

DOUG ANDERSON

In 1962 THEY told us: go to college because the Russians are smarter than we are! THEY gave me a “National Defense Loan” so off I went to Buena Vista College with the intention of becoming a science teacher. I spent my second and third year at UNI, and then realized that I did not have the patience to be a teacher.

My dad wanted me as a partner in the farm equipment business, and THEY were saying that Ag was going to be the place to make money because of the rapidly increasing world population. THEY forgot to tell us about the numerous things that would negatively impact the Ag economy during my next 35 years. I’m not complaining because I never got bored, and I learned a lot about people and life in general. It gave me the freedom to be with family and friends in time of need.

My desire to work and earn rather than study and be broke resulted in commuting on M-W-F to BV with Ron Osweiler for my last two semesters, and we each earned business degrees. I sold farm equipment and Ron worked the farm but was a good influence on me to spend time “up town” almost every night. I’m not sure when he got any sleep but I relied upon my ability learned in HS to nap during classes.

Fate kept Ron and myself doing things together until he died from cancer in 1982. We individually decided to enlist in the local U.S.Army Reserve unit in the winter of 1965 for 6 memorable years. Serving in the military was more of a formative experience for me than college, and I admire the military’s methods even though I can poke fun at them. When Ron married Kathy McGarry (Class of ’63), and opened his accounting business in Pocahontas, we enjoyed mutual friends in a card club, golf on Thursday, and our kids’ Boy Scout and school events. His oldest son, Gary, and my oldest son, Jay, were in the same class throughout school; just like Ron and I had been. Ron’s illness, reoccurrence of illness, and eventual death greatly shaped my priorities to put attending our kids’ events before my job; that was a big change for me.

Lani Richardson (Class of ’63) and I were married in October 1966 after she graduated from nurses training. Her first job was at the Emmetsburg hospital, and then signed on to be on the first nursing staff here in Pocahontas when the hospital was completed in 1967. She worked various job slots at our hospital including Director of Nurses until she retired in 1998.

Lani and I had two sons. Jay was born in 1969, and was a ballplayer from the time he could walk until his congenital heart defect showed up in 1984. The result of the many weeks in Des Moines and Texas was an unusual open heart surgery in Houston, TX. We remain grateful that we had Jay for three more years, and they were particularly special years because of our living in Pocahontas. Duane Marcellus was the football coach and AD, and kept Jay under his wing and with the various teams even though Jay could no longer play any sport but a little HS baseball. Jay was part of the exceptional Class of ’87 which went to State in both football and basketball. Jay died April 23, 1987 doing what he loved – shooting hoops in our driveway with his brother. He was a wonderful person and we still miss him very much.

Joel was born in December 1972. He benefited from our small town environment participating in sports, speech, music, and having certain very good teachers. He moved to Chicago upon

graduating from the University of Iowa in 1995. After a decade of mergers involving the banks he worked for, he shucked his daily suit and tie for sweatpants and T shirt when he made his volleyball club his primary occupation. You can get a glimpse of his business at "powerhousevbc.com" or by Googling "Powerhouse Volleyball." He has recently added basketball clubs to his businesses.

I started to retire on September 1, 2001 by locking the doors of our dealership but it took over a year to completely get out of business. Of course I went to Arizona for the winter months which we had gradually gotten in the habit of doing over a period of years.

Our primary residence is Sunland Springs Village in Mesa, AZ. It is an "active adult community" which means it is inhabited by old people who choose not to act old. If you Google "Sunland Springs" you can get an idea of the community and its facilities.

We settled in SSV nine years ago after being in a mobile park in Apache Junction. Golf had become our main enjoyment, and at SSV we have made a number of very good friends through golf and the necessary socializing which is an extension of the game. I say that Golf is a way of life: It is not a game of perfect, and neither is life.

Living in SSV isn't all play for us. Many groups including our Couples Golf League regularly do charitable things for youth, for the elderly, and for the needy. There are those who need assistance from time to time, and Lani's mom still wants the presence of her favorite son-in-law at times.

Pocahontas has been a good place for me. It gave me opportunities to serve my church and the community in a number of capacities over the years. But I won't be surprised if we decide to stop coming back sooner rather than later because life is easier in SSV. Traveling twice a year and taking care of two homes is getting to be a hassle. I'm glad that we traveled some in the past 50 years including some cruises so that I do not feel like I have a "bucket list" of travel things yet to do. We would miss the good people in Poky, the golf outings in the area, and the absence of stop lights which so far has offset the hassle of us to travel.

I feel fortunate about the good things which I have been allowed to experience, and I work at not dwelling on the things I wish had been different. To paraphrase what Judy Cundiff Oleson shared with me at our class reunion in Las Vegas a few years back, "I try to have a little fun each day."

It has been a good phrase for me to think of every day. So who knows, maybe there will be some little special memory to be found at our upcoming reunion. I've always felt fortunate that circumstances put me in the Pocahontas Class of '62.