. Her love and support (Mary's too) and that of my family, helped me get through this sketchy time of my life.

2009 - Now it was time to schedule my four-way open heart surgery, followed by weeks of additional physical therapy. I had complications develop whereby excess fluid kept developing in my chest cavity. I had it drained by insertion of a large syringe twice and with the third drain, they inserted a drainage tube. During each of the three sessions, they removed more than 2 liters of fluid. After the tube drained the fluid, a dry compound was injected into my chest, to fill the void and not allow any more fluid to develop. Subsequent to my recovery, we went on a Carnival Caribbean Cruise and Donna was unaware that I was setting her up to receive my proposal of marriage. After dinner, one evening, I tried to get down on one knee to propose. I did it, but after her acceptance of the TWO Engagement Rings I gave her, she had to help me back up to my feet. We had champagne and a cake that said **“Starting Over Together”** inscribed on it.

Back in our cabin were chocolate strawberries and a bottle of wine to celebrate. I can't help it if I am just an Italian Romantic!



2010 - A few months later, while making Wedding Plans, I developed a bout with MRSA of the blood. I had a fever of 105 degrees. I was confused and rushed to the hospital. I underwent Kidney Failure and was placed on Hemodialysis for five days. I was touch and go, again. After my release from the hospital, I went through eight weeks (16 Sessions) of chest catheter infusions of very potent Antibiotics. After my recovery from MRSA. I then had my left knee replaced and six months later, my right knee was replaced.

Meeting the Family

Donna wanted me to meet her son John and his family. We stopped to pick up some groceries. Donna was making an Apple Pie to take to John's house. It was his favorite treat from his Mom. While walking around the store, I saw where the apples were located and called Donna to get her attention. She placed a bag of apples in her cart and not knowing one apple from another, I thought of just being romantic, so, I said, "Those apples remind me of you". (I was thinking of the sign I saw which said "Golden Delicious".) Donna gave me a weird look and said,

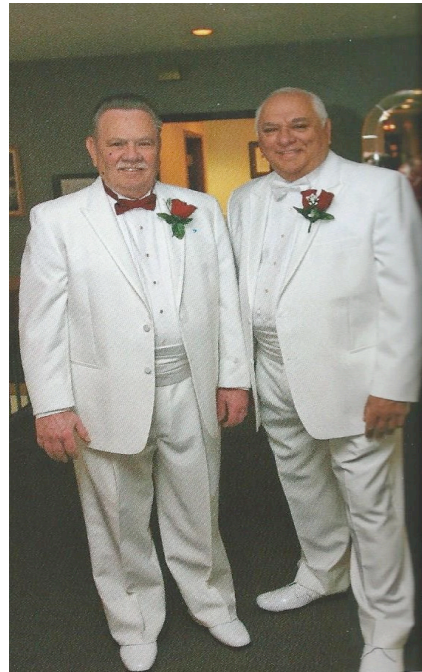
"So, I remind you of GRANNY SMITH!"

We both saw the levity in my stupidity.

Our Wedding Day – May 8, 2010

Father Ayotte, the same priest who performed the marriage ceremony for Jerrod and Bethanne, presided over and blessed my second marriage to **Donna K. (Compston) Mondillo**. Mary Hill, Donna's oldest daughter, was her Maid-of-Honor and Joseph (Joe) Sellan was my Best Man. Donna's two other daughters, Kathryn and Teresa, did the Readings, and Brooke, her granddaughter, was our beautiful Flower Girl.

NOTE: We had Bagpipes leading Donna down the aisle with her son John and the Scottish Bagpiper, in Kilts, then led the two of



us out of the Chapel, after the ceremony. The hall for the Wedding Reception was adjacent to the Chapel. Everything was covered in White with large Red Bows. We had 120 family members and friends in attendance for our memorable Wedding Day.. When it was time to perform the first Wedding Dance by the Bride and Groom, Donna and I unveiled decorated Walkers and used them to come around each end of the Head Table. Our guests could see something printed on a mounted placard. On Donna's Walker, "Pre-Medicare" and on my Walker, "Post-Medicare.

In addition, on Donna's Walker was a puppy and on my Walker was a little red devil. Both figures played music and sang "Do You Love Me?" simultaneously During the reception, our immediate families, numbering



40 on the dance floor at Sanese Caterers, joined in doing the *Chicken Dance* together. It was a planned bonding ritual that all the other guests/friends particularly enjoyed as much as we did

. We danced under a Ballroom Sparkling Ball that dispensed Bubbles over the Dance Floor. The food was excellent and everyone had a wonderful time. I gave Donna the marriage ceremony that she never had before. We were/are a damn good looking couple.

NOTE: Joe and Joanne Sellan were ready to celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary so we delayed going on our

Honeymoon until we could join them on a Carnival Caribbean Cruise. We had a wonderful time together.

Riding Unusual Amusements and Eating Unusual Foods were always favorite pastimes for Donna and me. We went on a Pirate Ship cruise in the Caribbean, with a Beach Party as part of that trip. The sand was so loose on the ocean bottom close to shore that Donna had to grab both cheeks of my ass and push hard to help me get out of the sand in the water and back up on to the dry sand on the beach. Our Pirate Ship mates got a kick out of that scene.



We took a Submarine tour of the ocean bottom at 100' down, a Cable Car ride in and over the canopy of jungle foliage, up the mountains and down into the misty valleys..

We took a Helicopter ride over the Disney properties in Orlando, Florida. We loved the thrill of various Roller Coasters and Space Mountain in Tomorrow Land at the Magic Kingdom.. The only ride we never had the opportunity to enjoy was an Air Boat ride through the Swamps of Florida.



We always speak of the times we were drinking cold beer and eating our huge Turkey Legs while walking around EPCOT.

The Canolis from the country of Italy, at EPCOT, were pretty damn good too!

We thoroughly enjoyed eating Alligator ribs and nuggets at Gator Land.

Donna's favorite was Escargot, with two Lobsters, at one of our dinners, on each of our Caribbean Cruises.

NOTE: She would get a double order of snails whenever they were available.

The Maple Tree Incident

One day, in an attempt to be a good neighbor, I cut the Washburn's lawn. I knew that Chuck was over Bethany's house helping her and Brandon with some window installations.

I was using our sit-down mower and when I ran up the embankment and near the big Maple Tree on their front lawn, the front wheels of our sit-down mower locked on to an underground root and the next thing I knew, I was riding up the trunk of the tree and then flipped backward with the mower slamming me into the sidewalk concrete.

I was pinned under the mower and a neighbor, who lived down the street, saw the billowing black smoke and came to my rescue. At the time, I did not realize the damage I did to my back.

2012 - 16 months later, I had my second Laminectomy (Spinal Back Surgery). The surgeon replaced all the existing hardware with larger hardware and more screws. One screw, it turned out, was placed in a crushed vertebrae and was not very secure in its placement. When that screw moved, I was in excruciating pain. I began with pain medications that proved to be insufficient and ineffective.

I then went to a Westerville Pain Management Clinic and they reached Maximum Protocol with me and couldn't help me any longer.

Still in pain, I followed up with another Pain Management Clinic that gave me a Back Brace and some other elixirs of pain medications that led to my bout of Drug Toxicity. I wound up in Mount Carmel East Hospital for 31 days with a number of those days spent in the Intensive Care Unit. Upon release from the hospital, I lost 70 lbs. (310 to 240). I could not walk without the assistance of a Walker on Wheels.

2013 - I then completed six months of Physical (Pool/Land) Therapy with some Occupational Therapy. I went from 88% handicapped to 18% handicapped. I was then able to transfer to/from a vehicle, dress, shower, eat at the kitchen table, play cards, travel when necessary (Doctor's Visits, Restaurants and an occasional Social Event); I was relatively independent. I even became capable of driving when absolutely necessary. However, Donna still had her hands full, caring for me like she does.

2015 - Repetitive lab results disclosed that my kidney failure was inevitable. Donna was experiencing knee problems, so, with the handwriting on the wall, we made the big decision to downsize and sell 558 Allview Court, Westerville, OH 43081. My home for 37 years was placed on the market and we began our search for the perfect Condominium.

We found it at 5932 Hickory Brook Way, Columbus, OH 43213. Our Condo was/is already 100% Handicapped Accessible and was move-in ready. The location could not be more convenient to every place of importance to us. Our purchase date was June 1, 2013, even though we lived in our Condo beginning in December, 2012. The local Fire Station is about a quarter mile away. My Dialysis Center and Mount Carmel East Hospital is only a half mile away. We are located mid-way between Broad Street and Main Street and three quarters of a mile from I-270 Highway and a couple of miles away from Route 70 (East and West) and Route 71 (North and South). At this writing, our 2013 Honda Accord (Purchased NEW), has 14,000 miles on it and it will be four years old in February, 2017.

NOTE: We don't have far to go to get what we need!

Chapter Seven

Life with Dialysis

The evolution of my kidney failure finally led to the decision to begin Peritoneal Dialysis at home. I went through the necessary surgery to install the stomach catheter and I completed the training that allowed me to conduct manual dialysis, four times daily, in my own bedroom. My start date was November 17, 2014. After a few months of practice and additional training, I graduated to the Overnight Peritoneum Dialysis Cycle Machine.

My days were then free and my nights saw me tethered to the cycle machine and also to my C-PAP machine. I thanked God for my Trapeze, hanging over my bed, which enabled me to move around without too much back pain. Thanks to Donna's love, care, and support, my life was tolerable.

The worst imaginable thing happened when I developed Peritonitis. I cannot explain the severity of the pain I felt. I considered it was like a woman going through labor.

I was taken to the hospital to have my Peritoneum stomach catheter removed and a chest catheter installed. I went from one operating room to another simultaneously. I then was immediately taken for my first Hemodialysis session on August 15, 2015.

That was followed by another session later in the day, and a third session the next morning. In total, they removed over 21 pounds of fluid from my body and I was finally relieved of pain and could breathe normally again. My transition to the routine of going to the Fresenius Dialysis Center on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday began.

NOTE: It is important to mention that a Kidney Transplant was not a reasonable option for me. The doctors believed that due to my age (72 years old), and all the trauma my body had gone through from so many major surgeries, over a short period of time, I was too much of a risk for transplant surgery. They felt that I would not survive another major surgery. We had no choice but to agree with that decision.

A few months passed and I became eligible for the installation of my Fistula in my upper right arm. Surgery again! I continued to use my chest catheter while my Fistula was given opportunity to mature. A couple of months later, we began using the smallest of three gauges of needles to transition to the total use of my Fistula over my chest catheter. When I finally completed three sessions of Hemodialysis using the No. 15 Gauge Needles (2), I became a candidate for the removal of my chest catheter. Out it came!

I was then considered to be a veteran Hemodialysis Patient!

OH, HELL NO!

J. R. (John Reynolds) is my best Dialysis buddy and he sits in the chair to my immediate left, during all of my Dialysis sessions. He is a black brother of mine and we refer to each other as “The Salt and Pepper Comedy Duet of the Dialysis Center”.

One day, J.R. thought he lost his Cell Phone. He panicked as it was a new phone and it cost him close to \$800.00. After a great deal of time and effort was expended trying to locate the damn phone, one of the Techs went out to his car and saw it laying on the console of his Lincoln Continental. I told Donna what had happened that day and she had the brilliant idea to create a GAG GIFT to help J. R. to know where his Cell Phone was, at all times. Donna took one of my Paisley Ties and cut it down to make a Cell Phone Carrying Case. It had a “V” flap, with a piece of Velcro to hold it down. She affixed a BELL to the flap as a “Security System” so J.R. could hear it tingle if someone tried to take it. Using her sewing machine, she then took an adjustable strap from one of our Casino Slot Machine Playing Cards and attached it to the case. Using my Label Maker Machine, I made a printed label for the outside of the case which said JOHN REYNOLDS and another label for the inside with the letters, “J. R.”. I then wrote up an Instruction Card for the inside of the case which said,

**“I belong to J.R. – If I get lost, AGAIN,
please call my wife, Karen at 614-XXX-XXXX.**

Thank You!”

I wrapped the Gag Gift in blue striped paper and put a card on the outside which said, **“TO: KING J. R. – Our Royal Pain in the Ass”**

The next day, when J. R. arrived at the Dialysis Center, he reluctantly opened his gift and, at first, wasn’t sure what it was that he was looking at. I told him what Donna made for him and its purpose. He laughed and tried to put the strap around his waist. That didn’t work, so, Lonnie, our Tech, adjusted the strap so he could put it over his head and hang it by his side, kind of like a Miniature Man Purse. He stood there, in front of me, and the Cell Phone Case was hanging down, between his legs. He asked me, “How does it look?” I responded, “If you were Buck Naked, it would look like a Fig Leaf. The way it’s hanging there, at least it looks like it has company! You could tell people that you got yourself a Flowered Jock Strap!” I was having a ball with him – No Pun Intended! I am not sure if he was going to show Karen his new toy or not. He was appreciative and told me to remember to thank Donna for the work she put into his special Gift.

That experience was invaluable.

Shannon's Samples

There was a Technician at the Dialysis Center who worked six days a week and was a Vegetarian. She was a workaholic who always took exceptionally good care of me. From time to time, she would ask me for certain recipes from Donna. Shannon had great respect and yearning for whatever Donna would create in her kitchen that did not contain meat or dairy products. Whenever Donna would make something special, she would put some in a small plastic container that I labeled "Shannon's Samples". Shannon would be so appreciative that she would tell me to THANK HER AUNTIE DONNA VERY MUCH, each time she got her treats. Donna and Shannon did not know each other, but became friends through the use of a small plastic container.

How neat is that?

A day of reckoning....

I walked into the Dialysis Center on a Tuesday and found that a majority of everyone had been moved to different chairs, without any sort of notice or warning. I found myself facing a blank wall, which was about five feet in front of the foot of my chair. Now please understand that I was used to my old location and the patients who surrounded me. We were all very social and helped each other to pass the time (between 3 and 4 hours) by talking and joking around. I was frustrated, depressed and very angry for how we were all being treated. With my creative juices flowing, I wrote a protest letter, in behalf of my closest Dialysis friend (JR) and myself.

(See a copy of my "Protest Letter" following)

On Thursday morning, I had a face to face with the Manager, Social Services, delivered my letter to her personally and asked her to deliver a copy of my letter to the Manager, Fresenius Dialysis Center, as soon as she returned from vacation.

On Saturday morning, JR and I were back in our usual chairs and had a good session together. We continue to enjoy our "side by side" Dialysis Treatment Chairs" to this day.

NOTE: As an advocate and successful negotiator,
I guess you could say that,

I still got it!

Petition
for
Hemodialysis Chair Reinstatement

August 11, 2016

To: Manager, Fresenius Dialysis Center
Manager, Social Services, Fresenius Dialysis Center

I/we commend the staff for their excellent care of my/our physical requirements. However, when it comes to the mental health and happiness of the patients, not so much. This past Tuesday was my/our worst day spent at the Dialysis Center. There were rampant reassignments of chairs and I was told that the relocations were not temporary. I looked at a blank wall for four and a half hours, and when I should be thinking of what I was going to have for dinner or what any of my 19 grandchildren were doing, the following thoughts were going through my mind:

I resented feeling that I was being punished for obviously having an attitude that was too positive. I believed the patients were being reminded of just who is in charge! Certainly NOT us! What benefit was there for me to continue to look at my life as “a glass half full”? I was frustrated, angry, depressed and extremely resentful. It did not have to be this way. My thinking conjured up vindictive ways that I could defend myself and my friends. I thought about a letter to Fresenius Corporate Headquarters, with a copy to my Group of Nephrologists. I thought of making contact with Channel 6 - On Your Side. Maybe I could notify the Better Business Bureau or maybe the Attorney General of the State of Ohio. Certainly my story would be of “Personal Interest” to the Columbus Dispatch. I have good friends who are Attorneys-At-Law. They would help me at little to no cost.

With utmost respect, I ask to be scheduled back to POD “C”, with J.R. to my left, also in POD “C”. Over time, we can rekindle our strong friendship with each other, the patients around us, the nurses and staff. We can get back to bringing levity to our environment and actually look forward to our sessions each week with a positive attitude, AGAIN!

What are you willing to do to make that happen?

Sincerely,

Bill Mondillo

Chapter Eight

Most Memorable Sporting Events

Playing Right Field on my Dad's Mechanics' Shop Softball Team because they were short handed. I was 12 years old and so proud to be asked to play.

Intramural Flag Football on Governor's Island, New York Harbor, representing the Coast Guard against the Army, Navy and Marine Corps Teams. We did real well, with the team from the same ship (Half Moon).

Coaching the 85lb. Penn Academy Rams to a 14-0 Season, Scoring 520 Points and no team scored on us. Billy was our starting Center.

Crabbing under the Ocean City, New Jersey, Causeway Bridge, my Dad (Grandpop Vic) and I caught about one and a half bushels of large Blue Point Crabs. That afternoon, while out on the open water, my Dad told me that he had to take a crap. There were numerous other boats, crabbing and/or fishing, all around us, so, he told me to start up our outboard motor and take us **under** the Causeway Bridge, out of view of the other family boats. I did so and he dropped our anchor and made sure it held on the bottom of the bay. My Dad then dropped his pants and underpants, and sat on the gunnel of our boat, with his bare ass hanging over the side. He was a sight to behold as he hung on with all he had, so as not to fall into the water. Then it happened! The anchor no longer held and we began to drift. We went out from the cool, windy underside of the bridge, into the hot sunlit waters of the bay area. My Dad, realizing how funny he looked, began to laugh uncontrollably. The more he laughed, the more he crapped! The more he crapped, the more I laughed. The more I laughed out loud, the more I drew the attention of all the boats, all around us.

The cycle continued until he was finished. He then calmly stood up, wiped his butt with napkins we brought with us, fixed his clothing, and bowed to everyone who was applauding the spectacle they just witnessed. We then decided it was time to call it a day and head in. We didn't talk about what happened. We just looked at each other, many times, on the drive home, and bust out laughing. Typically, on the way back to Philly, we would find a roadside stand, near the shore points, where we would stop for a hot bowl of fresh Clam Chowder and a cold drink of some sort.

At those stands, we would then usually pick up a burlap bag of 100 Little Neck or Cherry Stone Clams. When we got home, we would immediately get the big stock pot going, with hot water and lots of “Crab Boil” seasoning. We needed to cook the Blue Point Crabs while they were still alive, disregarding any that were dead. (Eating dead crabs was hazardous to your health.) While the crabs were turning to a bright RED in the hot, boiling water, my Dad and I would shuck the clams we bought. We probably each ate a couple of dozen raw clams, off the shell, and put the rest into a container, for making Spaghetti with Clam Sauce for supper later that evening.

As the crabs finished cooking, we let them cool, cleaned them and placed them in the refrigerator crispers to get cold. When we were ready to enjoy them, we covered the kitchen table with newspapers, dumped the crabs on the table, opened a couple of quarts of Schmidt’s Beer and had a Philadelphia traditional feast. (Those are Teenage memories never to be forgotten.)

Bowling with a High Game of 280, High Series of 636 and a High Average of 180 and winning the Bowling League Championship, all in one season.

NOTE: My boss, at the time. was Gene Janczak (**RIP**) and he was also a member of the Bowling League I participated in. He was a great guy to work for and bowl with, and he will never be forgotten.

Fishing at Silver Lake in Levittown, Pennsylvania with Guy, my Father-In-Law, and my son, Billy, was a real learning experience. Once a year, the State of Pennsylvania would stock the lake with Rainbow and Brown Trout. The limit was six trout per person, per visit to the lake. Guy, Billy and I made numerous trips to the lake but had next to no luck in catching the elusive trout. We could not however, stop watching a father and son, down the embankment from us, catch their limit time after time. We were amazed at their fishing prowess. When I could not stand it any longer, I approached the successful duo to see if I could learn their secret(s).

They were somewhat hesitant at first, but gave in, due to recognizing that we were avid fishermen having no good results for our continuing efforts. Their secret was “Blowing up their Crawlers with Air”. Now here is what they shared: “Make a Leader of approximately 18” to 24” in length. Tie one end to a dual swivel and tie the swivel to the end of your fishing line AFTER placing a sliding weight just above the swivel.

Now, use a TRUE TURN gold hook, tied to the other end your line, using a Fisherman's Knot. You are now ready for the SECRET!

Take your Night Crawler and run it up over your TRUE TURN Hook. Then inject AIR into other end, using a Diabetic Syringe. The bait will swell up and create the desired effect. Cast your line as far out into the lake as possible. When your line settles on the bottom of the lake, your inflated worm will rise above the lake floor vegetation, making it visible to any trout swimming by. Slowly take out any slack in your line and using a "Y" stake in the ground, place your rod, with the bale open, on the stake. Place a pebble on the line from your bale. Laying on the ground and just be patient.

When a trout takes your bait, your pebble will pop and your line will begin to pay out. Pick up you rod and let the fish take about three turns of line off your reel. Close your bale and allow the fish to put a strain on your line. Set your hook, after giving the fish an opportunity to mouth your bait without resistance." The father demonstrated everything he was saying and sure enough, as if on cue, he hooked into a beautiful Brown Trout. The father and son left with their limit of 12 assorted trout and Gay and I left with the knowledge of what we were going to do on our next trip to Silver Lake, just North of Philly and South of Levittown, just off of U.S. Route 1.

We got together and purchased the gear we needed to mimic our teachers. The problem we had was getting the needle necessary to inflate our Night Crawlers. Being resourceful, I was able to get hold of a glass, industrial sized syringe from one of my Maintenance guys at work. (He used it to inject oil into hard to reach machinery.) I had an accident the first time I tried to use that syringe to blow up my worm. It apparently held more air than I needed and I BLEW UP my Night Crawler and had worm guts all over my face and clothing. Billy and Guy said that, that was a sight to behold and one they would never forget. From that point in time forward we learned,

"How To Catch A Rainbow!"

Fishing on Lake Erie, on Angie DeFelice's boat with three other owners of companies working on my Merrill Construction Project. I hooked into and caught an 8 1/2lb. Walleye on 6lb. test line with my Light Shimano Fishing Rod and Reel that my Aunt Mary bought for me.

It was that same day that I will never forget hooking into what I thought was even a bigger Walleye. My fellow, more experienced, crew members knew more than I did, about what was on the end of my fishing line. They forced me away from the rail while two guys had me by my belt and the other two had long handled nets ready to bring in my catch.

They were carrying on loudly about “Not being pulled over the side by the immense fish that I allegedly hooked into”.

They went to great pains to ensure that I could not see what they netted and then tossed over my head, on to the deck. They all then had the laugh of their lives, at my expense. I caught a large, flat rock covered in little crater holes. They congratulated me on catching the very elusive *Lake Erie Rockeye*.

Well, I thought the rock was just thrown back into the waters of Lake Erie and that was going to be the last time I ever saw that “Rockeye”. I was wrong. Approximately six months after the completion of the State-of-the-Art 250,000 sq. ft. Merrill Distribution Center, Gary Eisenberger, Merrill’s President, asked me out to lunch. I have to admit that I was apprehensive about why I was being asked to join him for lunch. He drove me to the Monte Carlo Italian Restaurant in Westerville. When we walked in, I was aghast when I saw 20+ of the Construction and Trade Company Owners with recognized members of their respective management and supervisory teams. These were all people that I worked with, on a daily basis, over the course of the one year of our Construction Project. They gathered together to ROAST me, in public, at that lunch, in that restaurant on that day. And Roast me they did. During the Roast, you could see that all the other patrons in the Restaurant were being thoroughly entertained, to my chagrin. When the Roast ended, I was blindfolded. Four of the construction workers left the room and returned carrying something very heavy, atop a table, covered in a red and white table cloth. They put the table down, beside where I was sitting, and then removed my blindfold.

Angie DeFelice then told the story of the day that I caught the mystical and very elusive Lake Erie Rockeye. He put the finishing touch to the story by pulling off the table cover to reveal the most beautifully UGLY Trophy you ever saw. There, for the world to see, was a manually designed and constructed lacquered Tree Stump. In front of the wood stump was an old, worn construction work boot. Out of the work boot was sticking the upper half of a deep sea fishing rod with 50 lb. line running through the eyelets. On the end of the fishing line, on a large hook, was the **exact** Rockeye that I had pulled out of Lake Erie. There was also an inscribed placard, mounted beside the work boot, that told the story of “Bill Mondillo”’s Famous Catch-of-the-Day”.

I was humbled beyond words. To think that I made such an impression on all these Blue Collared Workers, that they would do all this for me. I have to say, Gary and I had a helleva time getting that damn trophy removed from the back seat of his car and into my office for display.

I kept that trophy, on a table, in my office, for over 10 years. It was always with great pride that I would tell my story, to many friends and office visitors, over the year.

Fishing at Alum Creek with Chuck Washburn, my next door neighbor, was most memorable when we spent a specific evening at our favorite cove. There was a place to park beside the road and then we needed to climb down over some huge rocks to get to a point where a peninsula jutted out into the water. The peninsula was approximately 50 ft. away from the rocks. While we were fishing, a family arrived and moved down on the rocks to try their luck. There were three children, a male adult and the obvious matriarch. She was a very big black woman and took awhile to get comfortable on a big, flat rock. Her husband was half her size. After a half hour or so, I hooked into a three pound catfish. Due to the fact that I had no interest in keeping any catfish, I took the hook out and threw the fish back into the water, unharmed. All of a sudden, I heard a woman's voice shouting, "Was that a catfish?" I politely responded, "Yes, it was". The woman went ballistic and started yelling at me, "You don't throw any catfish back in the water. When you catch a catfish, you give me a chance to get my fat ass off this rock and come over there. I will take it off your hook for you, so I can keep that catfish. You understand what I am saying?" Chuck busted out laughing and I meekly replied, "Yes, Maam. If I catch any more catfish, they are all yours." A short time passed and I hooked into a five pound carp. I beached the fish and thought about my recent experience. I hollered over to the woman, "Do you have any interest in this fish, if so, you can have it". She looked over at me and said, "Is that a CARP?" I quickly said, "Yes, it is". She immediately came back at me, "Well, you can take that Carp and shove it up your ass, I ain't no Nigger!" Chuck lost it! He was buckled over in pain, with tears running down his cheeks, from laughing so hard. Naturally, I released the Carp. The woman and her entire family were entertained by what she said to me. The seven of us absolutely saw the humor in my attempt to be a Good Samaritan.

Fishing at Alum Creek with John Ciaciura created one of the funniest fishing trips I ever had. You have to know that John, the big brother I never had, always jumped at the opportunity to go fishing with me; even though he *hated* to catch fish. John loved to provide company for me when I did not have anyone else to go fishing with. He would go through the motions and pray that no fish would bite on his baited hook. Anyway, I wanted to fish back in what I called my Private Cove.

To get to the spot where I liked to fish, it was necessary to make a trek through the woods. I knew the lay of the land so I led the way. We came to a rather deep gulley that we had to cross. I told John that there was a trick to getting to the other side. I told him to watch what I did and do the same. I grabbed all of our gear, with the exception of the bait box loaded with freshly caught large night crawlers. I figured John could handle carrying that box. I ran down the gulley and without stopping, ran up the other side. I had no trouble. I turned and looked across the gulley at John and said, "Do what I did and be sure NOT to stop moving your feet when climbing up this side of the gulley." John looked a little unsure but said, "OK". There he went; down into the gulley and up the other side, with his legs going a mile a minute. The problem was, he lost traction and began sliding back down into the gulley, on his BELLY. While sliding, he turned over on his back and the bait box went flying up in the air. When he came to rest at the bottom of the gulley, he was covered in mud and the live night crawlers. When the two of us finally stopped laughing, John composed himself and collected all the bait he could find, back into the bait box. Following my instructions and with my assistance, he climbed up my side of the gulley. Little did I realize that the comedy associated with this fishing trip was just beginning.

When we finally got to my favorite fishing spot, I rigged up both my fishing rod and the one for John to use. John saw the trees around us so he volunteered to move away from me and over to an open area where he would not get himself in trouble with the trees while casting his line. After our recent experience, I thought he had a good idea. Anyway, he casted his line and then I noticed a weird circumstance. John started to slowly get shorter as he began to sink into the mud on the edge of the bank where he was standing. I immediately told John that I would help him to get free but he insisted that I leave him alone and just fish. He said he felt secure, stuck in the mud, and therefore NOT getting himself into trouble. However, after a few minutes of quiet fishing, John broke his fishing line on a snag. He pulled himself out of the mud and came over to me because I had the tackle box and what he needed to re-rig his line. Knowing that John was not too adept in rigging lines, I gave him my fishing rod and told him to fish at my spot while I re-rigged his pole for him. I was kneeling down on the ground with my back to John, so I did not see what apparently happened next. John casted my line and got it hung up in a tree limb, out over the water, just out of reach. In front of him, in the water, was a large tree trunk. John must have thought it would hold his weight so he stepped out on to the log and

reached for my line, which was dangling in front of him. Do I have to tell you what happened next?

Oblivious to what was going on, I heard this loud, “WHOA!” (John never cursed.) I looked back in the direction of the noise and saw John straddling the log, out in the water, with my bobber swinging just above his head. The log had rolled when he stepped on it causing him to slip and fall with the log winding up between his legs. With a great deal of humor involved, I effected still another rescue of my best friend. To add to our fun, it began to rain, heavily. It was decided that God was trying to tell us something, so we packed up and headed for home.

NOTE: In case you are wondering, the trek back through the woods, over the gulley, and to the car, was uneventful.

We were both covered in mud and soaked to the skin. I spread plastic over the front seats in the car and we proceeded to go home. On the way, John said, “I’m hungry, let’s go to Wendy’s for something to eat.” I told John that we looked like a couple of Homeless Derelicts and were not too visually appealing to others eating in a Fast Food Restaurant. He said, “Don’t worry, I got it covered.” We went to Wendy’s, ordered Double Cheeseburgers with Large Fries and a Large Frosty, each. When we sat down to eat, John made a statement to the other patrons seated near our table, “Don’t mind us. We are just two dedicated construction workers who didn’t stop doing our job because it was raining.”

NOTE: I said John did not curse. I did not say that John did not lie!

Fishing at Hoover Reservoir with John Ciaciura was another one of my most memorable outings. We traveled to the North End, near the Sauter’s residence, to do some fishing. After setting up our beach chairs, about 50 feet apart, we commenced fishing. I was having success catching Crappie, Blue Gill and a nice Large Mouth Bass. John was apparently not having any luck at all and I did not understand why. John got snagged and did not seem to be having any luck getting his line freed up. Getting a little frustrated with watching John, I asked for his rod so I could try to get his line loose without breaking it. Reluctantly, he gave it to me. I was able to free his line and when I reeled it in, I got the surprise of my life. Attached to the end of the line, about three feet below his bobber, was a rubber night crawler *with no hook(s) in it*. I asked John, “How the hell do you expect to catch any fish?” He looked at me with his usual smile and said, “You got it.

I don't expect to catch any fish and that's the way I like to fish!" "I just want to enjoy being outdoors and provide company for you." I shook my head and let him go back to NON-FISHING.

About an hour later, John got snagged again. This time, he insisted on getting loose without my help. Finally, what snagged his line broke loose and he was able to reel it in. John actually caught someone else's Stringer with nine decayed Crappie still clipped on it. They stunk to high heaven but John was verbally proud of himself because he caught more fish than I did, with just one cast. **God, I loved that guy!**

Golfing in the pouring rain at the Royal American Golf Course and shooting an 87. (I also played on a foursome from Merrill Publishing Company that scored the HIGHEST (Worst) Score at the Annual Buckeye Container Customer Appreciation Golf Outing at the Wooster Country Club, Wooster, Ohio.

Hockey at Nationwide Arena – I was the guest of my Son-in-Law, Doug Sellan, and my grandson, Andy. During a break in the game, Doug excused himself and when he returned I saw that he had purchased a Blue Jackets' lined coat. He presented it to me as a gift and memento of my "First" Blue Jackets' Hockey Game. It is my favorite coat and I still wear it.

NOTE: On another specific occasion, I accepted an invitation to a Blue Jackets' game from one of my Distribution Center Suppliers. Along with a number of my company co-workers, we got to enjoy a Sky Box, about three stories up, over the ice rink. The Sky Box had catered food and drinks brought in, very comfortable seats and most importantly, it had its own Private Restroom. During the Hockey game, one of my co-workers and best friends, Chieu Trac, born in China and brought up in Viet Nam, went to use the bathroom. I was already in the bathroom when he came in. I saw an opportunity to Prank him. I knew how the facilities were set up.

There were two Urinals mounted on the wall, with a Privacy Panel separating them. Chieu was in the process of approaching the Urinal to the right of the Privacy Panel and therefore could not see what I was doing. I was washing my hands at the sink, to the left of the Privacy Panel and ran the water until it was very WARM.

I cupped my hands, quietly filled my hands with the warm water and then moved to the Urinal to the left of the Privacy Panel and tossed the warm water over the panel so it would hit Chieu. At the same time, I yelled out, “Damn, I hate when that happens!”

As expected, Chieu thought I pissed on my hands and threw my hands up in the air causing the urine to go over the panel and on him. He went ballistic. He began cursing me in what sounded like variations of every Asian language known to man. I hollered, “I’m sorry, I’m sorry!” and I ran out of the Restroom to wait for Chieu to come out. While waiting, I shared what I did with everyone there in the Sky Box; about 10 guys. When Chieu finally got himself cleaned up and came out, we all applauded him and then I told him about the Prank. It took a long time before he saw the humor in what I did to him.

We are still best of friends.

Hunting with a gun or a bow is not a sport I ever tried. However, when it comes to being adept at winning a *Scavenger Hunt*, count me in.

Dan and Donna Robins once had very good friends by the name of Frank and Judy Legman. Frank and Judy had a reputation for conducting the most unbelievably successful, Annual Scavenger Hunt ever imagined. It was a privilege to be invited and when we were asked, we jumped at the opportunity. You needed a team of five, so we asked our Pastor, Father George Schlegel to fill out our team. The rules were simple, complete the Scavenger Hunt in the fastest time and be invited back the next year to defend your championship. Don’t win and you don’t get invited back again due to the long waiting list of anxious participants. In addition, you were sworn to secrecy so no one, not yet experiencing the Scavenger Hunt, would have any way of knowing what to expect.

NOTE: It has been over 30 years since the Scavenger Hunts took place. I do not feel that I am betraying any confidence by now sharing exactly what took place to make our life experience so unique.

The logistics and organization were phenomenal. We knew it was going to be a long day (Noon to Midnight) but we did not know the extent of creativity and expense that went into making this Scavenger Hunt so memorable. And, so it begins.....

Ten teams of five met at the home of the Legman’s and each team was given a number of 1 thru 10. We all listened attentively to the shared, verbal instructions. Each group of five was then given its own team numbered shopping bag. (We were TEAM No. 3) The canvas bag contained information and tools which were critical to the travel directions and the

enactment of the consecutively planned Scavenger Hunt activities. All 50 contestants piled into ten visibly numbered vehicles and then, by the use of an amplified bullhorn, we were told to open our bags to learn of our first destination.

In our bag, we found a large paper map, a sharpened pencil, a ball point pen, a small pad of paper for taking notes, a flashlight, a pair of underwater goggles, some towels and a calculator. We were told that the articles in the bag may or may not be serving a purpose during our upcoming escapades. There was also a bright colored sign which read,

“ALL CONTENTS OF THIS BAG MUST BE
RETURNED AT THE END OF THE HUNT,
REGARDLESS OF USEAGE.”

With the clock set, we were then given the signal to “BEGIN THE HUNT”! Ten vehicles took off with some going in the same direction, and others going in different directions. Our team used Dan and Donna’s Custom Van to travel around Central Ohio as comfortably as possible. We were excited and confused at the same time. We could all feel our adrenalin flowing. It was very difficult to settle down and systematically approach all of the challenges laying ahead of us.

We followed our map with directions to a secluded Pizza Parlor out in the Boonies, about 30 miles from the Legman’s residence. Upon arrival, the Pizza Restaurant owner delivered a “Pizza to Go” in a box with the #3 on it. He told us to just take the box with us. With only those instructions, we naturally assumed that we would find the next clue somewhere in or on the box. The slightly warm Pizza was immediately distributed and eaten by the five of us. It was a little dry, but good. Not finding anything in the Pizza itself, we then scrutinized the box. The box came up empty, literally, with the exception of the cardboard circular disc that the Pizza was placed on. Upon closer inspection, we found that it was made up of plies of paper and corrugation. We pulled it apart and there it was! We discovered a piece of paper which provided map coordinates and a message,

“TRY TO CONTROL YOUR EGGS-CITEMENT!”

We checked the coordinates with the map provided in our Information shopping bag and figured out how to find our next destination. We traveled as fast as safety and traffic laws would permit and after about 20 miles, we arrived at a farm with a “Feed and Grain” sign at the entrance. There were a number of buildings with doors visible and we noticed an ARROW pointing down, over one of the doors on the biggest building. Our team of five entered the building and found ourselves engulfed in a maze of bales of hay and bags of grain. We carefully followed the trail until we came upon a

large trough, filled with EGGS. Remembering the CLUE regarding “EGGS-CITEMENT”, we felt confident that we were at the right location. Believing we were dealing with RAW EGGS, we very carefully removed the eggs in hopes of finding our next clue.

Sure enough, deep down, we found a packet of envelopes with a sign that said, “Remove YOUR team numbered envelope only and leave the rest. Be sure to return all the eggs to their original position.” We did what we were told and returned to our van. We opened the envelope and found new map coordinates and the message,

“GOOD LUCK WITH WISHIN YOU WERE FISHIN!”

We only had to go down the road for about a mile and we found a large, almost circular body of water. Recognizing it as our next destination, we left the Van and proceeded on foot for approximately 50 yards to the water’s edge. As we got closer, we noticed 10 fishing rods laying in the grass, around the perimeter of the pond. They were spaced about 10 yards apart and their lines were obviously cast out into the water. We spread out and began reeling in the lines (two each) until Donna shouted out that she had found the line with a sealed bag on it, with the #3, indicating our Team Number, marked on the bag. Based on our earlier experiences, we knew to re-cast all the lines, including the rod that had our bag on the end (now empty). We inspected the extracted contents of our sealed bag and we found more map coordinates and the message:

“ONE OF YOU IS ABOUT TO BE
MORE ‘COOL’ THAN THE OTHERS!”

We took off again, for about three miles, and came upon a Public Swimming Pool with a fence around it. The gate was unlocked so we entered the pool area and walked around. We spotted objects on the bottom of the pool, at the deep end (9’ Deep). We talked over our options and Dan volunteered to dive into the pool and investigate the “things” on the bottom. Dan stripped down to just his Bermuda Shorts and using the “Goggles” from our shopping bag, he dove into the pool. When he broke the surface, he had a brick with a sealed bag on it, with the #3 visible on the outside. We took the bag and tossed the brick back into the deep end. Dan made good use of the towels from our shopping bag. Once again, there were map coordinates on a piece of paper, along with the message:

“ALL OF YOU STILL NEED TO GET THE POINT,
ON A ROTATING BASIS!”

As the pool was located within the boundaries of a State Park, we did not have to go very far to find out that our next destination was an outdoor Archery Range. Sure enough, there were 10 targets set up, each with a

balloon hanging in the center bullseye and each target was visibly numbered from 1 to 10. Our instructions said to rotate, so we took turns shooting arrows about 25 ft., at Target No. 3.

Father George finally broke our balloon. We rushed to extract the envelope from the inside of the balloon and scurried back to the Van. The next clue was confusing to say the least:

“FIND THE M-O-N-O-P-O-L-Y OF STONES!”

The sun was going down and as darkness approached, so did we, to our next stop, a *Cemetery*. Our clue directed us to a specific section of the vast area of plots. It was Eerie! Now the flashlight from our shopping bag became an obviously needed tool to have and to use.

We spread out as much as possible and searched and searched. At long last, Mary hollered, “Over here!” Unbelievably, she found a grave stone with the name MONAPOLI inscribed on it. Behind the stone, on the ground, was a metal box. In the box were numbered, sealed envelopes. We extracted No. 3 and, believe me, we could not leave that cemetery fast enough. On the road again, we opened our envelope and found five “#3 TRAVEL” tickets. Along with the tickets were map coordinates and the unusual message:

“FIVE STILL ALIVE, LOOKING TO THE SKY!”

Following the map we had been using all day, we wound up at OSU’s Bolton Air Field. We were then directed to proceed to the Twin Prop, six passenger airplane that was sitting out on the tarmac. When the pilot asked us for our five #3 TRAVEL tickets, Mary went ballistic. She said, “There ain’t no way that you are going to get me on that friggin plane!” At first, we all really thought that we just needed to find the next clue somewhere in the vicinity of the airplane. Surprise, surprise....we were required to all board the airplane due to the fact that we had to actually FLY to another airport, where we would have the opportunity to find our next clue. The four of us did everything we could to coerce Mary into that plane. She finally gave in and held my hand so tight that she was cutting off my circulation. When the propellers started to turn, she screamed. When we lifted off the ground, she screamed again. When we soared up into the nighttime sky, she screamed, “Holy Shit, pray for me!”. All the way to the Columbus International Airport she was white knuckled and whimpering. We were in the air only a few minutes, but long enough to get the thrill of the Hunt. Landing created a concert of “Oh My God’s”, over and over again. We taxied over to a hanger where our Van was waiting for us. For four of us, that was amazingly surprising.

NOTE: Moving our Van was all pre-arranged with Dan's keys given to an individual back at Bolton Air Field. Apparently, Dan was taken aside and asked for his keys, with the understanding that it was all part of the Scavenger Hunt rules.

Upon entering the Van, we were handed an envelope with written instructions to go to the 94th Aero Squadron Restaurant and, of course, our cryptic message this time was:

“FIND YOUR PARADISE, UNDER THE STARS!”

After parking the Van, we all entered the crowded restaurant. We were “clueless” as we strolled aimlessly around the site, not knowing what we were looking for. We got into a huddle and discussed our plight. Father George saw the words, “...UNDER THE STARS” and remembered that the restaurant had an outdoor patio where you could eat and drink while viewing aircraft taking off and landing at the airport. That made sense, so we went to the outside patio and renewed our aimless search there.

I happened to notice that all the customers were dressed nicely except two people over in the corner, who were wearing white T-Shirts. They sorta, kinda stuck out in the crowd, so we went over to their table. As we got closer, we could see something on their T-Shirts. On both the male and female's shirt were DOTTED CUBES with the words underneath which said, “PAIR OF DICE”. We did it. We finally found our Paradise Under The Stars.

Due to the lateness of the evening, we felt we were done with the Hunt. If there were any more locations to find and puzzles to solve, we had no time left to finish before Midnight. The couple at the table smiled up at us and said, “Congratulations to all of you, you have successfully completed your journey. Now, you must return to Home Base to see if you are the FIRST TEAM to finish.”

Elated with the news, we took to the road again. When we arrived at the home of the Legman's, we were greeted with cheers and accolades. It was six minutes *before* Midnight. We were the FIRST TEAM BACK and the Championship was ours! We each received a huge beaker of Champagne along with a written *Invitation to Return* the following year to defend our Championship. Oh, just in case you are wondering, the “calculator” that we found in our Information Shopping Bag had no meaning or use. All of the 10 Team shopping bags had one item that was just thrown in as an item of misdirection, to add a little more challenge and confusion to the Hunt. Brilliant, in so many ways. Kudos to the Legman's.

NOTE: Only six of the other nine teams returned to the Legman's, all slightly after Midnight. Only two of the six returning teams completed

the Hunt, but not on time. The other four teams apparently gave up and just wanted to find out who won. Three teams obviously just went home.

“You are now privy to one more of my many memorable life experiences. I hope you enjoyed it.”

NOTE: By the way, the following year, we did not defend our Championship successfully, so, we were NOT invited back again.

Lifting Weight, also known as Bench Pressing, is a competitive sport that was initiated by my son, Brian Mondillo, for the Westerville South High School Varsity Football Team, when he was a Sophomore. When he first attempted to get the High School to sponsor a “Bench Press Team” they were not interested. That did not deter Brian, so he put together a team, on his own. Every member of his team WON their Weight Class, received trophies and medals, and got their pictures in the Westerville Public Opinion, the local newspaper. With the successful notoriety, Westerville South High School reconsidered and began sponsoring a very competitive team. I wound up being the proud father of the 210 lb. Class, Bench Press Champion for two consecutive years. Brian’s best lift was 405 lbs. His strength was the reason he was the starting Offensive Center for the Varsity Football Team, even though his real passion was to play Linebacker.

NOTE: Brian earned the status of “Top Ten” of his Senior Graduating Class and his picture still hangs on the wall at the High School. He was best known for his **Leadership and Character**.

Picnics in the Woods, with a stretch of your imagination, can be construed as a Family Sport. On a once a month basis, a number of St. Paul families got together, on a designated Sunday morning, at Blendon Woods State Park, for a joint family Breakfast in the Woods.

NOTE: The available husbands were usually made up from a various combinations of: Bill Mondillo, John Ciaciura, Jack Will, Bernie Austing, Glen Daugherty, Ed Brady, John Sauter, Larry English and Mike Gordan.

We made it a point to arrive as soon as the Park was opened up by a Park Ranger. This gave us the opportunity to select the ideal location for such a large group of people. We tried to get to the big Party House site, where there were many in-ground Grills close by, for our use. We would get the charcoal burning on at least three (3) Grills and then unload the trunks of our cars. The first thing we would address would be making up a gallon size, aluminum pot of coffee. While that was brewing, we would usually make available either Bloody Marys or Screwdrivers, for those wanting a

Kicker to start their morning juices flowing. Naturally, No Alcohol was permitted in the Park, so, our “Morning Beverages” were always pre-mixed at home and deceptively imbibed.

If a Park Ranger ever came by, we would always offer him/her a cup of coffee, but never a Bloody Mary or Screwdriver. We were courteous, not stupid!

We always had at least two very large cast iron skillets to place on the Grills. After setting up a few Party House picnic tables with table covers, napkins, plastic ware, cups for Juices and milk, and bowls of fresh fruit, we would start frying up Home Fries, Bacon, Sausages, Scrambled Eggs with Cheese, and Fried Eggs (To Order), for those in attendance.

We would also make our own Toast by frying bread in a little bacon grease. We obviously had no fear of Cholesterol!

About an hour after the men arrived, the rest of our families started to show up. The women brought the children and we fed them on a piecemeal basis, making sure they got all the food they wanted for Breakfast. The kids would then go play at the playground area while the women chatted for awhile and cleaned up our entire picnic area. The men would then put the remaining picnic supplies in the trunks of the women’s cars, as their vehicles were usually filled with their Golf Clubs. We always made it a point to leave the park before Noon. We all wanted to avoid the growing crowds of other families coming into the park as well as the unpleasantness of the hottest part of the day. The heat never bothered the guys who decided to play Nine Holes of Golf at a nearby course. The women and children would head home or wherever, for whatever other activities they had planned. This was a ritual we all embraced for many Spring, Summer and Fall seasons; one that we looked forward to and loved to share together with our families.

Rowing in the Saint George, Bermuda, Annual Yacht Club Regatta and winning, I needed to impersonate an Officer of the USCGC Half Moon. (Four of the six oarsmen were Enlisted crew.) We drank Champagne from the Trophy Cup at the Yacht Club and enjoyed a wonderful meal together. It was both fun and a little scary to be referred to as “SIR”.

NOTE: We did this successfully on two separate Search and Rescue Deployments and on the third visit, the Captain decided to use ALL Officers as the Rowing Team, with no Enlisted men, and they LOST miserably.

I should mention that the opposing Oarsmen were all Lobster Fishermen and they pulled numerous Lobster Traps each and every morning,

at daybreak, for supplemental income/living. They were, big, muscular and very athletic. They were also great sports and a joy to spend time with.

Spitting my Upper Dentures across the back yard at Jack and Kathy Will's Pot Luck Party, during a Watermelon Seed Spitting Contest. I won the contest but was disqualified because it was a SEED spitting contest.

Swimming at J,C. Pools in Westerville with Mary, Andy and Kristen one day, brings to mind the following images. Mary and I were sitting on the side of the shallow end of the largest pool, watching Andy splashing water in the direction of his sister. Andy was having so much fun aggravating Kristen that he intensified his efforts. Another boy, a little bigger than Andy, came over and started to give Andy a hard time about the way he was causing water to hit Kristen in the face.

Then the surprise occurred. Kristen became very angry, not with Andy, but with the interference of the strange young man who came to her rescue. Kristen started yelling, "Hey, leave him alone. He's my brother and if he wants to splash me, he can." In a split second, the two (brother and sister) began double teaming the good Samaritan. I commented to Mary, "I guess that boy just learned the meaning of *Blood Is Thicker Than Water!*"

Quoting Quips is a special talent that I have had all my life. A few examples of some of them are:

"The last time I heard you say anything that sounded intelligent was when you repeated what you just heard me say!"

"You can feed a man a fish to satisfy his hunger for a day, or, you can teach him to fish and he can eat his worms and night crawlers, if they're not biting!"

"I talk to myself because sometimes I need expert advice."

"Sometimes I roll my eyes loud!"

"I don't need anger management; I just need people to stop pissing me off."

"My people skills are fine. It's my tolerance of idiots that needs work."

"When I was a child, I thought nap time was a punishment. Now, it's like a mini-vacation."

“Wouldn’t it be great if we could put ourselves into the dryer, come out wrinkle free and three sizes smaller?”

“Even duct tape can’t fix stupid, but, it can muffle the sound!”

Chapter Nine
Locations

Places I've been, along with relevant memories
(Inside the United States)

Ashland, Ohio
 McGraw-Hill Distribution Center

Atlanta, Georgia
 Peachtree Street Seafood Banquet with BFG

Atlantic City, New Jersey
 Childhood Vacations with Wrestling Matches
 at Boardwalk Convention Center

Austin, Texas
 Club Volleyball Tournament with Grandson

Baltimore, Maryland
 East Baltimore Street Strip Clubs/Blaze Starr

Bangor, Maine
 BFG Dealer location

Bayonne, New Jersey
 USCGC Half Moon Ammo Pick-up Depot

Bensalem, Pennsylvania
 BFG new facility where I worked

Blue Balls, Pennsylvania
 Amish town in Blue Ridge Mountains

Boston, Massachusetts
 Attended Organizational Dynamics Seminar

Brigantine, New Jersey
 Cousin Kenny's family house at the shore

Bronx, New York
 Honeymoon Zoo trip

Brooklyn, New York
 Visited the Bridge

Bucyrus, Ohio
 Famous for Fried Bologna Sandwiches
 (Stopped after Lake Erie Walleye Trips)

Busch Gardens, Florida
 Saw Tommy Ortolani & Carol (CG Buddy)

Cambridge, Ohio
 Gary Salters hometown

Canal Winchester, Ohio
 Sam's Club shopping

Cape Canaveral, Florida
 Kennedy Space Center

Cape May, New Jersey
 USCG Recruit Training Center (12 weeks)

Charleston, South Carolina
 Pass through on road trip

Charlotte, North Carolina
 Stopover during trip to Florida

Chesapeake Bay, Virginia
 Crab Fishing trip with Dad

Chicago, Illinois
 Medieval Dinner Theater

Clementon, New Jersey
 Amusement Park near/on Delaware River

Columbus, Ohio
 Moved on August 15, 1976 to:
 558 Allview Court
 Westerville, Ohio 43081
 Ate Octopus at Nonny's Restaurant
 Moved on June 1, 2013 to:
 5932 Hickory Brook Way
 Columbus, Ohio 4313

Curtis Bay, Maryland
 USCGC Half Moon dry dock location (2X)

Dallas, Texas
 32 Ounce Steak at the Butcher's House
 Gentlemen's Club w/100 Topless Females

Dayton, Ohio
 Flight Museum tour

Denver, Colorado
 Y2K Seminar – Visited Buffalo Bill Cody gravesite

DeSoto, Texas
 McGraw-Hill Expansion Project management

Detroit, Michigan
 Senior Center Casino Trip

Dublin, Ohio
 Columbus Zoo
 Golf Outings at Muirfield

Dubuque, Iowa
McGraw-Hill Distribution Center

Florence, Indiana
Belterra Casino and Resort

Fort Lauderdale, Florida
Business and Vacation Resort

Fort Worth, Texas
Stopover on business

Gahanna, Ohio
Received plaque from Community Improvement Corp.

Grand Rapids, Michigan
McGraw-Hill Distribution Center

Grove City, Ohio
Small Arms Shooting Range for Concealed Carry

Groveport, Ohio
Westerville South Football Games

Golden, Colorado
Tour of Coor's Brewery

Hollywood, Florida
Tom's Bar-B-Q Ribs
Dog Races

Intercourse, Pennsylvania
Amish town in Blue Ridge Mountains

Kelly's Island, Ohio
Monument visit and Walleye fishing

Key West, Florida
Carnival Cruise Lines Port-of-Call

Kissimmee, Florida
Day's Inn Suites
Old Towne Amusement Park
Helicopter Ride
30 days of Vacation

Lancaster, Ohio
Where Donna lived when I met her

Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Tour of Amish Country
Good N' Plenty Amish Restaurant

Las Vegas, Nevada
Vacation (3X)
Stayed at Harrah's Casino Resort

Levittown, Pennsylvania
Silver Lake Fishing Trips
Aunt Ag's and Uncle John's House

Logan, Ohio
Donna's children live here

Long Island City, New Jersey
Fishing off Rock Jetty with my Dad

Lucasville, Ohio
Donna's daughter Mary lives here with her family

Mansfield, Ohio
Snowbelt begins here, heading North

Margate, New Jersey
Fishing Trip - Lost my wallet over the side of the boat
Caught 300+ Blowfish with Guy and Clarence

Marion, Ohio
Golf Outings at Marion Country Club

Miami, Florida
Pick-up / Drop-off (Cruises)

Nantucket Island, Massachusetts
Merrill Management Retreat
Hotel Fire (Color Coded)

Naples, Florida
Merrill Management Retreat

Nashville, Tennessee
Senior Center Trip

Nescopeck, Pennsylvania
Pocono Vacation spot

New Albany, Ohio
Elite section of Central Ohio

New Hope, Pennsylvania
Betty McLaughlin's Condo

New York City, New York
Honeymoon
Radio City Music Hall

Norfolk, Virginia
Naval Station / Chesapeake Bay Crabbing

Ocean City, New Jersey
Crabbing under Causeway Bridge

Orlando, Florida
Disney, Epcot, Sea World, Universal Studios, etc.

Pataskala, Ohio

Daughter Bethanne, Jerrod and family live here

Patterson, New Jersey

BFG Dealership Visits

Pawtucket, Rhode Island

BFG Dealership Visits

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Home for first 33 years of my life

(Cheese Steaks, Italian Water Ice, Soft Pretzels, etc.)

Bella Casa Restaurant

Northeast Catholic High School for Boys

Pickerington, Ohio

Nursing Home where Donna worked

Plano, Texas

Expansion Project City Council Meetings

Plant City, Florida

Strawberries, strawberries and more strawberries

Put-In Bay, Ohio

Tour on Golf Cart – Fishing for Walleye

Bikinis on Pleasure Boats

Reynoldsburg, Ohio

First On-Line Date

Sandusky, Ohio

Walleye Fishing Trips

Shickshinny, Pennsylvania

Town in Pocono Mountains

Silver Springs, Florida

Fresh Water Extravaganza Tour with Donna

Skokie, Illinois

Bell & Howell Board of Directors Presentation

St. Augustine, Florida

Best Stone Oven Pizza ever

St. Petersburg, Florida

Toured Pier and Toured City by Trolley Car

Somers Point, New Jersey

John's Place across the street from the Marina –

Ate Clams on the Half Shell every day

Watched for Daily Catch at Marina (Sharks)

Went Crabbing under Ocean City Bay Bridge

Staten Island, N. Y.
1st Apartment, with family, while in the Coast Guard
Barbara was born at USPHS Hospital, SINY

Trenton, New Jersey
BFG Dealership Visits

Ventnor, New Jersey
Boardwalk Bike Trips

Wapwallapin, Pennsylvania
Town in Pocono Mountains

Wildwood, New Jersey
Favorite vacation spot / Best Boardwalk

Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania
Coal Mining Town

Wooster, Ohio
Buckeye Container Golf Outings
(Received a Lifetime Invitation to ALL Outings)

Xenia, Ohio
Where to purchase Fireworks

Washington, D.C.
Penn Academy Rams Beat PAL All Stars 27-6

Westerville, Ohio
Home for 37 years with Great Neighbors
Coached Football at St. Paul's School

Wheeling, West Virginia
Wheeling Casino and Resort

Worthington, Ohio
Bravo Italian Restaurant

Zanesville, Ohio
Buckeye Lake Trips

***Places I've been, along with relevant memories
(Outside the United States)***

Argentia, New Foundland
USCGC Half Moon Mail Pick-Up Port
(Winds were so strong that we needed to be
pulled away from the dock by a Navy Tug and
ripped the towing chock right out the Tug's deck)

Aruba Island

Hit Slots for good money at one of the Casinos
Sunset Catamaran Cruise with a Honeymoon Couple
and Mary got crocked on seven Pina Coladas

Barbados Island

Beautiful beaches and Rum Distillery Tour

Belize

Family fed jungle Howler monkeys with Mangos and
fought off giant mosquitoes with Garnett

Bermuda Islands (5X)

Moored in St. George, Town Crier, Torture Chocks,
Fort St. Catherine, British Bobbies, Gun Powder
Cavern/Bull Frogs, Beaches without Shells,
Crystal Cave, Aquarium/Zoo, Hamilton Bus
Station, Shopping and Carnival party on the Pier

Cocoa Cay, Island (Royal Caribbean's Private Island)

Banana Boat ride with Mary and Marge/Ed Brady

Cuba Island

Military Readiness Training where Half Moon
earned highest awards possible
Shore Patrol Duty on Base w/Cattle Cars back to ship
R&R in Ocho Rios, Jamaica
(with Bobby Montross and Bob Thibault -
where Wil Toole and I pulled an all night Liberty)

Dublin, Ireland

Trip following Half Moon's North Atlantic BRAVO
Station fiasco when BM3 Williams was killed
Purchase of authentic Irish Linen / College Dance
Polish Merchant Ship
(Got drunk, ate Black Bread and raw fish &
communicated via Polish/English Dictionary)

Halifax, Nova Scotia

Snowball fight with local Police Force
Visit with Santa and hanging shipmate on Traffic Light

Nassau, Bahamas

Atlantis, Aquarium. Submarine Tour, Straw Market

Freeport, Bahamas

Poorest Island visited – Bought Tee Shirts with Holes

Grand Cayman Island

Swimming with Sting Rays, Turtle Farm,
HELL with its own Post Office and rope
boardwalk over burnt rocks, Perfumery
and Tortola Rum Cakes

Kingston, Jamaica

Capital City and beautiful

Labadee, Haiti

Most beautiful Cove and beach picnics

Martinique

Cable Car ride over the canopy of trees and
Zip liners zipping by, under the cable car
(We had to wear Parkas due to heavy mists
in the mountains' valleys below us)

Navasa Island

Liberty Call on uninhabited island off Cuba, with wild
goats and birds (Had to repair Light House)

Ocho Rios, Jamaica

Best Liberty with Best Friend, Wil Toole
(We were the guests of a Retired Couple
and a Honeymoon Couple and did not
spend a Penny all night.)

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Toured Fort and went to Female Impersonator Show with
Mary, Marge and Ed Brady (It was fantastic)

St. Croix Island

Plantation Tour

St. John's Island

Island Excursion

St. Kitts, Island

Train Tour with Lunch included (Nasty)

St. Martin/Martine

Nude Beaches for mostly Seniors (Not much scenery)

St. Thomas, Bahamas

Cable Car ride up to Paradise Point, Shopping
and Submarine Ride (90' ft. down)
Took Ferry to Tour of St. John's

Chapter Ten
My Immediate Family (Tree)

William Charles Victor Mondillo – Born: 06/13/1943

Married: November 3, 1962

Mary Agnes Teresa (Connor) Mondillo – Born: 12/12/1942

Deceased: March 1, 2008

Our Children:

William Lawrence Mondillo – December 25, 1963

Wife: Judith (Ayers) Mondillo

Children: Michael, Matthew and Michelle



Barbara Mary (Mondillo) Sellan – November 27, 1965

Husband: Douglas (Doug) Sellan

Children: Andrew and Kristen

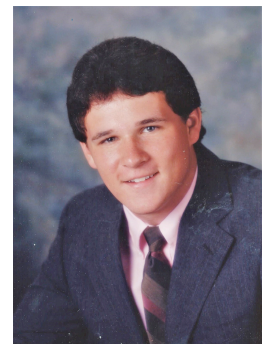
Joseph and JoAnn Sellan – Family



Brian Matthew Mondillo – November 4, 1969

Wife: Amy (Glowark) Mondillo

Children: Owen, Riley and Macie



Bethanne (Mondillo) Gilmore – November 4, 1976

Husband: Jerrod Gilmore

Children: Kayla, Luke and Jake





Married: May 8, 2010

Donna Kay (Compston) Mondillo – Born: 03/10/1954

My Step-Children:

Mary Christine (McCauley) Hill – Born: February 24, 1975

Husband: Anthony (Tony)

Children: Brett and Brooke

Sue and Les - Family

John Frank McCauley – Born: November 6, 1978

Children: Destiny and Skyler

Kathryn Louise McCauley – Born: November 3, 1981

Children: Elizabeth Spaulding and Lindsay Baker

Teresa Ann (McCauley) Pierce – Born: July 2, 1984

Husband: Jamie Pierce

Children: Kirstin and Jessie

Accomplished Grandchildren

Mike Mondillo

Graduate of Roger Bacon High School
Commander, Police Explorers
Accredited EMT/Fireman
University of Cincinnati Graduate
With Degree in Criminal Justice
Police Academy Graduate
Policeman - Married to Carly

Matt Mondillo

Graduate of Roger Bacon High School
University of Northern Kentucky Graduate
With a Degree in Marketing

Michelle Mondillo

Honor Graduate of Roger Bacon High School
University of Cincinnati Graduate
With a Degree in Marketing

Andy Sellan

Honor Graduate from St. Charles College Prep High School
Division II – All Ohio – Volleyball Player of the Year
Division II – State of Ohio Volleyball Championship Team
IPFW Division I – All American Volleyball Player (2014 & 2016)
Purdue University Graduate with Degree in Biology in Three Years
Purdue University Graduate with Masters Degree in Biology

Kristen Sellan

Honor Graduate from DeSales High School
State of Ohio Top 10 – Outstanding Women You Should Know
State of Ohio Jefferson Award Winner
University of Cincinnati Graduate
With Degree in Communications

Beth Spaulding

Honor Graduate from Grove City High School
Attending Bowling Green University
(Major in Secondary Education/Mathematics)

Destiny McCauley

Honor Graduate from Logan-Hocking High School
Attending Hocking College/Ohio University
(Major in Early Childhood Development)

Family Tree of
Father: Victor William Mondillo

Brother: Uncle Charles (Charlie) Mondillo & Clara his Wife
Children: Kenny & Rita his Wife
Children: Kenneth and Keith
Sister: Aunt Margaret (Sis) & Albert Cummins her Husband
Children: Patricia (Patsy) & Jimmy Sperry her husband
Children: Patricia and Michael
Mike (Lives in Arizona - No other data)
Victor Mondillo (My Grandfather)
Margaret (Martino) Mondillo (My Grandmother)
(Aka "Nanny")
Great Grandfather: Nicholas Mario Martino
Born: 03/05/01 Deceased: 05/21/69
Great Aunts/Uncles: Mary, Carmen, Joseph, John & Albert
Great, Great Grandfather: Mario (Angelo) Martino
Great, Great Grandmother: Victoria (Scotabaro) Martino
Great, Great, Great Grandfathers: Nicola Mario Martino
And Nicola Scotabaro
Great, Great, Great Grandmothers: Michaelena Zeppalardi
And Maria Louise Falatic

Family Tree of
Mother: Helen Mary (Wroblewska) Mondillo

My Grandfather: Jon Wroblewski (Both born in
My Grandmother: Sophie Wroblewska Warsaw, Poland)
Aunts/Uncles: Mary – No Children
Charles (Chuck) & Mary his wife
Children: Mary, Jon & David (Twins)
Estelle (Stella) & Richard her husband
Children: Richard & Estelle (Mickey)
Frances (Fran)
Children: Raymond & Ronnie

***Dedicated to the men who
most influenced my life:***

Victor William Mondillo

Ed Brady

Rich Burger

John Ciaciura

Zack Hess

Gerry Johnson

Bill Lang

Charlie LeFevre

Frank McLaughlin

Kenny Mondillo

Tommy Ortolani

JR Reynolds

Gary Salters

Msgr. George Schlegel

Joe Sellan

Wil Toole

Chieu Trac

Chuck Washburn

Jack Will

***Dedicated to the women who
most influenced my life:***

Helen Mary (Wroblewska) Mondillo

Mary Agnes Theresa (Connor) Mondillo

Donna Kay (Compston) Mondillo

Mary Wroblewska

Betty McLaughlin

Lea Owen

In Loving Memory:

(Alphabetically)

Diane Austing - Dear Friend
John Ciaciura - Big Brother I never had
Larry (Guy) Connor- Father-In-Law
Mary Connor – Mother-In-Law
Frances Doran – Aunt (Mother’s Sister)
Ronald Doran- Cousin
David Insul – Dear Friend
Frank McLaughlin- Dear Friend
Leroy Maxwell – Dialysis Buddy
Clara Mondillo - Aunt
Charles Mondillo – Beloved Uncle/God Father
Helen Mondillo - Mother

Mary Agnes Theresa (Connor) Mondillo

Margaret Mondillo – Nanny/Grandmother
Margaret (Sis) Mondillo – Aunt (Father’s Sister)
Victor Mondillo - Grandfather
Victor W. Mondillo – Beloved Father
Donna Robins – Dear Friend
John Sauter – Dear Friend
Mary Wroblewska – Beloved Aunt/Godmother

Pre-Arrangements at Resurrection Cemetery Lewis Center, OH (Plots with Head Stones:)

Lawrence Thomas (Guy) Connor
Mary Agnes Teresa (Connor) Mondillo
William Charles Victor Mondillo
Donna Kay (Compston) Mondillo
Helen Mary (Wroblewska) Mondillo

Epilogue

I call your attention, once more, to my favorite word in the English language. It has guided me throughout my entire lifetime. That word is RESPONSIVE.

In my selective and diverse Autobiography, I have attempted to address the following memories of my family:

**What was my Dad like?
What did my Dad do?**

**Who Poppy really was to me!
What I remember best about my Poppy!**

**What were The Life and Times of my Great Grandfather.
What was it like to live in the 1940's and 50's.**

I have had a full life and I have no regrets. I have been blessed with two wonderful wives that I love with all my heart. My children are easy to be proud of. They earned everything they have, and I am especially happy that they shared the lives of *their* children with me. I could not be happier with my entire family and my myriad of close friends.

In my own words, permit me to define an interpretation of the *Divine Plan* intended for me.

I have this personal "Book of Life", you see. On some of the pages are listed all of the BAD things I was guilty of while I lived. On the other pages are all of the GOOD things I did or attempted to do. My objective, during my life is/was to erase the Bad with the Good and to get my "Book of Life" expressing only a GOOD RESUME for review, when I meet my Maker.

I love you all and I hope that I helped you
create your own "GREAT" Resume!